

pledged to it. The government is committed, not so much to further investigations as to a completion of the work that has been undertaken.

If we do that work the West will have no great grievance against this parliament, except that we must also do what we can to develop the port of Vancouver and our waterways. We must go after the railways, both the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Canadian National Railways, and try to find out, either by experiment or by litigation, what justification there is for these abnormal charges that have obtained in the West. This parliament, too, or the Railway Commission, or whatever body has jurisdiction in the matter, must get after the shipping profiteers on the upper lakes. I do not know anything more discreditable in the history of America than these abnormal freight charges which have been put into force since the war by the people who control the shipping on the upper lakes and on the St. Lawrence. Every concession which the railways have given to the western people has always been absorbed in shipping charges. There seems to be, I was almost going to say, an infamous understanding between the two. Perhaps there is a quiet "divvy"; I do not know whether that is so or not. The fact, however, is that there have been unfair charges levied by the shipowners and the railways. We have got after the railways in an endeavour to obtain reductions and we must get after these other people as well. The main thing is to put heart into the people of the West by building this railway which they require. If we do I feel confident that substantial results will accrue to the people who live in the western provinces and who to-day ask this parliament for relief in various ways. I hope that this parliament will give them that relief not only in regard to transportation but in regard to reasonable banking facilities, and possibly the improved credit which has come to the United States in the last two or three years might also come to the people of the west of Canada. I shall therefore have much satisfaction in supporting the motion. Still greater satisfaction will it be to me if the government make good the pledge of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and complete this experiment—even if it is only an experiment—and so keep faith with the people of the western provinces.

At six o'clock the House took recess.

### After Recess

The House resumed at eight o'clock.

Mr. C. C. DAVIES (North Battleford): In rising to support the resolution moved by my hon. friend for Prince Albert (Mr. Knox) it is not my intention to deal at any great length with the subject. I understand that there are a number of other speakers who will have something to say on this question, and it would not be fair to them if I made any extended remarks at this moment. But the question of transportation, and especially the question of the early completion of the Hudson Bay railway, is of such vital importance to the agriculturalists of western Canada that I feel I should be remiss in my duty if I did not in my poor way try to add something to this debate.

Public opinion in the West has been practically unanimous upon this subject for very many years. I remember when I first came to this country over twenty years ago how the Hudson Bay railway was dangled as a bait to the settlers in the West, and it seems almost inconceivable to me that after twenty-three years we are debating in this House of Commons the question whether this is a feasible route or not. From the beginning of this year the question has been discussed in practically every public assembly in western Canada. Unanimous resolutions have been passed by all the great farmers' organizations in western Canada, and by the board of trade of practically every city and town of importance in that part of the country. During the past few weeks the question has been thoroughly discussed in the legislature of Manitoba and the legislature of Saskatchewan, where unanimous resolutions have been passed pressing this government to complete the Hudson bay route as early as possible.

I wonder if hon. members who represent the eastern part of Canada ever realize the vital importance of the question of transportation to the western farmer. We in western Canada have a great problem to solve: how to raise our agricultural products and place them on the markets of the world in open competition with agriculturalists from every other part of the world, situated as we are fifteen hundreds miles away from a seaport. That is the question we have to solve in western Canada, and it can be solved if we open up the Hudson bay route. The problem of transportation in relation to the distribution of agricultural products is of vital interest to western Canada, and a route which brings us one thousand miles nearer the sea is a route which must receive the earnest consideration of this government.