

studied the question—and I may say I studied it very many years ago and always kept in touch with it—I have always had the greatest possible faith in the advantage of the opening of the Hudson Bay route, to bring the products of the West in closer and cheaper touch with the markets of the world. At the present time, as in past years, anywhere from one-third to one-half of the great wheat product of the prairie West finds its outlet to the European market by way of United States routes and ports. That proportion has been increasing rather than decreasing in recent years. Port Nelson is as close to the centre of the wheat fields, and to everything that lies west of that centre as is Port Arthur, and Port Nelson is as close to Liverpool as is Montreal. These being the facts, surely it is the business of every patriotic Canadian to try to secure for our own country the traffic in our own products. If there were no other reason for the development of the Hudson Bay route, a reason would be found in the fact that our present transportation and port facilities in Canada are not able to hold for us the transportation control of our own products. Under present conditions half of the products of the West find their way to the European markets through the United States.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Because of insufficient elevator accommodation at certain places.

Mr. OLIVER: I am not saying what the cause is.

Mr. PUGSLEY: Because of lack of Government elevators.

Mr. OLIVER: I agree with the hon. gentleman from St. John (Mr. Pugsley). I will go as far as the hon. gentleman does in accusing the Government of all the crimes in the calendar.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: Any more?

Mr. OLIVER: And then some. They have not provided the elevators, which I think they should have provided at the ports of St. John and Quebec, and thus more fully employing the railroads running to these ports. I quite agree with him in that, but I am taking the facts as they are, and those facts are that half our grain goes out via the United States. We are not able, under present conditions, to retain the transportation of our own traffic in our own products. The Hudson Bay route would give us a fair and reasonable opportunity to retain a large proportion of that traffic in our own grain, and for that reason, it

[Mr. Oliver.]

seems to me that, under ordinary circumstances, and in normal times, the Dominion of Canada was well warranted in deciding to incur the obligation to construct the Hudson Bay railway.

I have not been arguing upon that question, except as it was raised by the hon. member for North Perth (Mr. Morphy); I have been arguing on the question in its immediate and present conditions, and it is under those conditions I would be compelled to support the Government in taking such measures as are necessary to get those rails laid to the waters of the Hudson bay—having come within such a short distance, and there being such a comparatively small expenditure to be made to achieve that end. I would have agreed to drop the expenditure on the Hudson Bay railway at the beginning of the war, if that had been the policy of the country, and the Government, but when it was not their policy, I certainly, as a western man, feel like insisting very strongly that the Hudson Bay railway should receive the same consideration as all the other great enterprises upon which the country had entered previous to the war. After having agreed, as we did last night, to an expenditure of upwards of \$60,000,000 for the relief of the Bank of Commerce, I think it is not a time when we can quibble or quarrel—

Mr. CURRIE: No.

Mr. OLIVER: If my hon. friend (Mr. Currie) insists, I do not wish to convey for a moment the idea that that would be all the expenditure that would be involved, for I have no doubt several hundred millions will be ultimately involved, but last night we specifically agreed to pay out of the depleted treasury of Canada, under war conditions, subject to an award of arbitrators, a sum of \$60,000,000 for the relief of the Bank of Commerce, and, under these circumstances, I submit that the subject of the completing of the Hudson Bay railway is not a matter of such comparative magnitude as to entitle the enterprise to be dropped.

Resolution concurred in.

Sir THOMAS WHITE: I desire to call attention to the fact that the debate which has taken place is out of order. I only raise the question because I do not desire a precedent to be established. The debate was upon the question of concurrence, and not upon the motion that the report of the committee be received. Under rule 17 (A) the debate is out of order.