

of it with the Intercolonial railway and the operation of the combined railway as a complement of our canal system in this country. That would immediately have given the people an improvement in transportation and would have brought relief to the people of Ontario and it is in the province of Ontario and of Quebec that the real transportation grievance exists in this country to-day. They may have a grievance in the west, I grant that and I grant that we should open up our new country, but if you propose to deal with the transportation question, if you bring in a great policy involving the expenditure of \$150,000,000 of public money and get only a colonization road in return as I believe you would under the measure now before Parliament, you have done nothing for the solution of the transportation problem. Had the government taken over the Grand Trunk—and I am prepared to verify what I before stated in this House, that the Grand Trunk proper could have been taken over on a rental,—immediately it was taken over it could have been consolidated with the Intercolonial. The combined roads could then have been connected with the Mackenzie & Mann system and this consolidated government system would have been in the Northwest in a single day and would have given relief from one end of the country to the other. This is the relief for which the people are looking; this is the relief for which the farmers are looking, a reduced rate on grain; people in Ontario are asking a reduction in freight rates and have any number of questions to bring before the Railway Commission, but so far as I can see there is no relief for them except by some measure of that kind I propose. It is a practical measure, a measure that gives immediate relief. Let us look at the facts in regard to transportation. We have in Ontario and all over the Dominion of Canada unlimited water powers that are nearly all in the possession of the people to-day and the way to solve this problem is to take advantage of the new discoveries of the day and the application of the principle of water powers to railways owned and controlled by the government; by this means you would give relief to all the people of Canada. There is no relief coming from the Grand Trunk Pacific road; on the contrary the Grand Trunk is getting an immense sum of money, and eventually they are to get the railway, while the people of Canada are getting nothing. There is no visible solution of the transportation problem and that is what the people of Canada want. The people desire relief applied to the existing railways in Canada not to some scheme laid out in the back country, in the wilds of the Northwest almost up to Hudson's Bay. There is no relief except on the lines I have suggested. Even if this Bill goes through—as I have no doubt it will—it will only make the problem harder, so that when we do tackle it—as we will some day have to tackle it—to

a solution, we will have to take over this road which we are incorporating to-day and all of the expenditure put upon it. As I have said there is no way to give relief to the people of this country, especially in dealing with the Grand Trunk other than by the nationalization of this road, its consolidation with the Intercolonial Railway and the consolidation of the combined road with the Mann & Mackenzie system. That would give the people immediate relief and it was on just these lines that the hon. ex-Minister of Railways was working, and on which he differed with the government. Instead of making the mistake of his life I believe that the Hon. Mr. Blair took a good course and one that would have redounded to the interests of this country. How can you solve the transportation problem if you do not take over the existing railways? What is the great value of the Grand Trunk Railway to-day or of the Intercolonial as an asset of this country, in the settlement of the transportation question? It is the splendid position these roads now occupy. The value of the old Grand Trunk Railway consists largely in the terminals and ports which it possesses, the switching grounds in all the great cities. Let us take these over and make them a part of the national system and you have the great railway facilities of the Grand Trunk in Montreal and of the Intercolonial in St. John and Halifax and of the Grand Trunk in Toronto and in the other great cities utilized for the benefit of the people, and in this way, you would give the people of the country immediate relief.

Mr. CAMPBELL. Have you made an estimate of the cost?

Mr. MACLEAN. Yes, I have made an estimate of the cost, and I may tell my hon. friend that if the government had gone to the Grand Trunk people in London and said: We will assume your liabilities and make some small provision for the common stock, they could have got that road. Let me tell the hon. gentleman that it is not the Grand Trunk shareholders who pay for the maintenance of this road but the people in Canada who use the road. They have paid the debt and are paying the debt and should control the road and use it towards the solution of the transportation problem. My right hon. friend deprecated this action of the present chairman of the Railway Commission in leaving his government on that issue. Hon. Mr. Blair believed or was coming to the belief that national ownership was the real solution of the question. He took that view in this House and was prepared, I believe, to take over the Canada Atlantic Railway for the same purpose, and instead of making a mistake I say that he brought forward a policy which would have done a great deal for the immediate improvement of the transportation facilities of this country. He made no mistake, but on the contrary proposed something that was in