

which there is no necessity—that if the Bill comes before this House again in the same old form, I intend to oppose it just as forcibly as it was opposed a year ago. On the other hand, if the Government will bring down in its Estimates proposals for the amount necessary to make certain extensions in Western Canada, especially where the lines are already graded, I shall be the first to hold up both hands in their favour.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: Would my honourable friend prefer to have the amounts for the building of those lines placed in the Estimates, and thus deprive the Senate of any chance to deal with them except by throwing out the whole Supply Bill?

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: I will take my chance on that, and for this reason: That I know the Government cannot get appropriations for some of these branch lines through the House of Commons.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: But the whole Bill passed the House of Commons last year.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: It did in its blanket form, but not item by item.

Hon. Mr. DANDURAND: The members of the Commons could have done as we did they could have raised their voices in protest against the building of some of these branches; but they passed the Bill unanimously. I never suggested that we should pass it unanimously in this House.

Hon. Mr. ROBERTSON: I desire to call the attention of my honourable friend to a proposal that was made only yesterday by the member for Swift Current, and with which I am in entire accord. The member for Swift Current was referring to the Branch Lines Bill that was discarded last year. After it had been argued that it was a three-year programme and that it must go through in that form he pointed out that the Government each year was voting from eight to eleven million dollars, the amount that was required for the succeeding year's work in constructing and carrying to completion the Welland Canal project. Then he proceeded in these words:

They have asked us to pass eight or seven or eleven million dollars from year to year for the maximum amount of work that can be carried on that year. Why cannot we deal with the branch lines in the same way? Let the government come down with an appropriation in the railway estimates for branch lines and ask for a sufficient amount to carry on the maximum amount of work that can be done this year. I am quite sure that if that were done this parliament, every part of it, would vote the money gladly, and even though it may take three years to finish the work once it is begun, there is no reason why this parliament

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should not vote from year to year sufficient money to carry on the programme. For that reason I sincerely hope that instead of prejudicing the case by bringing forward a three-year programme, or trying to reform the Senate if it needs reforming, the government will bring in a programme for one year that will appeal not only to members of the House but to members of the Senate as being constitutional in procedure, and then I believe that the West and the East will get our much needed railways.

With that I am in entire accord. I will say nothing more on the Branch Lines matter at the present time.

The honourable member for Lambton (Hon. Mr. Pardee) implied by his remarks on the railways that the Government ownership of railways was proving a success. I do not think we have yet reached the stage at which we can come to that conclusion. I hope nobody thinks that the late Government, in adopting the policy with regard to railways, did so because it believed absolutely and solely in the nationalization of public utilities, particularly railways. Everybody must know that it was because of the necessities of the time. No other course was open. I am hopeful, indeed confident, as things are going now, that if the Government, not only the one now in power, but all those that may be in power in years to come, will follow strictly business methods, as the honourable member from Lambton suggested yesterday, in the administration of the National railways, they will ultimately succeed as Canada develops and its population and business increase. We have in Canada to-day enough railway mileage for double our present population. All our railways need is increased business to make them all profitable; but unless they get that they will still be faced with years of struggle. And the Canadian Pacific is no better off than the Canadian National so far as business outlook is concerned. Perhaps its outlook is even not quite so good, because there has prevailed in the past few years a sort of public sentiment on the part of the shipping people, who say: "If we must pay through taxation for the deficits of the Canadian National, we may as well send our business that way and help to make the thing self-supporting." That sentiment has done more to increase the business of the Canadian National railways than all the solicitation of all its agents or travelling representatives in the country.

In addition, the Canadian National has given good service. I do not think anybody can complain of the service. But how has it been able to give the service? Because from 1918 on to 1921 the Government that conceived the consolidation plan provided the means and carried on the work which enabled