

May 7, 1872

which to construct the line, which would almost allow the amount per mile spoken of. He believed that railway companies were about the best immigration agents possible, so long as there were proper restriction to prevent any monopoly. The Government ought not, however, to rush into the matter blindly, without first knowing what the cost would be. It had been suggested that all contracts should be submitted to Parliament, and he considered that, if the Government could not make arrangements that would be in every way satisfactory they would be justified in calling an extra session of Parliament and laying the whole matter before the House.

He had voted for the resolutions last year, because he believed ten years was quite enough to build the road. Capital was plenty, and could be got as cheaply as it ever would be, and he had no fear of the great bugbear that we were going beyond our means.

Mr. HARRISON said that the question was not so much what he had done in the past in reference to this railway as what he intended to do in the future. The intention of all with scarcely an exception was to build the road and to do it as quickly as possible. This would be found to be the almost universal sentiment of the House and the country. The Dominion was in honour bound to do it—as it was her interest to do—and settle the North West. It was a duty to ourselves, to the civilized world, and to the surplus population of the old world; and it was also the duty of the Empire to see that the road was constructed.

The Americans had already one road and proposed another, and everyone knew that the Canadian road would have great advantages over the American line. The great trade of the east was a prize in which the rising Dominion would benefit. He approved of the mode of construction being by private enterprise, and also of the idea that there should be competing companies, and hoped that no company honestly seeking incorporation for the purpose would be refused on any technicality. If Canadians were capable of constructing the work they ought to have the preference over foreign capitalists. Americans had found it necessary to engage Canadian engineers in their most difficult undertakings, and they had not to go outside the House to get as high engineering talent as could possibly be found. (*Cheers.*)

He quite approved of the proposition not to deplete our exchequer by giving the whole subsidy in money. The only way to make the land valuable was to open it up and settle it by people who would contribute to the revenue in both customs and excise, and he knew of no way so likely to bring this about speedily as to put the land in the hands of companies, with proper restrictions. He was glad to see that the line would come near Lake Nipissing. The Government of Ontario would, no doubt, be asked to assist in the matter, and they would, no doubt act in union with the feelings of the

people of the Province. Some place called Mattawa had been named, but the terminus ought to be as near as possible to the railway system of Ontario. They were all agreed as to the advisability of constructing the road, and there could only be some difference as to the mode.

Hon. Sir GEORGE-É. CARTIER said the intention with regard to the eastern terminus was that it should be at some point near Lake Nipissing, with which the Ontario railways would connect, and at the same time enable the Quebec Government to assist to build a railway from Lake Nipissing towards Ottawa on the north side of the Ottawa River. By this means the two provinces would derive as much advantage as they expect.

Hon. Mr. McDOUGALL (Lanark North) thought there seemed to be no disposition to offer any serious amendment or opposition, and he had no doubt the resolutions would be passed, though possibly with slight modification. The fact that the country was pledged through its Parliament to build a railway between Lake Nipissing and the Pacific must be admitted. They were bound to do it, and if they considered the discussions last session, the discussion in the public press, the action of other legislatures and public men, it must be seen that the great majority of the people of Canada should make use of American railways as much as possible; but the public seemed to be greatly ahead of that matter, and he must acquiesce.

In the light of the experience of the past few years, he had somewhat revised his opinions as to the ability to build railways. Ontario had seen two or three railways extended very rapidly over a very rough country, which had produced a revenue sufficient to pay the interest on the capital expended and expenses. Part of this result was attributable to the adoption of the narrow gauge. The Pacific Railway was to be of this gauge, and would be constructed at much less cost than the Grand Trunk Railway and other lines of the past.

With regard to the sentiments attributed to the Government, he had never understood that they had said the railway would not cost the country anything. Public works could not be constructed without expenditure. They could not eat their cake and have it too. He had understood that the Government had stated that, in view of the increased revenue of the country, and in view of the greater power of the country to meet its liabilities, it would not be necessary to impose any additional taxation, (*Cheers*) and he did not doubt that such would be the case, taking the calculation of the member for Ontario South (Mr. Gibbs) that the annual outlay represented was 1 1/2 millions. The people of Canada were quite ready to incur that risk for the sake of having a great highway throughout the length and breadth of the country. He regretted, however, that the matter had been brought before the House on such imperfect data. The engineer's report was very brief, and to his mind very unsatisfactory.