

question is under consideration. I am not discussing the regulations; I am discussing the modesty of my hon. friends in arrogating to themselves the credit for carrying out the same policy as their predecessors did, and which it is not very likely will accomplish the end in view if the statements of the Liberal press in the North-west and British Columbia are any indications of public feeling. The next matter is with reference to the contract which is to be laid before the House. The contract was placed in my hands after I had commenced speaking: the Senate I think will excuse me if I do not discuss this question as intelligently as I might have done if I had had a few minutes to read it. But I have this to say with reference to the policy of the government, that it is another evidence of the total abandonment of the principles they had advocated for years. We have been told over and over again that entering into contracts by Order in Council was a vicious principle. We have been told over and over again, that all contracts should be given out by tender, but we are told in this case that urgency necessitated taking a different course. I read in the government organ of this city, a day or two before I came to Ottawa, a statement of this kind, and I was rather surprised, because it was written in a chuckling and glorifying style. It went on to say that the government had entered into a contract for the construction of a road in order to enable produce to be carried into the Yukon district at the earliest possible moment, and that passengers could get there; and that it had been a great disappointment to many people who have spent large amounts of money in investigating the feasibility of building a road, and that there were over thirty people applying for charters in order to obtain power to enter that country, and that fully half a million of money—you will find it in the *Free Press* of a few days ago—had been spent by these gentlemen in order to ascertain whether they would be justified in investing money in constructing the road, and that they went away chopfallen because, without their knowledge, a contract had been secretly entered into with two gentlemen, to give them that whole country. Whether that is justice to the outsiders or not I am not going to argue just now. It has been said also that this road is to be

built without the expenditure of one dollar of public money. That was well illustrated by a little paragraph I saw. A farmer went home and told his wife he had bought her a very expensive piano. "Well, my dear," she said, "You should not have done that, we cannot afford it." "Don't trouble yourself about that, I never gave a dollar for it. I gave the farm for it." While we don't give any cash subsidy we give away an enormous territory which is supposed to be worth hundreds of millions of dollars. If the reports of Mr. Ogilvie and those who have been in that country, and the investigations of prospectors are to be relied upon, then we have given millions. But why was it necessary to take this step? Parliament was to meet within five or six days after the date when this contract was being entered into. But nobody knew; it was kept a profound secret. Contrast the course of hon. gentlemen opposite with the conduct of the government of Western Australia when they were placed in a precisely similar position. About four or five years ago gold was discovered in Western Australia. There was just such clamouring for railways into that country, about 120 or 130 miles, as there is now for railways into the Yukon district. Did the Australian government, with Sir John Forest as governor, adopt the policy that has been pursued by this government? Not at all. They asked for tenders. There were scores of people waiting for it, and they made this provision: "We will give you a contract for the construction of this road into the gold territories," and time being the essence of the contract, they limited them to a certain period within which it should be completed, but they added this addendum "you shall have the use of that road from the time of its completion until the time provided in the contract." The moneyed men went to work; they built the road at about one-half the ordinary cost for the construction of roads, and for the seven or eight or nine months that they had that road under their own control to collect the revenues from freight and passengers, they collected more than paid for the construction of the whole road, and retired wealthy men. Of course, I admit the difference between the climates. I admit the difficulties in the Yukon country, which they will say, no doubt, are almost insurmountable. They are not insurmountable, because if the reports be true that road can be built at \$25,000 a