

should be aided by the surplus money, but he denied that the country was bound to consider this question in the light in which he put it, as if the surplus was a windfall. As the people had paid this large sum into the Treasury let it be given them back, and the question could not be dealt with in part. Holding the view that the surplus was the produce of the taxes of the people and to which all had contributed in proportion to their means, it ought to be disposed of as nearly as may be in the same manner as it would have been had the taxes not been paid, namely by restoring it to the people of the country, but at the same time, in so far as it was possible, its restoration should be accompanied with as much benefit to new undertakings of public enterprise which were worthy of encouragement. He agreed with the Attorney-General that the Municipal Loan Fund was a question difficult of solution, and he (the speaker) proposed no general scheme for its settlement. There was no reason for declining to do justice in the case of certain municipalities against which there were no claims. We ought to consider what public improvements in the remote sections of the country it would be fit to expend the public money upon, but at the same time do general justice to the whole country, remembering that the surplus was produced out of the pockets of the province. The House might afterwards if it saw fit supplement the general distribution by the required sum necessary in the case of public improvements requiring special aid. He thought that population should be taken into account in dealing with the surplus—that there should be a general redistribution of the money first of all and that afterwards it might be supplemented by whatever special aids in the public interest were required. In the case of municipalities which were owing the Municipal Loan Fund the money granted to them should be applied in payment of their arrearages. He therefore felt called upon to move, seconded by Mr. McKellar:

“That all the words after ‘that’ be omitted and the following substituted therefor:—‘This House feels bound to express its conviction that the country will have just grounds for dissatisfaction unless some plan is adopted whereby, while making all just and necessary provisions in aid of railways and other public improvements of provincial interest in the thinly settled and the unprovided districts, a large part of the available surplus should be apportioned according to population, and expended in such way as each of the counties, cities and separate towns shall, as to its own allotment designate, in aid of railways or other permanent public improvements affecting the localities, or towards the exemption of municipal obligations already contracted for such purposes; due precaution being taken for the proper application of the money, and provision being made that the allotment to any municipality indebted to the Municipal Loan Fund should be applied on equitable terms towards the satisfaction of what may be found due by the Municipality or an adjustment of the Municipal Loan indebtedness.’”

Hon. Mr. WOOD in reply to the previous speaker said that the object of the Government was to hold out inducements to parties to build lines of railways running from north to south, or south to north, which would act as feeders to the great lines on the frontier, the welfare of which was of vital importance to the province. The proper and only way was to leave free the human will and enterprise, and allow parties to construct great public improvements, which, when found to be of general benefit and worthy of encouragement, might be aided by grants of money, so that in time the country would be thoroughly intersected with lines of railway. There was no vagueness about the resolutions. In them was contained the general principle that those lines of railway, be they many or be they few, which shall lead to the back waters of the country, or the frontier lakes, they shall be aided; if their direction was transverse or oblique they shall receive support. The hon. member for South Bruce said that he considered that there was a great inequality in the amounts per mile proposed to be granted to railways. Now the aim of the Attorney-General was easily to be seen. He considered that in old settled counties where the people were better able to contribute to railways than those in newer districts, and, therefore, they would be entitled to less per mile for the railways passing through them. The hon. member for South Bruce was also mistaken when he said that the Government would leave out of account many public improvements which were inaugurated before a certain date. The fact was that most of these came within the purview and meaning of the act, and would be entitled to aid. The assertion that the surplus should be handed back to the municipalities and distributed among the assessed, was a ridiculous one, since it would send the money to the rich man only at the expense of the poor people; and he (the speaker) held that every man who drove a plough or consumed tea, tobacco or other taxable articles, paid as much in proportion to the surplus fund as the hon. member for South Bruce, although he might have paid into it thousands of dollars. The Government intended, when dealing with the Municipal Loan Fund, while doing justice to those municipalities indebted to that fund, to mete out equal justice to all. The hon. gentleman concluded amid loud cheers by referring to the proud rank which the country would take before long, and said that if the people were to be educated to self-reliance, money should never be given them to use for local purposes. He trusted that such a use would be made of the surplus that it would leave a monument behind to mark the first years in the history of Ontario.

Hon. Mr. CAMERON said that the hon. member for South Bruce in his resolutions took two positions—one of which was that the Government, as far as its resolutions went, was right in proposing to aid railway enterprises, which he admitted had been of vast benefit to the country during the past and that there was room for more enterprises of a similar character. The other

position he assumed was that the Government in their resolutions had not gone far enough. He (the speaker) must say that the statesmanship of the hon. member for South Bruce was of a very strange character when he proposed to take away the very functions of government from the rightful authorities and derogate them to municipalities. He was assured that the House would never consent to such a course and say in effect that the people should be coerced to have the money taken out of one pocket and put it in the other.

Mr. CRAIG (Glengarry) referred to the fact that when he had a resolution before the House in principle somewhat similar to the amendment proposed now by the hon. member for Bruce, not one single member of the Opposition opened his lips in favour of it, and what support he received was from hon. gentlemen on the Ministerial side of the House. Now that the Attorney-General had declared that he was willing to deal with the Municipal Loan Fund and that that fund would be distributed equally over the province, the opposition were found antagonistic to the very principle they had previously affirmed. He had been told he dare not vote with the Government on their railway resolutions; but he represented a people of common sense and would vote against the amendment, with the full conviction that his action would be cordially endorsed by his constituents.

Mr. McKELLAR spoke in favor of the amendment and said that they were in the shape of a premium offered to the people to support the Government, in order that they might obtain railway grants.

Mr. McCALL (Norfolk) felt called upon, in the interests of the people along the line of the Great Western railway, to vote against the resolutions, which did not do justice to a large portion of the inhabitants of the country.

