

authority either to re-vote the moneys or to refuse to re-vote them, and likewise to exercise the closest scrutiny of the application of all such supplies. If the Bill which is before us to-night is passed it will of course be followed by the Bill to which I have referred—an auxiliary measure which will complete the transfer to the Canadian National Railway Board, for the next three years, of power to deal with this enormous sum of money, and this power the Board will exercise without regard to the voice of Parliament.

The question is, what should Parliament do with this Bill? I fully appreciate the responsibility which rests upon us in revising measures of this character and perhaps in going to the extremity of refusing to pass them; but it seems to me it is the duty of the Government to submit to this Chamber measures which will appeal to the judgment of the House as embodying sane legislation, and to furnish this House with full information as to the necessity of proceeding with undertakings of this character. I doubt that any honourable gentleman will controvert the position taken by us. We should be recreant to our duty if we accepted such measures as this without having an opportunity to exercise our judgment on the fullest information available, and without being convinced of the necessity of the undertaking. We must also take into consideration the unfortunate position in which Canada stands to-day as to her public indebtedness and the load of taxation which we are bearing.

My honourable friend is fully aware of the extraordinary character of this measure. In view of its extraordinary nature the Government, anxious as it is to proceed with those branches, ought to be ready to adopt the practice which Parliament has followed for the last generation or more, by placing in the estimates specific information regarding each road. Thus Parliament would have an opportunity to determine whether or not the moneys should be voted for the purposes indicated, and could also exercise supervision over expenditures.

Therefore, honourable gentlemen, I express my disapproval of a measure of this kind and of the failure of the Government to fulfil its obligation towards this Chamber and the people of Canada by neglecting to furnish us with the necessary information regarding so stupendous an undertaking, involving an expenditure of \$100,000,000. In view of Canada's inability to meet so huge an expenditure, I see no alternative but to urge upon my honourable friend that this Bill should be withdrawn and that the Government at next Session furnish the necessary information to warrant Parliament

in assuming responsibility for the proposed undertaking. If my honourable friend does not see his way to furnish this Chamber with the information to which we are entitled, then, it seems to me, only one course is open to the Senate of Canada, and that is to reject this measure. I therefore, honourable gentlemen, move that the Bill be not now read a second time, but that it be read a second time this day six months.

Hon. F. L. BEIQUÉ: I feel, honourable gentlemen, that for my part I should not give a silent vote on the motion which has been made. We have been told that Government operation of railways was an experiment, and that within a year or two, or perhaps three years, it would be ascertained whether or not it would be possible to continue it. That led me to expect that the country would not be committed to a further expenditure for the building of new lines and the extension of a railway which already has taken on a great magnitude.

I am surprised at the way in which this Bill has been treated by both sides in the other House. One would have expected that a Bill of this importance, involving an acknowledged expenditure of \$28,000,000—an amount which may be doubled if the experience of the past is followed—would have been carefully inquired into to ascertain in every case the necessity of building these lines. This Bill, for reasons that I cannot understand, seems to have been treated as a kind of necessity; but on reading the Debates of the House of Commons one is unable to find any satisfactory information in support of the present measure.

I believe that the time has come when this House should assert its power and its right to deal with matters of this kind—and to deal with them in an energetic manner. I think that no building of railways of this kind should be continued without proper information being furnished to this House, and furnished in proper time. I quite agree with the leader of the other side of the House that this Bill is coming too late—that it is not on the eve of prorogation that a Bill of this kind should be sent to this House; and I believe if it is sent again this House will affirm its right and will do its duty by referring the Bill to the Committee on Railways, Telegraphs and Harbours, where it will be possible to inquire fully into the necessity and advisability of building any number of miles of railway which may be suggested. This country has been brought to the brink of bankruptcy by the building of too many railways—railways which are