

March 29, 1871

it was known that when the Ottawa and St. Lawrence had been navigable, that canal had fallen into comparative disuse, and it should be considered whether the amount annually expended could not be saved. The opening of the Upper Ottawa would conduce more than anything to developing and improving the country, and was sorry the Government had gone no further than propose to improve a few local works, as he thought they ought to be able to initiate a distinct policy on the subject, making the present appropriations a mere commencement of an ultimate plan.

Hon. Mr. LANGEVIN stated that the works being now undertaken were really only part of the plan proposed by the Commissioners.

Mr. MACKENZIE was glad such was the case, and he asked the serious attention of the Government to what he had indicated as to the want of accommodation at Montreal. Those engaged in developing the mineral resources of the West were daily complaining on this subject.

Hon. Sir FRANCIS HINCKS said the defective arrangements at Montreal certainly deserved consideration. He referred to the Lake Ste. Marie Canal, and admitting its importance, he thought that, considering the present negotiations at Washington, a plan to construct that work would really be a doubtful policy. He read an extract from the papers before the House, being a minority report from Mr. Laidlaw, showing that as the recommendation of the Commission was that the canal should be built on the same plan as the Welland Canal, it would not be large enough for the vessels passing through the American Canal, that no tolls would be obtained, and would not be of the slightest possible use except in case of war. Of course the Government had not adopted this view, but they thought it inadvisable to proceed with the work at present.

Mr. MACKENZIE said that such were the facilities for constructing the Canadian Canal that if it were built it would be used at once to its utmost capacity, and he regarded Mr. Laidlaw's report as most puerile.

Mr. WORKMAN spoke of the want of accommodation at Montreal, and explained the way in which the Harbour was worked, and he was sure that the Harbour Commissioners had done everything that could be expected of them. As to the petroleum, the absence of shipments arose from the transfer of the article itself, but as regarded the staple products of the country, matters were conducted more cheaply, more efficiently and more expeditiously than at any other port on the continent, and he had heard many captains of vessels testify to such being the case. Of course he would not object to Government aid but certainly he would not ask for it.

Mr. RYAN (Montreal West) thanked the member for Lambton for having drawn attention to the matter, but could not agree with

his colleague from Montreal. The Harbour Commissioners might have done what they could, but if that body were differently constituted, very much more might have been done.

The Committee rose, reported progress, and asked leave to sit again.

It being six o'clock the House rose.

AFTER RECESS

FREDERICTON AND ST. MARY'S BRIDGE

The Act incorporating the Fredericton and St. Mary's Bridge Company was passed through Committee, **Hon. Mr. GRAY** in the Chair.

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THE BRITISH COLUMBIA DEBATE

Hon. Sir GEORGE-É. CARTIER moved the resumption of the adjourned debate on the proposed motion that the Speaker do leave the chair, for the House to go into committee of the whole to consider certain resolutions respecting the admission of British Columbia into union with Canada, and the motion of Mr. Mackenzie in amendment thereto.

Carried.

Hon. Mr. GRAY resumed the debate. He said that it mattered little how this House might regard the measure unless they were backed up by public opinion, and that opinion was greatly affected by statements made in this House. The measure should be viewed by the light of the ledger, in the practical light of the present day, rather than in the light of the past. This House should regard it too, in the light of the experience of the neighboring Republic, and see how we might profit by it. As had been observed by the hon. member for Sherbrooke, there were two precautions to be taken. The constitution was in no way to be infringed and the Dominion was not to incur a financial burden too heavy to be borne. In this view, he believed every member in the House concurred. And first, with regard to the objection urged against the representation of British Columbia that it was too large, he would say that the British North America Act did not limit representation to the white population but even if it were so limited, the number of representatives under the circumstances of that Colony was not too great. When the Manitoba Act was passed last session exception was taken in the debate to the representation given to the new Province, but the reply was that the expected increase in the population would, *within a very short period*, be proportionate