

so that a possible saving might be effected.

It was because of these representations, and of the fact that the corporation principally answerable for the project asked for an extension of time unless the proposals now before the House were carried, that the agreement now submitted was entered into.

I would like to say that, before the Government consented to enter into an agreement of this sort, every consideration was given to the various sections of the country affected by the original project. We found that if we were to comply with the request of the Kettle Valley and subscribe to the usage of the trackage of the V., V. & E. from Princeton to Coldwater, with proper safeguards, we would be materially assisting in the carrying out of the project.

It is interesting to note that when the Kettle Valley Railroad opened negotiations with the Government for a variation of the agreement such as is now provided, the only objections to be filed were those emanating from what is known as the Aspen Grove district. They came from Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper, representing an English syndicate which had purchased land for farming, and also from Mr. Bate, a pioneer of Aspen Grove, representing some sixty-two mineral claims.

A very careful hearing was given by the Executive Council to the case presented by Sir Charles Tupper, and it developed this situation: That, acting on the strength of the location surveys of the Kettle Valley Railway, which had been located here and at Ottawa, large holdings of land were disposed of in England to a very powerful and representative syndicate. In the brief filed by Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper the names of the gentlemen interested were mentioned, together with the amounts which they subscribed. The lands, although located at an altitude of between three and four thousand feet above sea level, were held out by Sir Charles Hibbert Tupper to be valuable farming lands, and attached to his brief are reports from Captain Leader, a farm expert who had been carrying on certain experimental work.

The complaint was that this English syndicate, induced because of the location of the line through Aspen Grove to buy these lands, would suffer

considerable loss if the Government permitted any deviation from the location which has been filed. But in addition to this objection it was pointed out to the Administration, with considerable emphasis, that a Government map, issued in 1912, bore upon its legend this direction: "Lines coloured red, railways under construction," and that such a line appears in the map in the neighborhood of Aspen Grove.

Counsel insisted that the Government was obliged, because of this circumstance, to protect the purchasers of this property. The question may be asked of the Government tonight, is it fair and honorable to the public at large, since there has been a location showing the line through Aspen Grove and since there has been a map printed showing that line to permit a deviation from the original agreement?

Before I answer this question, Mr. Speaker, I think it is worth while to enquire into the matter a little more closely. The allegation is that these lands were bought in 1911, while the fact remains that this map did not appear until 1912. Not that this would materially alter the case. The question stripped of outside considerations resolves itself into the question of whether or not, assuming all the allegations to be true, the Government would be justified in expediting railway construction which affected the general public interests of the country.

The House will agree that the V., V. & E., over whose tracks the Kettle Valley will presently operate, is at most twelve or fifteen miles from the lands at Aspen Grove, in which this English syndicate is interested. These lands are at an altitude of from three thousand to four thousand feet and are hardly in the nature of lands that could be divided into small holdings with any great profit; but if there are farm lands there of a nature sufficient to justify development, it will not be a difficult task to find a suitable trunk road system that will bring them closely enough in contact with the V., V. & E. and the services of both the American and Canadian lines.

I cannot believe that any English company undertaking to engage in a businesslike way in the work of developing and settling farm lands in the interior of British Columbia would approach such a task and finally carry the purchase of lands to completion on the strength of a mere railway location,