

amount to \$11,700,000, on which \$250,000 a year is less than 2½ per cent. So that this subsidy which is being given is just about one-half the interest on a bond for the cost of the construction and equipment of that road, whether it is built new or acquired and improved; and the statement about the portion built and to be built, I understand, is made by the Government, not as a matter of much consequence to the House, but as determining the facility and the rapidity with which the line could be completed.

Mr. BLAKE. But I think there is a very important consideration as to that. I do not understand that we are to vote away the public money in order to aggrandise private fortunes. Nobody can deny that if there is any merit in this scheme whatever, the result of its completion must be largely to enhance the value of those lines already constructed, which are now to become, instead of isolated local lines, also parts of a great through line. They are there; somebody owns them; but is it to be said that besides paying a large subsidy towards the construction of the links which are to give them an enhanced value, we are to give the public funds in order that somebody may buy somebody else's property? I say the enhanced value of those lines is a piece of great good fortune to the proprietors of those lines, without our giving public money in order to their being bought. Let them be thrown into the common stock of the new through line, at what price may be agreed upon between the fortunate proprietors of the new combination; but do not let it be said that the public are to pay for those lines at the enhanced value they will acquire as new lines. It seems to me we are entitled to know on what basis this proposal is made. The Minister of Public Works did not think it worth while to tell us how it was that a subsidy of \$170,000 a year for 15 years, which we were assured emphatically last year was enough to accomplish this object, is now to be changed into a subsidy of \$250,000 a year for 20 years. I have given the capitalised value of this subsidy; it is an addition doubling the amount of last year. I asked Sir Charles Tupper last year how he knew \$170,000 a year was enough. He said he could not tell, but he assured us that he had made enquiries, and that it was enough. Now we are not told that more is necessary or why it is necessary, except that we see it in the resolution. Is it necessary because it is found necessary to buy the proprietors of these large roads and pay them for them? The hon. member for Stanstead (Mr. Colby) said, awhile ago, that as long as there were sacrifices and expenditures to be involved by themselves, they had a monopoly. Well, they were promoting their own interest. Some of the municipalities which have paid inordinate sums and have not reaped the fruits have suffered some misfortune. I do not know whether it is intended to recoup them; I do not know whether it is intended to purchase the International line—not only to give it an enhanced value as the concern it will become as part of the through line, but also to give the money to buy it at that enhanced price. The hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Hall), a little while ago, spoke of Mr. Light, whom I do not know; but he was employed by this Government to make this survey, and I suppose he had their confidence, and the hon. gentleman said he knew Mr. Light, because, as the Government engineer of the Province of Quebec, he had made a report as to the north shore in consequence of influences from Terrebonne. Well, we know what that meant; it was not because Terrebonne had more voices, but because the voice that spoke for Terrebonne in the Legislature of Quebec was the most powerful voice in that Legislature; and the hon. gentleman knows the unfortunate results that were achieved by Mr. Light, because the Prime Minister of that day wanted the road changed to suit his constituency. And to-day we have a gentleman appointed Acting Minister of Railways in this House, in

Mr. HALL.

whose charge Mr. Schreiber is, who has been directing these surveys, who is the political officer responsible for the direction of these surveys, and for the orders in which these surveys are given; and he is not in the House at this moment listening to this discussion.

Mr. POPE. I am here.

Mr. BLAKE. Yes, he is here; but he is on the back benches. He comes forward now, and I am glad to see him. It is in his Department in which these surveys have been going on, but he does not take charge of the resolutions; they are not placed in his hands to move.

Mr. POPE. Nor was it under my charge the surveys were made.

Mr. BLAKE. Well, I do not know to whom the hon. gentleman's deputy and engineer was allotted for the surveys.

Mr. POPE. I refused to take any part in these surveys. Sir John A. Macdonald said he would do it himself when I accepted the position of Acting Minister of Railways.

Mr. BLAKE. There is the acknowledged incompatibility in the hon. gentleman's position. That is what I complain of; I say he ought not to have been appointed Acting Minister of Railways during the time these great interests were decided, because his personal interests were such as to prevent him acting in that position.

Mr. POPE. No; I have no personal interest.

Mr. BLAKE. He is reported to have a large personal interest in the International Railway.

Mr. POPE. You should not take everybody's reports.

Mr. BLAKE. The hon. gentleman won't give me anybody's report. I think it is unfortunate that the hon. gentleman should have been appointed Acting Minister of Railways at the time and under the circumstances that this change was to be made. I think it would have been better that the political officer at the head of that Department should not have had the interest the hon. gentleman had in the solution of this question. That very circumstance was not to disqualify the hon. gentleman continuing in the Government; but he had his own Department, the Department of Agriculture and Statistics. But why should he be taken out of the Department of Railways, which had to settle this question? Now I have extracted from the hon. gentleman the admission that he felt himself he could not touch this question, and that the First Minister had to instruct Mr. Schreiber, that he had to give orders about the surveys, as the political person responsible for all this, although up to this instant he had supposed the Acting Minister was the person responsible. There was a hidden hand, and the hidden hand is now disclosed.

Mr. POPE. No; there was no hidden hand.

Mr. BLAKE. Then it was the hon. gentleman's hand, for his was the hand we saw.

Mr. POPE. It was the open hand of the Prime Minister.

Mr. BLAKE. No; it was not, because it is only to-night that we learn it was his hand. But although the Prime Minister wrote, I dare say the hon. gentleman was at his ear.

Mr. POPE. No.

Mr. BLAKE. Are you sure? What a dreadful position for the Acting Minister of Railways to be in, that he could not even speak to the First Minister about an important affair. What a shocking position for him to be in. Would it not be very much better if he were not Acting Minister of Railways?

Mr. POPE. That is too thin.