

Hudson Bay Railway

inating all the items that could in any way be considered national, and dealing only with those that I could class as gifts or bonuses or subsidies to the provinces, I find the figures are as follows:

Ontario and Quebec.. . . .	\$2,775,000
British Columbia.. . . .	2,295,000
Maritime provinces.. . . .	1,921,000

Of this amount I might observe that Prince Edward Island gets only the small portion of \$33,700 and the prairie provinces—Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta—only \$305,377, the total being \$7,298,062.

To this total I might add the steamship subsidies, because in looking over them I do not find any of really national benefit. They serve the small ports, and therefore are only of provincial account. The large trans-Atlantic steamship systems that handle our grain and other products are made to pay their way by the freight charges they collect from our grain and cattle. These steamship subsidies amount to \$1,128,275, giving us a total of \$8,426,337. In looking at those items one may perhaps be pardoned for observing that the prairie provinces with approximately 25 per cent of the population of the Dominion receive only about 3½ per cent of that total. This is a further reason why the government should give favourable consideration to the completion of the Hudson Bay railway.

In conclusion, I might refer to the fact that we are approaching a by-election in the constituency of Moose Jaw. I predict that the Liberal candidate will be promising the people that if he is elected the government will complete the Hudson Bay railroad. Therefore I hope the government will express themselves a little more frankly on this project, because it is certainly going to be an issue in the Moose Jaw election, and I do not want to see the Liberal candidate making any pledges unless he has the government behind him.

As for the criticisms and the doubts levelled at this project, we are quite prepared to meet them. In fact we have been meeting them for the last forty years. Doubtless there are and always will be such scoffers and doubters, and had it not been that men of vision overruled the skeptics the great country west of the Lakes would still be a fur preserve, the Canadian Pacific railway would never have been built. Indeed, we may go back a few hundred years and say that America would never have been discovered. And as we now criticise those who opposed or supported in their day, these other great projects so posterity will judge us for our decisions here to-day.

Right Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN (Leader of the Opposition): Before the vote is taken, Mr. Speaker, I wish to declare my position on this resolution. The resolution has not the definiteness and meaningfulness that one would like. Its first demand is that the government consider a report of a Senate committee for the purpose of saving an investment in the Hudson Bay railway.

11 p.m. It would be a strange government in the Hudson Bay railway. solution to that extent. There is no commitment involved; the government accepting it is just where it was before.

The second part of the resolution has more meaning. It calls upon the government to recognize the priority of the undertaking with reference to other transportation projects started subsequent to the Hudson Bay railway. The meaning of that as well could stand further explanation. It may go beyond what the ordinary man would interpret it as conveying. I take it to mean that the completion of the Hudson Bay railway should be a charge upon this country prior to the prosecution of other transportation projects of a similar or larger character. That is to say, the road should be completed before we put through any similar project whether in the East or West; but not that its completion should be held to be a charge prior to the completion of minor, local, auxiliary and subsidiary projects of a transportation character, many of which are under way or should be in various parts of the Dominion.

Now assuming that I have not misinterpreted the resolution, I will make very clear where I stand myself. I hope in that regard I shall have more success than did the Acting-Minister of Railways (Mr. Graham) in his address a short time ago. I will try to imitate his brevity, but I will try very seriously to excel his clearness and finality.

In the first place I favour the Hudson Bay railway. It goes without saying that this would be my position. I do not purpose to canvass the merits of the undertaking, as one would be compelled to do if the whole project were in the future. I do not propose to discuss at all the feasibility of the route. I know there are many still who doubt that feasibility. I know there are some who doubt it whose opinions from a practical standpoint would be better than mine. On that phase I only say this: The matter has been debated and investigated, investigated and debated, not for a few years but for many years, for a whole generation. For forty years it has been the subject of dispute, and in that forty years, four decades, this country has come to