

Then of course they can entrust the Management to proceed with the construction. That is the Canadian National Railway Act as passed by Parliament. Surely the Government of the day does not intend to act on every request or suggestion of the Board of Management as to construction, without first considering whether these lines should be built, and then taking the responsibility for them by placing the amounts in the Estimates in such a way that they can be thoroughly discussed, and that we in Parliament can get the details hereafter. We all know that if the amount is placed in the Estimates the details must come out in the Auditor General's report, and of course every member has full knowledge.

There will be one advantage to the Government if this Bill goes through, that the Management of the railways will simply say—and the Government will back it up, because they admit the Board is to have full power: "It is not in the public interest to give information as to what these roads cost, who the contractors are, etc." Therefore Parliament will not be able to get any information, because the figures will be kept out of the Estimates, and will not appear in the regular way in the Auditor General's report.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I would like to put a question to my honourable friend: could we not put that condition in this very Bill, that a report will have to be made to Parliament annually of the construction cost, the number of miles of railway that are built during the preceding year and so on?

Hon. Mr. REID: Of course, if we could amend the Bill we could put anything in it, but I have my doubts whether we have the power of amending, on account of it being a money Bill. Taking that position, it does seem to me very strange that the Government are afraid to put the amounts for these railways in the Estimates, as is the custom.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: But why should the Government be afraid? They will have to come to Parliament for the money.

Hon. Mr. REID: Of course, the honourable leader of the Government should answer that question himself. If I had to give an answer, I might suggest that the amount that is being voted in the Estimates for the present year is staggering to the people of this country, and if \$28,000,000 or \$30,000,000 were added I do not think the Government would like the public to be advised of that fact. By covering it up in a Bill of this kind they thought they could get it through.

There are other reasons why I do not like this Bill. If passed it will mean that our

Hon. Mr. REID.

Estimates will not show to the public what we are spending, and next year we will have another Bill in this House with another long list of railways, the cost of which will not appear in the Estimates at all. Even this Bill permits the Board of Management to go on and construct not only 1,100 miles of railway, but many more, because clause 7 of the Bill says:

The mileage of the said lines of railway and the cost of construction thereof, as mentioned or referred to in the schedule to this Act, are merely estimated distances and costs for the information of Parliament, and shall not be taken to restrict the Minister in the issuance of such certificates nor the Company in the performance of the work of construction and completion nor in the issue of its securities.

Why, instead of a thousand miles they could build another Transcontinental, and not come to Parliament. Then this Bill gives the Government power to issue securities on those lines without consulting Parliament. So that we might just as well admit that from now on the Management of the Canadian National Railways can build any further railways that are to be built, practically without coming to Parliament, and this country can be saddled with hundreds or thousands of miles of railways that will not only not pay after construction, but may never be constructed. So the deficit on the Canadian National Railways will be increased, and we may make up our minds that those railways will never pay; it will be impossible to make them pay. Thus public ownership would be destroyed by the way the new work was being constructed. The honourable leader of the Government stated that these are lines which should all be built.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Oh, no.

Hon. Mr. REID: Do I understand that the honourable leader, as representing the Government, submits a Bill here, and says now that they should not be built?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I did not say that; but when my honourable friend stated that all those lines should be built, I simply said that I was submitting them for the consideration and best judgment of the Senate upon the opportuneness of building them.

Hon. Mr. REID: Do I understand now that the leader of the Government, who has sat at the Council table and agreed to this Bill, now says that he does not think the whole lot of these lines should be built?

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: I say they all should be built, subject to the approval of both branches of Parliament, and my honourable friend's responsibility begins here.

Hon. Mr. REID: I am going to accept that responsibility, but my honourable friend,