

managements for the purpose of cutting out, in the first instance, any question of rivalry in building lines that neither can afford under the excuse of holding a territory here or a territory there, and if he will also take up with them the matter of duplication of services which really add nothing whatever to the travelling and shipping facilities of the people, I am confident that something can be done very much more to the advantage of overburdened taxpayers than building railways to beat out the Jones'.

Mr. MARLER: On account of this line being in the province of Quebec and in the vicinity of Montreal, I do not want this resolution to pass without my saying a few words relative thereto. This line is, as I understand the matter, for the purpose of connecting up the present line of the Canadian National at Grande Fresnière to Rinfret Junction, so that there will be a connection from the Tunnel station in Montreal directly into Laurentides. That is the object of the line. The Canadian Pacific running from Place Viger station practically parallels the line at Montfort. The two lines at Montfort, I should imagine are not more than half a mile apart.

Mr. ETHIER: At St. Jerome.

Mr. MARLER: I was saying that the distance between the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National at Montfort Junction is very small.

Mr. ETHIER: Montfort is about twenty-five miles ahead and to the northwest, but at St. Jerome, the lines are parallel for about two or three miles. The Canadian National goes northwest and the Canadian Pacific goes right through to the north.

Mr. MARLER: I quite understand that at the particular point the hon. member speaks about they are close together, and they could be joined up without difficulty. There could be a joint service out of Place Viger station, thus obviating the necessity of building this line at all. It may be perfectly true that the building of this line may give the Canadian National traffic. Many hundreds of people would go from the Tunnel terminal instead of the Place Viger station into this beautiful territory. I admit all that, but the only effect this will have is to take so much traffic from the Canadian Pacific and give it to the Canadian National. If we approach the question of building these branch lines with this object, I have no doubt for a moment that many of these branch lines are justified. I do not approach the question with that object in view at all. When the country is served properly by one railway, one is enough particularly when traffic arrangements can be made—and

they undoubtedly can be made—and if they cannot be made, we can pass laws in this parliament to ensure that they are made. If the Canadian Pacific will not make a joint arrangement, we can pass a law to make it do so. So far as I can see, this means simply taking traffic from one line and giving it to another line. As I said at the beginning, I did not want it to be supposed that because this line is in the province of Quebec and serves the city of Montreal, to a certain extent, I would therefore be in favour of it. In fact I oppose it.

Mr. LANCTOT: I was informed a few moments ago that the leader of the opposition, (Mr. Meighen) wanted to know where I was, as I did not happen to be in the chamber. I was called to the door for a few minutes but, as the right hon. gentleman will see, I am back again. I suppose he would like to know where I stand in relation to branch lines. I will tell him, because I am always willing to satisfy the hon. gentleman on questions relating to the railways. The leader of the opposition is the person who was instrumental in this country becoming the owners of nearly all the railways in Canada, and as I did not support him at that time I do not intend to endorse any of his views to-day. I have been asked on many occasions by my right hon. friend whether I had increased or reduced my price in this matter. During the campaign of 1921, it is true, in my county I told my constituents that I was ready to sell out the whole thing for a dollar. But when I so stated I included in that offer the outstanding guarantee by this government in connection with our purchase of all the railways in Canada, and that was more than a dollar. I understand that we have to meet certain liabilities in connection with the purchase of the Canadian Northern and the Grand Trunk and all other lines. This country still owes a considerable sum on the railways. I believe that some \$167,000,000 has been paid already on the Transcontinental line, and the Intercolonial railway has also been paid for. But the purchase of the Grand Trunk and the Canadian Northern still involves a heavy liability on the country. So that when I embraced all these liabilities in the offer I made, of one dollar for the whole thing, I think I was making rather a good bargain in the interests of the country. In my opinion the country would be better off if it could dispose of the railways. As regards branch lines, I do not intend to say anything, because it seems to me that the three parties are apparently willing to support public ownership of railways at the present time. I differ from them all.