

enumerating them or by any reference to them whatever.

I repeat what I said at the beginning, namely: that I regret that the Government, in presenting to Parliament their proposal to acquire the shares of the Canadian Northern, did not at the same time present their view as to the value of the equity in those shares. I have as much faith in the judgment of some of the members of Government as I would have in the judgment of the arbitrators who will be appointed—even more, because the Government would have a better appreciation of the public view of this question and would not be so apt to be influenced by the many specious arguments which, I know, will be advanced for the purpose of impressing the Board of Arbitrators as to what is the real value of these shares. I therefore think that even now the Government, with all the evidence they have before them—and they have practically everything that could be presented to the board—should undertake to re-open negotiations with the owners or pledgees of the shares and come to Parliament and state the amount, if any, which, in their judgment, is the value of the equity in those shares, and then let us dispose of the matter at once. But failing that, I say that section 4 of the Bill should be amended in such manner as to indicate, further than has already been done, the principles which should guide and influence the arbitrators in determining the value of the shares to be acquired by the Government of Canada, and specifically to eliminate some of the methods which are ordinarily invoked by the owners of public utilities in endeavouring to establish abnormal values for those utilities when acquired by governmental or municipal bodies.

Mr. SCHAFFNER: Although the Canadian Northern railway has many important branches in the East, that road is essentially a western road. It is a western road in its inception, and most of its lines are in the West. I wish to place on record a strong hope and desire that, whoever the arbitrators may be who are appointed to do this work, at least one of them will be selected from Western Canada.

I wish to refer for a moment to some of the remarks made by the hon. member for Huntingdon (Mr. Robb) who certainly was not very familiar with the facts. If I understood the hon. gentleman aright, he said that he never knew additional railways to cause lower freight rates. There is one instance of that, and that is the Canadian Northern. Every one from Western Can-

ada knows that the building of the Canadian Northern in Western Canada had a very great deal to do with the lowering of the freight rates to farmers and others in that part of the country. He also referred to the telephone system of Manitoba. While that question may have nothing to do with the acquisition of the Canadian Northern railway, his facts were not correct in respect to that telephone system as he proved later on in his address. No other province in Canada to-day has a telephone system that is giving greater satisfaction than the telephone system of Manitoba. The hon. gentleman said that he was prepared to advocate increased freight rates for the reason that labour and everything else that enter into the carrying on of railways to-day cost more than they did a few years ago. He said that the telephone rates in Manitoba were higher to-day than they were a few years ago. That may be the case, but the citizens of Manitoba are to-day finding no fault with the bargain made by the Roblin Government in connection with the telephones of that province, and if it costs a little more to conduct the telephone system in that province to-day than it did five or six years ago, the reason is exactly the same as that given by the hon. member for Huntingdon why the freight rates should be increased, namely; that it costs more—and that is a question I need not elaborate—to run either freight trains or telephone systems to-day than it did a few years ago. I simply hope my request will not be overlooked, that one of those arbitrators may be selected from Western Canada.

Mr. SINCLAIR: This debate has lasted a considerable time, and we have not yet heard the last word on this question. I am somewhat surprised that we have heard so little from the opposite side of the House. There is a feeling that there is too much partisanship in Canada, and there is a revolt, I understand, against what is known as machine politics. I should suppose that we have never had a greater exhibition of what I would describe as machine politics than we have had in this House during this discussion. We are proposing by this measure practically to double, or more than double, the public debt of this country, and since three o'clock this afternoon—it is now after one a.m.—hon. gentlemen opposite have not responded at all to the challenges that have been thrown across the floor from this side of the House. They have practically been dumb in the