

the government and the Minister of Railways to a certain extent. This commission would be a kind of buffer between the minister and the public who might have reason to complain of the way in which the Intercolonial Railway was operated. While that would be true, it would not diminish, as far as I can see, in any way, the control of the government and the minister over the railway. The rates, under certain limitations, the appointment of the employees of the road—these things would still be in the hands of the government, and the change would not take the railway out of politics. If you could effectually take the Intercolonial railway out of politics it would be a good thing; but the fact of giving this commission certain rights to deal with the Intercolonial Railway would not have that effect. A very serious difficulty is indicated by the hon. gentleman from de Lanaudière. The Minister of Railways is given a certain control over the commission, and the effect, I think of bringing the Intercolonial Railway under the control, or supposed control, of the commission, would be to introduce the political element into the commission, and that would be a very undesirable thing. These commissioners would be appointed by the government, and if they undertook to interfere with the government in the management of the Intercolonial Railway, you would immediately bring about the danger of friction and difficulty between the government and the commission, and the commission would go to the wall as a matter of course. There would be a further tendency, I think, on the part of the government to be careful that the commissioners were men not likely to interfere with the government management of the Intercolonial Railway. My own impression is that including the Intercolonial Railway under the operation of this third clause, would do serious mischief to the efficiency of the commission, and would not very much benefit the Intercolonial Railway. That is the feeling I have. If the Intercolonial Railway were taken out of politics altogether, and if the management and control of the Intercolonial Railway were placed in the hands of the commission, then that would be a different proposition, and one for which a great deal could be said; but I honestly do not think the amendment

moved by the hon. gentleman from Westmoreland would do very much good, and it would be calculated, by producing conflict and friction between the government and the commission to do a good deal of harm.

Hon. Mr. LOUGHEED—I presume there is no question attracting so much public attention to-day as the nationalization of all public utilities, and particularly of railways. It seems to me the consideration of this feature of the case might well be imported into this question. I suppose a more opportune time was never given to the government of Canada to make a practical experiment of the working out of this important question, than through the introduction into this Bill of some provision by which there should be a different administration of the Intercolonial Railway. We very well know that the pressure of party influence brought to bear on the administration of the Intercolonial Railway, as it is under the present government and as it was under the late government, prevents it from being a business enterprise, and will continue so, and if anything operates against the popularity of the question of the nationalization of railways or of all public utilities, it is the actual exhibition, such as we have annually before us, of deficits which arise from time to time with reference to the working of the government railways. Now, while I am fully aware that including the Intercolonial Railway in this clause would not satisfactorily work out the question of the nationalization of that road, yet it certainly would have a very important bearing upon it and would lead to an economical administration of the road by the government. If the control or litigation of tariffs and tolls would lie with the board, it therefore must necessarily fall on the government of the day administering that road, to administer it in the most economical way, so that the same rules or principles which would be applicable to other roads of the country which are run on a business basis would be equally applicable to the Intercolonial Railway. At the present time there is no such pressure brought to bear on the administration of the road as could be brought to bear on it by this commission. I think the experiment is one that would be watched with very great interest by the