

could inform me on the subject further would be the Arctic Pilot, which I proceeded to get from the British Admiralty, but I am sorry to say that I did not find any more information in the Arctic Pilot than we already possessed. I may be perhaps forgiven if I repeat some of the things that I have been saying so often in the Senate on this question. Nine years have passed since I brought up the subject in this House, and when I look around this Chamber and see the great number of new senators who have come in since that time it shows the advisability of re-stating some of the facts. In all those nine long years I have followed up this question, have read everything that has been written on the subject, and have always taken a very deep interest in the navigation of our northern seas. I believed then, and I believe now, that the route from Hudson bay through the straits to the Atlantic, will never be commercially practicable. Therefore I think it is right to call for those documents, and to ask whether it is opportune at the present time, with a large deficit staring this country in the face, to go on with this extraordinary expenditure, which was estimated under a former Administration at a certain sum but which, according to the figures to be brought down, will be found to more than double the original estimate of the cost. There is the great expense of building 450 odd miles of railway from Le Pas to Port Nelson, through an uninhabited country, in which for the first 150 or 200 miles there may be here and there little spaces fit for agriculture, but which for the last 200 miles nearing the shores of Hudson bay, is absolutely useless, not even having any valuable timber. I want to say that I have no politics in this matter. I know full well that this work was begun by a former Administration; but, perhaps that Administration was not as well informed as it should have been when it undertook this project. But now that this work has been going on year after year, we are better informed as to the very great difficulty attending the carrying out of the enterprise. The railway, when completed, can only possibly do business for a few months in the year, because, as every one knows, Port Nelson and Hudson bay and the straits are absolutely closed to navigation for eight or nine months in the year, and during the remainder of the year navigation by this route is most dangerous. It seems to me, therefore, that it

would be only right for the Government to stay its hand, for a few years at any rate, before spending more money on the project, and especially on the development of Port Nelson. I have here a map which, with the permission of the House, I shall lay on the Table and invite hon. gentlemen to look at it, since we are here to look after the public interest. I ask hon. gentlemen to look at this map, and say if they know of any harbours in this country or elsewhere which present such difficulties in providing terminal facilities. The map speaks for itself. On the main shore line the water is shallow, and when the tide recedes there is actually a mile and a quarter of absolutely dry land left at low tide. Then the channel of the Nelson river, from its mouth for twenty long miles up stream, is so shallow that a channel will have to be dredged nearly all the way. The deep water begins twenty or twenty-two miles from the coast, and from there to the shore a channel will have to be dug through the deposits of silt that have been carried down by the Nelson river; and this dredging will have to be done every year at great expense, in order to keep the channel open. Owing to the permanency of our tenure of office in the Senate we have the satisfaction of being able to follow up questions like this, and become thoroughly familiar with them. This is essentially a matter which this House should look into carefully. In the other Chamber where they have so many things to occupy their time and attention, they cannot give the time necessary to consider a question like this thoroughly. No one seems to pay any attention to the millions and millions that are being spent at Port Nelson and in the building of this railway. When the work is completed I claim that it will be of no commercial benefit, and the people of the Northwest, who have been advocating this enterprise in all sincerity, perhaps, would not advocate its completion now if they were better informed on the subject. The Board of Trade of Winnipeg has urged the Government to hurry the completion of this road. I ask the members from the West when that road will be completed, do you think it will pay any farmer to send his grain to be stored at Port Nelson all through the winter and the following spring, and have it sent out to the markets of the East until the next August, when the new crop would be just coming in. I do not believe that many