

The motion was agreed to, and the Bill was read the second time.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED, seconded by Hon. Mr. Owens, moved the third reading of the Bill.

Hon. Mr. WATSON—In the form in which this Bill is presented to the Senate I cannot accomplish the object which I had wished to attain. The Bill which was referred to by my hon. friend involves an unnecessary expenditure for the country to undertake at the present time, and should not have been gone on with, but as the matter has come down to us, the money that is to be paid for this road is included in this Supply Bill. I had purposed moving to reject that Bill, but I cannot do it now since it is included in the Supply Bill. I must say that I am inclined to think the country will not approve of the action of the Government in undertaking that expenditure at the present time. We know that throughout Canada individuals, as well as corporations, are trying to do everything they can to save and economize for the purpose of assisting in the prosecution of the war, and at this late hour of the session to ask for a vote of something over \$4,000,000 to give to a speculative concern when there is no present necessity for that expenditure, or for the building of the road, is an extravagance which I think the country will not forgive the Government for undertaking. The road in question traverses the shores of the great St. Lawrence river; it cannot possibly compete with the water route in the summer time, and from all the information that has been put before us there is very little use for it in the winter time. In fact, my information is that it is almost impossible to operate that road in winter, for there are very few people to serve, the trains cannot run over the track in the winter time, and there is a very heavy snowfall. Still, the Government at this late date suggested the buying of this road from a speculative outfit that has prosecuted that enterprise for a number of years, and that has done more to discredit Canada in her borrowing powers than any one man in Canada. The belted knight has tried several times to get the Government to take this road over, and has not succeeded; in fact, from the rumours we heard a few weeks ago, I thought the present attempt would not succeed. Unfortunately, with his tenacity, his enterprise, and his powers to organize, he

Hon. Mr. BOSTOCK.

has evidently succeeded in compelling the Government—I say compelling the Government, because they must have been compelled to undertake this expenditure. I was disappointed in the vote last night. I had expected that that Bill would probably have been defeated in the Senate. So far as I was concerned, there was no canvass made, but I noticed last night a number of gentlemen here whom we had not seen for weeks or months, and I had thought they came for the purpose of saving the country at this particular time. I venture to say that if a number of the members who are not simply casual visitors, but who have attended this House pretty regularly up to within a few weeks ago, had known that this Bill was coming before Parliament, they would have remained here and voted against it. I am only surmising, but that is what I think. A reference was made last night which could not but recall to my mind a similar occurrence in the House of Commons a good many years ago. It was referred to by the hon. senator from Victoria division. On that occasion the Bleus of Quebec held up the Government in 1884, when they were “on strike”—I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, whether you were in the Commons at that time, but I think you were. There was a dead set made on the Government at that time that the Canadian Pacific railway was asking for a loan of \$30,000,000, and the Bleus of Quebec went on strike. They were not in their seats in the House for three or four days; they were in caucus in room 8, and intended to vote against the Government on the \$30,000,000, as one of the leaders told me, at 6 o'clock in the evening. However, by 1 o'clock in the morning they all walked in and voted for the \$30,000,000 loan. The gentleman informed me that on the next day they changed their minds because a responsible minister had come to their caucus and assured them they would get what they were asking for; consequently they voted, and everything was all right. We found out afterwards that the price of getting their vote for the \$30,000,000 loan was the giving of guarantees on provincial roads in the province of Quebec for some \$15,000,000. This might interest some gentlemen who have heard the question discussed on several occasions as to how the term was introduced into Parliament and into legislation—“for the general advantage of Canada.” That is the occasion when we first heard of subsidies given by the Federal Government