

less money than the one proposed, and if the cable from New Zealand was adopted it might be taken to Fiji, and the New Zealand Government might then say that they would rather not touch French territory, and they might take a short cut with it to connect with the nearest point in the Pacific, so as to escape New Caledonia. I agree with the resolution, and neither the mover of the resolution nor the representatives of the other colonies will commit themselves, by supporting it, to any proposal to have a line from Queensland to New Caledonia. It is merely an expression of opinion which may hold out some inducement to a company to lay down a line of cable, and it will not interfere with us should a Conference of the Governments subsequently decide upon a better plan than that partly agreed upon by Queensland, by way of New Caledonia. All we have to do now is to recognise the advantage of having a second cable by way of the Pacific and Vancouver. I should be no party to making San Francisco a terminus. If we are to have a second cable at all, it should be by way of Vancouver, and through Canadian territory. On that point I do not think there are two views on the question. I have very much pleasure in supporting the resolution.

The HON. J. G. WARD (N.Z.): I think it as well to refute one or two of the arguments put forth in connection with this matter, or to endeavour to do so. I take first the two points on which the President especially takes exception to the proposal for the cable *viâ* New Zealand. They were, the increased distance by taking the cable *viâ* New Zealand as against New Caledonia, and the going through British territory or otherwise. You ask if a cable company would put down an extra distance of 1,945 miles of cable for nothing? Of course the answer to that is that no cable company would dream of putting down an extra length of 1,945 miles of cable for nothing, but no one proposes that they should get no return for the extra 1,945 miles of cable. New Zealand, as a colony, would stand in proportionately in the guarantee for such a cable; but if you do not take it *viâ* New Zealand, you cannot reasonably claim that that colony should stand in in the guarantee.

The PRESIDENT: What will you pay? Will you pay the interest on the extra cost of £588,000?

The HON. J. G. WARD: The future details would require to be carefully considered. Again, it would be an advantage to have the cable *viâ* New Zealand, as it is recognised by experts that the bottom for the existing cables is not the best that could be found between the colonies, and it is also admitted that a very much better place for putting it would be from Queensland to some place in New Zealand. The argument of Mr. Todd, as to the length of life of a cable, is also in favour of what I have proposed. If we are discussing and contemplating the desirability of having a Pacific cable, why not commence straight and lay the cable between the colonies in the right place? New Zealand will stand in, and bear its proportion of the cost of this cable. The President said that from 1861 to 1875 all the business was done through Java; but that was not a good argument in favour of taking the line through French territory. It would go through British territory by the route I have named.

Mr. C. TODD: The Red Sea and Mediterranean cable passes through only one foreign territory.

The HON. J. G. WARD: The route I propose is much clearer, as far as British territory is concerned, than any other.

The HON. A. WYNNE: We do not bind ourselves to any particular route by this resolution.

The HON. J. G. WARD: What I want to say is this: I do not agree with the President in saying there is anything like an ordinary comparison between the position of our cable service *via* Java and the service *via* New Caledonia. English races all over the world generally will regard a line taken through French territory, and passing through French hands, with a certain amount of disfavour. I take no exception to Queensland, or any colony supporting or guaranteeing this cable; that is their concern. The point is not so much whether the cable would or would not be cut in time of war, but what would occur at such a time would be this: That the British people would have to pass their cable messages through the hands of French officials, and I do not think they would be disposed to do that. If we can get a cable independently of this one, through British territory, we ought to do so. I do not want to allow Mr. Todd to place on record a financial statement which, I think, with all due deference to him, is somewhat misleading. I think I will be able to convince him that he was wrong in his premises and wrong in some of his deductions. For instance, he stated that the length of the cable would be 8,000 miles.

Mr. C. TODD: That is the length stated by the promoters.

The HON. J. G. WARD: The length, allowing for 7 per cent. of slack wire, is about 7,390 miles. He was wrong there to start with. Then the amount which he stated as the cost of the cable, £2,000,000, is £500,000 in excess of the estimate.

Mr. C. TODD: I only gave the promoters' own figures.

The HON. J. G. WARD: We should not mislead ourselves, and I assure him that he is wrong. Then we come to the revenue and the loss. He made a revenue of £97,500, and a loss of £77,500, and then indicated the proportion which each of the colonies would have to pay so as to make up the guarantee of £50,000. When putting the colonies in the position of subscribers to this guarantee, why not have given us—which would only have been a fair and rational thing—the amounts which Suva, Fiji, the Sandwich Islands, and Vancouver would have to guarantee before arriving at the loss? Because it is a matter of record that the Hawaiian Government have already agreed to subscribe £5,000.

Mr. C. TODD: The guarantee, first of all, was £100,000. I reduced it to £80,000, and if the Australian colonies guarantee £50,000, that leaves £30,000 for the United Kingdom, Canada, and the other places you mention.

ADJOURNMENT.