

could come down to the House with a proposition which would be fatal to the existence of confederation. A reference to public documents, however, had convinced him that the true object of the Administration must have been to destroy all present hope of a Union on reasonable and prudent terms. His reason for this conclusion was that the Department which was naturally charged with the conduct of negotiations on this subject was under the control of a gentleman who had, some time ago, in a letter to the public of Canada, used expressions, which in him (Mr. Blake) would have been called treason, and he could not but think that the preposterous proposition of the Government with respect to the Pacific Railway, was specially framed to defeat a Union with British Columbia.

These observations were made by Mr. Howe, when he was about to assume the position of Secretary of State. These being his expounded views, written in a deliberate letter, who could wonder that he was a party to bringing down a measure so iniquitous that the House could not help rejecting it. No wonder then that Governor Musgrave should have stated publicly that he was amazed at the concessions granted by the Canadian Government. Were not hon. members justified then, in asking for further information before taking this irrevocable step. If this measure should become law, the faith of the Dominion would be blighted and without the consent of British Columbia could never break one jot or tittle these cast-iron obligations. But the hon. Minister of Militia did not propose to increase the taxation of the country. Let him then put it in the bargain with British Columbia that no future misunderstandings might arise in the fulfillment of our pledge. Hon. members opposite had stated that they were willing to give 60,000,000 acres of land to aid the railway, and to pay off the interest on the debt incurred by the railway by the sale of lands in the North West. The Ontario Government had found it advisable to make free grants of their

lands to settlers, instead of making a revenue from them, and the Dominion Government would find it no less difficult to derive a revenue from lands in the North West.

He (Mr. Blake) called upon every member in this House to consider whether he was not betraying the interests of the Dominion in ratifying this bargain which the administration of the day had made. The fixed date of commencement and completion of the railway were dead weights on the enterprise under which the country was already staggering. They enhanced the difficulty of the undertaking. Could any country expect more than a promise to build this railway as soon as possible? Could British Columbia expect more from this Dominion? He was an advocate of Union, but under such terms as these, he considered it his duty to oppose it. He did not blame British Columbia for these unjust stipulations, but he blamed this Government for having stultified themselves by making such proposals. No solid argument could be brought against the view that the terms proposed by British Columbia and to which the colony was content to submit, should have been accepted by the Dominion Government. The amendment of the hon. member for Lambton was not in opposition to the union. The Opposition did not oppose the scheme but the unjust terms by which it was accompanied, and he could not see how any lover of his country should hesitate as to what course to take with respect to this measure.

After a short discussion as to whether the debate should be adjourned or continued,

Mr. BOLTON rose to explain his position with respect to this measure, and opposed the Ministerial scheme.

The debate was adjourned, and the House rose at midnight.