

have been able to obtain, that road is on the south shore and entirely distinct from the other two; but it is put in with the others in this one Bill. Now, as far as I can understand from the statement of the leader of the Government this afternoon, we are in this Bill asked to specify that the valuation shall be referred to the judge of the Exchequer Court and that he shall not value these roads at a larger amount than \$4,349,000. In addition to that, we assume a liability of \$2,500,000 worth of bonds, making a total of something about \$6,800,000. Now the whole question turns on what really is the value of those roads. The proposal is to leave that to be decided by the judge of the Exchequer Court; but what we have to consider at the moment is whether the country is justified, at the present time, in making an expenditure of this kind. This Bill, as I said before, is brought down to us in the last days of the session; we have very little time to consider it; and we are asked to pass this Bill, which would enable the Government to take over these three roads and commit the country to this expenditure. Further than that, if I am rightly informed, we should not only have to put up this amount of money, \$4,349,000, and assume further liability under the bonds, but we should further have to commit the country—

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—My hon. friend says assume the liability under the bonds. What does my hon. friend mean by that? No matter what the bonded indebtedness may be, we only assume \$2,500,000 of that indebtedness. I hope I make myself clear on that.

Hon. Mr. BOSTOCK—There is a bonded indebtedness over that?

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—There is a bonded indebtedness exceeding that \$2,500,000. There are two issues of bonds; an issue on the Quebec, Montmorency and Charlevoix Railway of \$2,500,000, and a bonded indebtedness of the Quebec and Saguenay road of approximately \$4,500,000. But the only bonded indebtedness that we are assuming and restricting the valuation of the Exchequer Court to is \$2,500,000. Beyond that we assume no responsibility.

Hon. Mr. BOSTOCK—That of course does not touch the point that I was making, whether we were justified in asking the country to assume this amount of \$2,500,000 bonds, the amount of \$4,349,000 which may have to be paid out in cash, and the further liability of the amount of money that

would be necessary for putting this Quebec and Saguenay road in a condition that it can be operated. I understand that this Quebec and Saguenay road is at the present time not in operation; that it is a road that has been constructed and has lain idle for one if not two years; that there are no bridges built on the road; and that some of the concrete work even was not completed. The condition of the road has been stated to be about 87 per cent completed, at a cost of somewhere about \$89,000 a mile. That is putting a great liability on the country, and one that I submit we are not justified in doing at the present time. The Government have been holding out to the people this session the great liability under which the country has been placed by the railway policies that we have pursued in the past, the enormous expenditures that we have had to assume in order to carry on roads that we made ourselves responsible for, and the liability which we incurred when the country was very much more prosperous and was not faced with the burden of war which it has to face to-day; and we have heard the hon. member of the Government in this House telling us of the enormous burden placed on the country by this railway policy in the past; and I think that it is time that hon. gentleman in this House considered whether we should not hesitate before committing the country to any greater expenditure at the present time. We have been quite ready in this House to do everything, and to support every measure that the Government brought down for the purpose of prosecuting this war, and we know that the war is going to lay a great burden upon this country. I do not think that the Minister of Finance to-day can say how much he is going to have to ask the country to give him to carry on the war for the next 12 months, because I notice in one of his speeches a short time ago he had already increased the amount that he considered he would have to borrow in order to carry on the business of the country, from \$250,000,000 to \$300,000,000. It appeared to me that since he announced in his Budget speech that he would probably have to borrow as much as \$250,000,000 this year he has seen cause to revise his figures and it may be necessary to increase the amount to \$300,000,000. That will show hon. gentlemen the position that we are in to-day, the amount of money that we may have to raise and the increased burdens that we will have to place upon the people. Considering these