

portant question has been treated by this Government; but also, I must add, by the late Government in some respects. The Government railways, which have cost the country a quarter of a billion dollars, have no terminals of their own. At Montreal they are at the mercy of the Grand Trunk, and at Quebec at the mercy of the Canadian Pacific. We can imagine what that must cost annually. At Quebec the Government purchased three miles of splendid deep-water frontage on the St. Lawrence front, between the Champlain market and Sillery, for the freight business of the Transcontinental, and it is admirably suited in every way for that purpose.

The Hon. the SPEAKER: I am afraid I must point out that the honourable gentleman is reading his speech.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: Not at all. I am not reading my speech.

The Hon. the SPEAKER: I would not have said a word about the matter but that my attention has been called to it.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: The same rule applies to everybody. Other honourable gentlemen have read their speeches from beginning to end, and in their own language.

Hon. Mr. DOMVILLE: His own colleague has read a speech.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE: I was saying that the Government purchased a splendid deep-water frontage on the St. Lawrence between the Champlain market and Sillery for the business of the Transcontinental, and it is very well adapted in every way for the purpose; yet they allow themselves to be induced by some unhappy influence to use the Canadian Pacific railway terminals and the very limited area of the Louise docks, where, as everybody in Quebec knows, there is not room enough to shunt a modern freight train. If more docks and elevators are to be built at Quebec it is to be hoped that they will be built on the property on the St. Lawrence front acquired by the Government for the purpose. But do the Government really intend to equip their railway with proper terminals at Quebec? The people of Quebec do not seem to think so, because the Mayor of Quebec some months ago wrote a formal protest to the Prime Minister, calling upon the Government to carry out its engagement with the city as to terminals, as made by a notarial agreement executed as far back as 1910.

Hon. Mr. CHOQUETTE.

Now, here is a quotation—not my own. It is a letter from the Mayor of Quebec to the Prime Minister dealing with all these matters which I am now bringing up. I have secured the best information, in order to be as accurate as possible in presenting these facts. I am not blaming this Government entirely for the situation, and am not saying that they have intentionally done anything against Quebec or any port in this country; but I want to emphasize that the statements which I am making are facts. If the views of the honourable gentleman from the Gulf division are wrong, I might say something on the subject myself; but my statements would not carry as much weight, so far as the public or the Government are concerned, as the authority of the Mayor of Quebec, supported by the city council, or the authority of the Board of Trade, acting on the recommendation of its president. Letters have been exchanged between the Mayor of Quebec and the Government, and between the Board of Trade and the Government, but nothing has been done in the matter. The letter of the Mayor of Quebec is as follows:

[Translation.]

Quebec, June 20, 1917.

To the Right Honourable

Sir Robert Borden,
Prime Minister of Canada.

Dear Sir,

I have the honour to enclose copy of a letter addressed by the Hon. F. Cochrane, Minister of Railways, to Sir George Foster, in reply to a telegram received from the Quebec Board of Trade, and which states "that the Railways Department does not at present need shops for the Transcontinental railway at Quebec, since those in operation at Moncton, Rivière du Loup and Transcona are adequate for the work to be done, and that on account of our heavy financial burdens the minister does not see the necessity of incurring the expense of equipping railway shops at Quebec until they become absolutely necessary."

I respectfully submit that this decision of the honourable the Minister of Railways has made a painful impression on the citizens of Quebec, who are fully convinced that they have vested rights in this matter which cannot be ignored.

In the first place the city of Quebec has contributed largely towards the Transcontinental railway, while no other city in Canada has been called upon to do anything in the same direction.

For a nominal sum we turned over to the Transcontinental the Champlain market property, the most valuable ground on the river front of the city, covering a space of 282,000 feet and worth, judging by adjacent property, from \$5 to \$9 per square foot, or over \$1,400,000. We permitted the destruction by the Government of the biggest market in the city, the Champlain market, the building of which alone was worth at least \$250,000, in order to allow of the land being used for the purposes of the Transcontinental.