

takes that have been made. When we get the Grand Trunk system, as we shall in all probability, we will have to co-ordinate the entire public-owned system, and hundreds, if not thousands, of miles of railroad will be useless, because, owing to the folly of the people's own representatives, those useless lines were built. The Grand Trunk Pacific and the Canadian Northern parallel each other for hundreds of miles through the Yellow Head Pass; you could throw a snowball from one line to the other. The Canadian Northern has many hundreds of useless miles of railway. I believe in the policy of the present Prime Minister (Sir Robert Borden) when Sir Wilfrid Laurier announced his policy to construct the Transcontinental and the Grand Trunk Pacific—although I believe my hon. friend from Maisonneuve, if he were to make a frank confession, would say that that was a tremendous blunder. The right hon. gentleman's (Sir Robert Borden's) policy, as leader of the Opposition at that time, was that those roads should not be built, but that the Canadian Pacific railway should be double tracked around the north shore and the new railway system given running powers over the Canadian Pacific railway. That would have been the ideal policy and it would have saved a billion of dollars; but at that time we had in the West that prince of political cracksmen, Hon. Clifford Sifton, driving the thing through, and when he ran for Brandon he had a gang of railway engineers locating branch lines almost to the backyard of every Liberal who was recalcitrant and of every Tory who, he thought, might be influenced to vote for him.

Mr. LEMIEUX: My hon. friend seems surprised.

Mr. RICHARDSON: My hon. friend seems pleased. That is where thousands of miles of unnecessary railway were unloaded on the country. I have not spoken to any individual members of the Government, but the only sane system to be adopted, and the only system under which public ownership can possibly be made a success, is to co-ordinate the whole system, abolish every mile of unnecessary railway, and, after you have that done, let a commission state what shall be accounted the fair cost for the system, and what rates ought to be set to pay operating expenses, up-keep and, say, 5 per cent on the capitalization so ascertained. It would mean writing off from the public ledger probably half a billion dollars, but that is the only

possible way in which public ownership can be made a success. And it is the just way, because both parties, I repeat, have been equally responsible for what has happened, and so have the people, because they have backed both parties in pursuing such an insane policy. So, let them take the consequences.

I was struck with the position taken by my hon. friend from Maisonneuve this afternoon when he said that Quebec did not get its share of these forty-two charters.

Mr. LEMIEUX: Forty-four.

Mr. RICHARDSON: But the Acting Prime Minister dealt with that phase of the question so ably and so satisfactorily that I hesitate to refer to it again. It indicated, however, the trend of the hon. gentleman's mind: the West is getting a lot; why should not the East? Why should not Quebec get its share? He indicated that the construction of these railroads might be used for political purposes.

Mr. BUREAU Hear, hear.

Mr. RICHARDSON Well, that shows that in the mind of the hon. gentleman and perhaps in other gentlemen's minds—possibly in my good friend's (Mr. Bureau's) mind, in view of his "hear, hear"—there is the idea that the construction of railroads should be used for political purposes.

Mr. BUREAU: That is against my idea.

Mr. RICHARDSON; Now, in God's name—and I take His name on my lips with reverence—surely the time has come when that kind of thing should be eliminated from the life of the country. Surely a new era is dawning. Surely the idea of service must take the place of the idea of political patronage or political power. At any rate, if that is not in the minds of members of the House, it is in the minds of the people. The people are beginning to understand the significance of the railway question. The member for Dorchester (Mr. Cannon) said that he had grown tired of hearing about this railroad question.

Mr. CANNON: I did not say that I was tired; I said that the people were tired of the way this Government was handling the question.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I am prepared to accept my hon. friend's statement, although if he refers to Hansard I think he will find that he used that language. However, I do not wish to attribute to him anything that