

plan, or on the strength of a legend on a Government map. What a very uncertain record it is after all to have to rely on the location survey of a railway line, more especially in British Columbia, where the configuration of the country is so difficult as to make it almost impossible, on first inspection, for even the most expert engineer to say positively that the line recorded is the one that will be followed when construction is carried out.

If you examine the departments here and in Ottawa you will find that there has not been a mile of railway built in the mountains that has not been located and relocated many times. The final location might be moved twenty miles from the original plan.

Is it credible that a person or corporation would purchase land in British Columbia on the strength of a Government map, which is marked here and there with lines projected and under construction, and enter into an agreement that could be justified on sound business lines? The uncertainty of the location of the lands themselves is a factor that ought to be taken into consideration.

It is a reasonable thing for a Government in dealing with railway corporations whose enterprises are projected through the mountains to give every opportunity possible to leading engineers to work out the best route and to secure the most feasible and the most economic line. So I say that, while the gentlemen interested in this particular instance may have felt quite safe in representing that these were farm lands in the vicinity of the Kettle Valley road, at the same time it was rather a hazardous thing to go the length of representing for a certainty that the railway would be building along that specific route. You will see from the scale of the maps that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to locate acreage unless it was in the tens of thousands of acres. In my humble opinion he would be a very careless man indeed who would enter into an agreement, as purchaser, or agent, on the strength of a Government map in any section of the Province. Nevertheless, here, in a few words, is the position presented to the Government a few days ago.

The Government of British Columbia is always solicitous of vested interests, and we are always careful to give every protection so far as constitutional

authority will warrant. We have been very much concerned because of the representations made lest there should be any misconception or misunderstanding as to the attitude of the Government. We are fearful that some persons who might be unscrupulous in the matter might go the length of representing that this Government would be responsible for something that would amount to repudiation. And so the Government does not admit that anything is being done that at all savors of repudiation. We do not agree that in substance the condition which this bill proposes is a departure from the original bargain between the Kettle Valley and the Government to build the Hope Mountain railway.

I suppose when this measure is commented on in England, where the purchasers of some of these lands are resident, much fault will be found with the Government because it has not compelled the Kettle Valley Railway to abide by its original location lines.

Mr. Speaker, if there is fault with the Government, which, of course, I do not admit, there is still much more fault to be found with the purchasers of this property, with the men who would willingly enter into the purchase of a large property on the representations I have outlined. It seems to me that ordinary intelligence would warrant the persons interested in ascertaining, right on the spot and at first hand from the Government and the railway company, positively where the line was going to be. I cannot agree that even if the line were built there the land would be made productive farm land, unless Nature in the first instance had made it so. I need not discuss with you what you would expect from land at an attitude of from three to five thousand feet, but I can say that it is not in the usual order of things in British Columbia to find valuable productive farm lands always at that elevation.

But if these lands are as the purchasers describe, if the productive value attaches to them that is set up in the reports annexed to the brief of learned counsel, the fact that we shall have two standard railways operating within measurable distance of them will, to my mind, strengthen and enhance their value. In the first instance the lands were to have the direct service of the Kettle Valley road. Under the proposals now before the