

the federated provinces. It was to open up channels for the trade of the east. That was the first reason for the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The later and perhaps the most cogent reason was that it was absolutely imperative, if faith was to be kept with British Columbia, that a railway should be built across the continent. A contract was made by the Dominion government with the Canadian Pacific Railway and the consideration on the part of Canada included a grant of money, a grant of land and exemption from taxation. The Northwest Territories are to-day paying their share of the interest on that money grant so we will wipe that question away. However in addition to that which is imposed on them in common with the rest of Canada they are contributing a land grant not only for that portion of the line which was built in the Territories, but also for that portion which was built in British Columbia and for a part of the line which was built in Ontario and in Manitoba. Now, Sir, that is a great burden upon the country. The result of it is that millions of money which have been made in that country and which should be kept in the country to develop its resources are being sent out in payment for the lands. We have claimed compensation in the draft Bill for such lands as were alienated by the Dominion government for purely Dominion purposes. Our demand in that respect has apparently not received consideration and all I desire at this moment is simply to mention the fact and to enter my protest because it has not been considered.

To turn to the third consideration for the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. The exemption from taxation is a very unjust burden and it falls entirely on the shoulders of the new provinces. It is an unjust burden which was incurred for the benefit of the whole of Canada, and the Dominion should relieve us from it. The Dominion parliament made the contract and incurred the obligation. There was no provincial legislature at the time; if there had been one in existence I do not suppose it would have been possible that such a contract would have been made. A very strong point was made in the argument which accompanied the draft Bill in this respect. It was urged in the strongest terms that this unjust burden should be removed from the shoulders of the new provinces. In the teeth of this protest we find that it is actually proposed in this Bill to rivet the burden on the new provinces as part of their constitution. I can see no possible reason for such action as that, and I enter against it my strongest protest. I hope that when this Bill comes to the committee stage the government will see fit to withdraw that particular clause. When this exemption was being discussed in parliament some two or three years ago,

and when the leader of the opposition made a proposal that certain steps should be taken which would remove this burden from the Territories and place it where it properly belonged, the Prime Minister, at all events by implication, gave some sort of hope to the Territories, when he used this language:

All this shows how absolutely essential it is that the question should be referred to the courts; that we should have an authoritative decision as to the meaning of the law before we can take any public action in the way of giving relief to the settlers of the Northwest Territories.

The right hon. gentleman evidently admits here that the settlers of the Northwest had a case in asking for relief. I recall that statement to his mind, and trust that he will give it serious consideration. We have also a statement made by the member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Scott) on the 20th of October, 1903, when he said:

Let me say that in face of the position of this Canadian Pacific Railway tax matter, in view of the millions of acres of land that are involved and the millions in value of railway property of the company that are involved, it appears to me that the people of the Northwest would be simply crazy at present to accept autonomy unless driven to it as a last resort.

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Such being the case, I certainly approve of delay until all doubt about the Canadian Pacific Railway tax exemption has been removed.

That was the opinion of the member for West Assiniboia (Mr. Scott) not so very long ago, and yet we are to-day told in triumphant tones that the seven Liberal members from the Northwest are behind the government in support of this Bill.

Let me deal for a moment with the question of the public domain. The Bill proposes that the lands, mines and minerals and timbers are to be retained by the Dominion government and not placed under the jurisdiction of the new provinces. If gentlemen on the other side of the House have their will in respect to this Bill, that is what will occur. Well, Sir, we claim that we have just as much right as any other province in the Dominion of Canada to the full possession of our lands. I was very glad to see that the Prime Minister had dropped the old stock argument that Canada had purchased the Northwest Territories, and therefore that the federal authority could deal with these Territories just as it liked. There were very cogent reasons for the right hon. gentleman dropping that argument, but I was surprised to hear the Solicitor General revive it and in doing so he must have been oblivious to some circumstances which have occurred within the last few years. In reply to the Solicitor General's statement that the acquirement of the Northwest Territories had not been profitable to the Dom-