

friend also, to the knowledge of all, that the people of British Columbia have been asking for years. Now, when a company comes forward which claims that it is able to give this communication, which asks permission to do so, which apparently is able to do so, has the power to do so, has all the necessary resources; under such circumstances, I would not take it upon myself to deny this advantage to the people of British Columbia, or even to retard the consummation of what they have desired for so long a time. This communication, I consider, is not only necessary to them, but absolutely essential to their welfare and development. It is indispensable to the welfare of British Columbia that there should be communication between the cities of the coast, Vancouver and Victoria, and the mining section in the Kootenay district. They have long been waiting for it, they have now an opportunity of getting it; and I would not take it upon myself even to retard for a moment the consummation of their earnest desire. Now, I agree with my hon. friend that this railway should be built on Canadian territory. Well, it is provided by this Bill, as it has come from the Railway Committee, that the Governor in Council shall be entrusted with the power and duty of seeing that it is kept upon Canadian territory, and not allowed to go out of Canadian territory except for adequate reasons.

Mr. SAM. HUGHES. Has the Prime Minister considered the fact that this road merely runs along inside the Canadian boundary line, and when it comes to a convenient point it crosses back into American territory; and from opposite that point branch lines, which will be found to be five or six times as long as the main line in Canada, will be run up in order to tap the mining districts of British Columbia and feed American cities?

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I do not know a single road built or projected on Canadian territory which is not tapped by the Americans. Let this railway be built on Canadian territory by all means, but this railway does not serve its purpose if it is denied access to American territory. Why, Sir, all our railways are tapped by American railways. The hon. gentleman stated a moment ago that this territory in British Columbia was already tapped at several different places by American railways. Possibly it is. But let me ask if there is any part of the Canadian frontier between the Pacific ocean and the River St. Lawrence which is not tapped at almost every mile by American railways? The necessities of the case require it. We built a road a few years ago, the Crow's Nest Pass Railway, a very useful road; but when that road was completed, one of the very first things it did was to obtain communication with the American side. The American traffic forms a valuable part of the traffic of the Crow's Nest Pass Railway,

and this American connection increases the value of the business which it has developed in the mining districts. So I say: Put this road on Canadian territory by all means. But I repeat what I said a moment ago, that the powers which are vested in the Governor in Council are ample, and the Governor in Council will exercise those powers in order to keep it, if possible, on Canadian territory, and it is only allowed to be diverted when that is necessary in order to avoid great difficulties of construction. For these reasons, the government have come to the conclusion not to accept the amendment.

Mr. R. L. BORDEN. I understood the right hon. gentleman to suggest that clause 3a, proposed by my hon. friend from North Toronto (Mr. Foster), is similar in some aspects to clause 3 of the Bill. The remark I made a moment before was in view of what I understood to be another comparison, namely, that between section 7 of the Bill as it now stands and the section proposed by the member for North Toronto. But if there is, as the Prime Minister says, very little difference between section 3a, now proposed to be added by way of amendment, and section 3, why, after all, is it likely that the proposed amendment would have any greater effect in retarding the construction than section 3 as it now stands? It seems to me to impose more responsibility upon the government. But I do not quite follow that portion of the right hon. gentleman's argument which indicated that there would be greater danger of unduly retarding the road.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER. I do not know that there would be much danger if we accepted either draft. I speak under correction, but in my judgment I do not see much difference between the first part of the amendment suggested by the member for North Toronto and the present drafting. At all events, we have the Bill as it has been considered by the Railway Committee, and I always hesitate to alter in any way the drafting adopted by that committee. My hon. friend, who has experience in these matters, knows that it is always an invidious task to amend a Bill under such circumstances. You may correct an error which any one thinks he sees in it, but after this Bill has been considered by the Railway Committee, I see no reason to depart from its finding.

Mr. LENNOX. As the Prime Minister says, it is a delicate matter to amend a Bill coming from the Railway Committee. The Railway Committee has already amended this Bill, and would have amended it further had it not been, as suggested by the Minister of Finance, that it might be better to leave it until the policy of the government had been ascertained. The Minister of Finance evidently regarded it as an important matter at that time; the Minister of