

Schreiber has called in question some points in the report of Mr. Light, but in the subsequent report Mr. Light takes up these points and shows that not only by his own survey, but by reports of other engineers which are not questioned, Mr. Schreiber's criticism of his report is not well founded, and this reply, to my mind, defies contradiction. As to the length of the several lines there is not much difference. I think that the combination line, which unites all the advantages of a through line, which favors the interests of Quebec as well as the interests of Halifax and St. John, is 27 or 28 miles shorter than the one selected, while the grades are much more favorable. Mr. Light shows that in the line which has been selected by the Government there are grades which prevent it being a commercial route, and it cannot be used advantageously for the carrying of heavy freight. I know that the accuracy or value of Mr. Light's report has been questioned, but this House should bear in mind that Mr. Light cannot be accused of favoring any private interest. He has been employed by the Province of Quebec to examine this line in his capacity as engineer for the province, and his report, based upon figures which are proved to be correct by the reports of other engineers, forces us to the conclusion that he is right in his view. Now what is proposed to us by this Bill? It is to vote public money to build a short line which is objected to by competent engineers as not being the shortest line, and, moreover, as being a route which passes so near American cities that it will carry our trade to foreign shipping ports, giving them the profits which we should derive from our enormous expenditures upon the Pacific Railway. While we are pursuing a policy to develop our trade and build up our own cities, we are about to aid a line which will carry our trade to American seaports, and they will gain the principal benefit to be derived from our large expenditures. Under these circumstances I regret to say I am obliged to protest against this Bill. I sincerely believe that the policy to the Government is not in the interests of the country, and I trust that they will reconsider the matter. Of course I do not expect to create any conviction in the

minds of the majority of the House, but I understand the Bill is leaving to the Government a certain margin of discretion, and I hope even after the Bill is passed that they will reconsider this matter and ask themselves whether this is not a departure from their policy, and whether this appropriation should not be suspended until at least an instrumental survey shall be made.

HON. MR. BELLEROSE—I do not wish to detain the House on this Bill, but I should like to make one or two observations. I regret that the Bill, as it stands, is one which I cannot support. It contains some things which I consider are not in the interests of the country, and there is a part of it which is calculated to retard the development of the Dominion and to injure the prospects of the Lower Provinces. Some two years ago I voted against a bill which proposed to grant a company power to build a bridge over the St. Lawrence, west of Montreal. The reason which I gave for my vote on that occasion was that until our great highway would pay, I considered it was our duty, as the Parliament of Canada, to see that the trade of the west should not go to the United States but should be carried to Canadian sea ports, and consequently that we ought not to allow the St. Lawrence to be bridged west of Montreal. My opinions are the same to day. I believe that we ought not to allow the Canadian Pacific Railway to cross at Montreal and reach Halifax, St. John, or St. Andrews by passing as near to Portland as the proposed road will do. If the line mentioned in this Bill were the shortest possible route, I would say that it was a strong argument in favor of it, and that we must give the commerce of the country the shortest route to the sea-board. But I regret to say that my conviction is that that short line, improperly so-called, is not the shortest practicable route. My conviction is that a road to Montreal, to St. John and Halifax, by way of Quebec is the shortest. That is the conclusion to which I have come from reading the reports, and a letter of Mr Sullivan and another letter which I have seen to-day by a civil engineer of Halifax, and a letter from Mr. Smith and the opinions expressed by others.