

be so, it would tend to prove that the Alberta government do not approve the bill as it now stands.

But I am not here to plead the case of the Alberta government; I am here to plead the case of the Dominion government and the interest of Canada in this bill. The hon. member for Peace River will correct me in a moment if I am wrong. It has been said that the road is about to be sold to the Canadian National or the Canadian Pacific. That the road should be sold to the Canadian Pacific does not interest me so much, but that it should be sold to the Canadian National does interest me because the Canadian National is the property of the Dominion of Canada. In the past we have had bitter experiences in connection with railways which have been constructed by private companies or even by provincial governments, if there be any such cases, and which have later turned out to be a liability on the hands of those who constructed them. In those cases they have felt that the best thing they could do was to turn the railways over to the federal government. A few years ago a gentleman from Manitoba who sat in this house used to speak quite frequently in regard to railway matters and to say that the government of the day had loaded themselves up with a lot of lame ducks. That is true. Our railway policies in the past have been anything but what they should have been.

If this road is to belong to the Canadian National Railways or to the federal government, they should have something to do with the bill, and if extensions to the present line are to be made in one direction or another those extensions should not be made unless the Canadian National approve them. I know I shall be told immediately that the Canadian National are not the owners of the road and therefore have nothing to do with it. That is the old argument. The Canadian National did not own a number of railways that were built outside of their control and with the consent and approval of parliament over a period of twenty-five years, but the Canadian National and the people of Canada became owners of those roads. When a venture proved to be a bad one, it was put upon the shoulders of the Canadian people. I shall have something more to say later on, but for the time being I should like to hear the hon. member for Peace River answer the point which I have raised.

Mr. HEPBURN: I should like to recapitulate the events leading up to this bill standing on the order paper under date of April 17. It appears that there was some misunder-

[Mr. J. J. Denis.]

standing in regard to a certain figure used in one of the clauses, and the sponsor of the bill, the hon. member for Peace River, was unable to give the necessary information to the house at that time. The Minister of Railways thereupon said, as reported in *Hansard* at page 2112:

Mr. Dunning: In any event the mistake must be corrected by some formal action on the part of this committee. I suggest to my hon. friend that he leave the bill in committee in order to enable him to confirm his impression, or he may move the necessary substitution now.

Mr. Kennedy: Let it stand.

So it was at the instance of the sponsor that this bill was allowed to stand. I maintain that if any member who is sponsoring a bill in this house cannot give to the house at any time it is required the necessary information in regard to the bill, he should not ask of this house the special privilege of having his bill given preference over other bills. I am surprised indeed that such a request emanated from his part of the house, because hon. members sitting in the southeast corner of this chamber announced with great gusto on the hustings the policy of equal rights for all and special privileges for none.

Mr. KELLNER: I rise to a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The hon. gentleman is discussing a question which was settled by the house the other night, and I submit that his remarks are therefore out of order.

The CHAIRMAN: I take it that the hon. gentleman may make a reference to the bill having been allowed to stand, but he would be out of order in going into details.

Mr. HEPBURN: If hon. members in that part of the house do not like to have their inconsistencies called to their attention, all right.

With reference to the bill before us, I have given notice that on the third reading of the bill I shall move in amendment:

That the said bill be not now read the third time, but be referred to the committee of the whole for the purpose of amending it as follows—

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment of the hon. gentleman should be moved on the third reading of the bill, not in committee.

Mr. HEPBURN: This amendment, Mr. Chairman, has a strong bearing on the bill before us, and I should like to explain why I am bringing it forward. I am moving an amendment of that nature because the hon. member for Wetaskiwin moved an amendment to a bill standing in the name of my hon. friend from West Lambton in regard