

date, I pass on, without expressing any opinion as to just what lines the Government should follow.

There are one or two other matters in the Address to which I would like to refer briefly. From the present situation in regard to Western railroads, and particularly the statement that an expert is to be sent up to Hudson Bay to examine and report, I should judge that the Hudson Bay Railway and the branch lines in the West are practically being knocked together, and that we may safely deal with them all on the basis of what may be called colonization railways.

In regard to this whole question I have never made any secret of my sympathy with the Northwest in the matter of branch railways. I think I once stated in this House my theory on this subject, that when a man settles on the land he must have transportation in some form, either by water or by rail, because if he has not, he dies or must leave the land. I further say that I object to a man having both water and rail transportation while part of the country has neither. In the same way I object to any part of the country having two railways while other parts have none.

Anyone who has read the history of the Canadian West must see that for the future we have to expect an almost annual expenditure, and a pretty substantial one, for railways there. One of the big railway men—I think it was Hill—in speaking of the Western States, said that a man should be able to get his wheat to his elevator without having to haul it farther than five miles. He added that in those rich wheat belts roads could be laid within ten miles of each other and run successfully from a financial point of view. I have just that feeling about our Northwest. We have to face the problem. The farmers are entitled to have roads. For the present, I think that if a man gets within fifteen miles of his elevator he can live, though it would be better for him if he were only ten miles from it, and better still if only five.

But I think we have been used a little bit unfairly by the West. I was speaking to a western man the other day, and he was complaining about our obstructing their branch roads. I replied: "It is partly your own fault, and you will have that trouble again unless you do one thing. You asked us in ten or fifteen cases for a Bill to construct a road from Point A to Point B, at a cost, in one instance, of \$5,500,000, without giving a single word of information about what there was at A or at B, or between A and B." I think that before being called upon to consider any of those branch roads we ought to have full

information laid before us. In the old country a petition states what land there is, and what people there are, at A and at B, and what lies between. Such information is available to the West. Further than that, we ought to have the assistance of the Railway Commission. It is one of the institutions of the country, having engineers and a whole staff. If a road is suggested to us, we ought to have from the Railway Board either yes or no as to whether it is justifiable or not. More than that, we must have some guarantee that all the roads will serve their own territory. They should be put under the control of Parliament. If a Government road is satisfactorily serving a certain territory, and making markets available to it, I would not allow the C.P.R. to come in on that territory. Vice versa, I would not allow the Government road to go on the territory of the other. Of course the time will come when we shall have more money and more people to the mile, and the problem I am now mentioning, of seeing that all parts of the country are provided with railway service, will not be so acute as it is to-day. I am quite willing to allow that clause in the Speech from the Throne to pass, with the qualification that before I vote for any of those roads I want to be fully informed with regard to them.

There are one or two other things that I might mention. There are the proposed measures for Farm Loans and Old Age Pensions. It is perhaps better not to say too much about those, because there is some suggestion that the Bills may be altogether different from what were laid before us at the last Session of Parliament, but I am prepared to meet both measures in a perfectly fair spirit, and give them the same fair treatment that they received from us last year.

Hon. Mr. CASGRAIN: Honourable gentlemen, I do not intend to take part in this debate. It has been intimated to us that time is very limited, and I hope that during the Session, perhaps some time in February, we shall have plenty of time to talk about these various things. I am sure that on that occasion we shall hear from the junior member for Ottawa (Right Hon. Sir George E. Foster), who will tell us all that the League of Nations has done.

But I rise on a question of urgency. I have not been very much in favour of having a representative of our own at Washington, but we have appointed His Excellency the Hon. Vincent Massey, and there is something for him to do, and do at once. If he succeeds, I for one will say that I was absolutely wrong in thinking we should not have a representative at Washington. Citizens of the United