Mr. GOW spoke strongly against the resolutions and saw no reason why the five gentlemen composing the Government had not devised some scheme for the settlement of the Municipal Loan Fund. The Government should go further than their resolutions indicated and allow all the people who had contributed to the surplus to enjoy the benefits of the distribution.

Mr. CUMBERLAND said that the time had not long passed when the opposition had declared that there could be no surplus; but now that there was—and a large one at that—and a great scheme was devised to distribute it for the general welfare, they saw fit to attribute unworthy motives to the “five men,” as the Government had been somewhat cavalierly designated by an hon. member. The history of the Municipal Loan Fund showed on its records constituencies that had been recklessly extravagant, and these same extravagant people were to receive, according to the proposition of the member for Bruce, head for head and dollar for dollar, with others who were not indebted to the Province, their share of the surplus.

Mr. BOYD argued in favour of the amendment, and while admitting that railways should be encouraged, said that their construction should be part of the whole of the general scheme—population being the basis upon which the money was to be distributed. No scheme would be acceptable to the country which did not do equal justice to all, seeing that every one in the province had contributed to form the surplus.

Mr. PAXTON said that he represented a county which was deeply interested in railway enterprises, and the Government scheme would certainly not be favourably received there, since it proposed to do but partial justice. Why should not those sections of country which had carried through large public enterprises receive aid equally with those which were about to undertake them. The best way to deal with the surplus was that indicated in the amendment before the House and allow the municipalities the benefit of the surplus money which was to be distributed.

Mr. SINCLAIR also spoke against the Government resolutions, which he said were so vaguely worded that it was impossible for hon. members to have any guarantee that the money would be properly used, nor did he know whether or not his county would be fairly dealt with under the scheme. Before consenting to any appropriations the House ought to understand all about them; and if it could be shown that Bruce and other counties would receive their fair share of money in forwarding their railway enterprises, he would vote for the scheme. There should be no “log-rolling” indulged in, but all parts of the province should receive even-handed justice. Entertaining these views he was prepared to support the amendment of the member for Bruce.

Mr. CURRIE said that he had never been strongly in favour of granting large additional aid should be given in aid of the educational interests of the country. The hon. member for North Bruce, he said, had deprecated what he termed “axe-grinding,” while in the same breath almost he made a bid for his own county, and said that if it could be shown that it would receive its fair share of the surplus money he would vote for the scheme. The House had been told by three members of the Government that they would devise a plan by next session to deal with the Municipal Loan Fund, and the scheme might with profit be delayed till then, though he did not think that any municipality should be relieved of its debt.

Mr. BEATTY said that a great deal of misunderstanding seemed to exist as to the intentions of the Government in the present matter. He saw no use in delaying the scheme of aiding railways because there were older portions of the county would receive a share of the subsidy, or until the Municipal Loan Fund was settled. Why delay a matter of justice and one which was generally asked for. The effect of delay would be to retard the progress of public works, and aid to railways would be postponed at least for another year. He represented a county that had no direct

interest in railways that were likely to receive a subsidy, yet the narrow policy proposed to-night would if established retard the progress of public improvements in all sections of the province. In the interests of the country he felt called upon to vote for the resolutions introduced by the Attorney-General, and he was willing to go among his constituents and tell them that he had thorough confidence in entrusting a portion of the surplus money to the Government to deal with it as they proposed by the resolutions.

Mr. OLIVER spoke against the resolutions, which he did not think would satisfy the country generally.

Mr. RYKERT could not altogether agree with the position taken by the Government in the present question, as he considered that it was unwise to bring down a surplus scheme on the eve of a general election. He could not support the amendment, and he must say that he could but reluctantly give his vote in favour of the resolutions, since he thought that as the Ministry had seen fit to bring in a measure they should have developed their whole policy. If the hon. member for South Bruce had brought in his amendment to the effect that the question of the disposal of the surplus should be delayed for a year or until after the elections, when it could be dealt with more satisfactorily. He thought that the older portions of the country which had pledged their credit and spent large sums of money in aid of public improvements, should be entitled to the first consideration of the Government, but they should not be dealt with on the basis of population but according to the amount of the undertakings they had fostered.

Mr. TROW spoke against the resolutions, which he did not think were fair in spirit to the older sections of the country.

Mr. MONTEITH cordially supported the Government plan of encouraging the opening up and settlement of the northern part of the province and would therefore give his vote in favour of the resolutions.

A division was then taken on Mr. Blake's amendment, which was lost on the following division:—

YEAS.—Messrs. Baxter, Blake, Boyd, Christie, Clemens, Cook, Crosby, Finlayson, Fraser, Gow, McDougall, McKellar, McKim, McLeod, McMurrick, Oliver, Pardee, Paxton, Perry, Sexton, Sinclair, Smith, (Middlesex), Springer, Trow and Williams, —25.

NAYS.—Messrs. Anderson, Beatty, Boulter, Calvin, Cameron, Carling, (London), Carling, (Huron), Carnegie, Cockburn, Code, Colquhoun, Corby, Coyne, Craig, (Glengarry), Craig, (Russell), Cumberland, Currie, Evans, Eyre, Ferguson, Ferrier, Fitzsimmons, Galbraith, Graham, (Hastings), Grabame, (York), Hooper, Lauder, Lount, Lyon, Macdonald, McCall, (Elgin), McGill, Matchett, Monteith, Murray, Read, Richards, Rykert, Scott, (Grey), Scott, (Ottawa) Secord, Smith, (Kent), Smith, (Leeds and Grenville), Strange, Swinerton, Tett, Wallis, Wigle, Williams (Durham), Wilson and Wood—57.

The House went into committee of the whole on the resolutions—Mr. Lyon in the chair—which were adopted; and the House adjourned at 12:30 a. m.