

Hudson Bay Railway

and made fit for agricultural purposes at a cost of approximately \$2.50 per acre.

Mr. CAHILL: Does the Hudson Bay railway run through this land?

Mr. STEWART (Humboldt): It touches it at The Pas.

Mr. CAHILL: Is not this triangle west of the Hudson Bay railway?

Mr. STEWART (Humboldt): Yes. I was not referring to this as land that the Hudson Bay railway would particularly serve; I was simply citing it as an illustration. Farther north there is land similar to this, referred to by the hon. member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Millar), containing about 12,000,000 acres, which require drainage. I was offering this as something not theoretical but regarding which we have definite data. It is so definite, Sir, that although the Department of the Interior after securing those figures did not deem it advisable to go ahead with the work, the province of Saskatchewan accepted the figures and have, I believe, reached an agreement with the department to proceed, either this year or at no distant date, on their surveys and drain at least a part of that Carrot river triangle in order to make it suitable for farming operations.

I think, then, it will be readily admitted from the statement which I read, and which I heartily concur in, that the natural resources themselves justify the building of this road. If they justified the building of this road many years ago when it was undertaken and \$20,000,000 expended, certainly they justify a further expenditure now of another \$4,000,000 or \$5,000,000 to complete that road and so make profitable the capital investment.

I hinted some few moments ago that there were suspicions in the minds of a great many people in the West as to the reasons why this road was not being completed. I have in my hand a letter which appeared in the correspondence columns of the Saskatoon Daily Star of February 21st, in which the writer airs his suspicions that sectional or political interests are holding up and delaying the completion of this road. Now, Sir, I do not endorse the statements made by this correspondent, but I wish to bring it particularly to the attention of the government that these suspicions do exist and that it is necessary for the satisfaction of the people of western Canada that they should be dispelled. I am delighted with the sentiments that have been expressed in this debate, and I am sure that when the speeches are read by the people of western Canada those suspicions will in a very large measure be dispelled. But to show

[Mr. C. W. Stewart.]

how this particular correspondent feels in regard to this matter let me quote a passage from his letter. He says:

We know the East is against the completion of the Hudson bay road.

I am very glad that certain eastern members have expressed themselves plainly and emphatically to the contrary but I should like to add a word to the point emphasized by the hon. member for Nelson (Mr. Bird) when he spoke of the psychological effect of the completion of this road to the bay. The people of western Canada feel that its completion is their due. They are not so provincial as not to watch with careful eyes the voting of public moneys in the present session as well as in past sessions, and they are aware that in the past week, for example, we have voted estimates running into millions of dollars to provide transportation ways and means for farming communities located along our lakes and rivers in eastern Canada. We in this section of the House, Sir, could not very well try to hinder the placing of harbours, wharves, breakwaters and other necessary accommodation for the farming people of Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island because we realize that such accommodation is indeed essential, and I think it was very noticeable that the members of this group did not raise any serious objection to these votes. But I would remind the government that the people of western Canada, as I said a moment ago, fully realize that these means of transportation are being provided year by year, and that next year other requirements of a similar nature will probably have to be provided for, and therefore they feel that they too should have absolutely necessary wharves and harbours supplied to them. I was amazed, Sir, when I turned to the appropriations for Manitoba for harbours and rivers not to see its greatest port mentioned—Port Nelson. I thought possibly that a special vote might be found somewhere in the estimates, but I could not find anything for that important harbour. Such omissions are not having a good effect upon the people of western Canada.

I have based my arguments very, very largely upon statements that have already been made in this House, but I doubt, Sir, if sounder statements can be found anywhere on this subject, and I want to make one further quotation to sum up my attitude. It is contained in a speech made by Sir Wilfrid Laurier when criticism was advanced early in the history of this project. He stated

The future of Canada is too great for any one part of its territory to be hurt by the development of the routes of commerce of any other part.