

and not one dollar can be paid out without Parliamentary authority. I believe in Parliamentary control of the people's money and for that reason intend to vote for the amendment.

Mr. I. E. PEDLOW (Renfrew South): There still seems to be a misunderstanding, even in the minds of several members of the Government including the Acting Prime Minister, in regard to the subject under discussion. As I read the measure I find that the Government already owns the railways for whose management we are endeavouring to draft rules and regulations. For instance, the preamble states:

Whereas His Majesty on behalf of the Dominion of Canada has acquired control of the Canadian Northern Railway Company—

Not that the Government is about to acquire the railway, but that it has acquired it.

—and of the various constituent and subsidiary companies comprising the Canadian Northern System, as specified in the First Schedule to this Act, and it is expedient to provide for the incorporation of a company under which the railways, works and undertakings of the companies comprised in the Canadian Northern System may be consolidated, and together with the Canadian Government Railways operated as a national railway system.

I think that very much of the discussion that has taken place is entirely beside the question. We are not discussing, and have not been—unless forced to assume the defensive on this side—the question of the public or private ownership of the railways under consideration. We are here to devise ways and means of managing the railways that we already own, or are supposed to own—there seems to be grave doubts in the minds of hon. gentlemen opposite as to whether we really own these railways or not; in the one breath we are told that we do own them, and in the very next breath we are given to understand by members on the Government side that we are not the owners. But we are supposed, according to this Bill, to own these railways, and therefore public ownership, I submit, is not the question under discussion in this debate. I am surprised at the Acting Prime Minister insisting that we should put ourselves on record on this subject, when the question of public ownership, or otherwise, is not the issue. That hon. gentleman has accused members on this side, including the leader of the Opposition, of obstruction. I would like to call attention to some of the methods of so-called obstruction that have been adopted by gentlemen on this side. For instance, on Thurs-

[Mr. Sinclair.]

day, April 24th, when this Bill was up for consideration in Committee for the first time, the members on this side endeavoured to obtain some information from the Minister of Railways, and spent two full hours in the effort to do so. Can hon. gentlemen opposite accuse us of obstruction under such circumstances? The Minister of Railways absolutely refused to give us the information we demanded from him, and which we had a right to receive. And after two long hours of debate, the information was vouchsafed; and what did it amount to? The Minister of Railways was trying to withhold from us, at least he pretended that he did not know, what salary was being paid to the man who was managing the Canadian Northern railway—the trifling sum of \$25,000 was not worth noticing in the estimation of the Minister of Railways—and yet this is the man to whom we intend to trust the management of the railroad system of this country under the present Bill. Then, Sir, coming to the following day, Friday, April 25th, we spent nine weary hours endeavouring to extract further information from the Government in regard to this Bill. The Acting Minister of Justice (Mr. Meighen) was leading the House on that occasion, and we endeavoured to elicit from him details respecting the right of way of the forty-four railway lines that, according to him, the Government intended to commence operations on immediately. The minister refused to give us that information, or any information whatever, as to the location of these roads, and finally, when he rose to reply to gentlemen on this side, he sneered at the idea of the House wanting information of such a character. Now, if the Government is going to start the construction of these railroads in a few weeks, it should at least have the location of the railroads in question fixed. Yet the hon. gentleman sneered at the request for information in that regard—it was a trifling thing in his opinion for the people of this country to know where these forty-four railroads were to be located. These are examples of the kind of obstruction that the House has been subjected to, and because of which the Government, forsooth, considered it absolutely necessary to introduce the closure and shut off further discussion of the terms of this Bill. I repeat that we are not opposing the Bill on its public ownership provision, but purely and simply because we wish to see proper arrangements made for the management of this gigantic proposition. The member for Red Deer (Mr. Clark) this afternoon made a