

An hon. MEMBER: Louder.

Mr. VERVILLE: Even should I speak any louder I do not believe you would have the advantage of understanding me, but that is no fault of mine, for, as you may know, Mr. Chairman, in this world of ours animals and insects generally speak one language, but not always two.

As representative of such a large city as the metropolis of Canada, I believe it is my duty to give my opinion, for what it is worth, upon the question now before us. Since the beginning of the war, two words have often been used in this House: justice and equity. It is really the proper time to say they are rather empty words and I believe that it would be better to change them. As to the legislation now before the House, I hope the hon. Minister of Finance will not venture to say that there is in it a sum of justice for the people of this country, nor could he say either that there is any sum of equity. I am not opposed to the idea of nationalizing the public services; I have studied some at that school of nationalization which has for principle to manage for the people, by the people, and for the benefit of the people, any enterprise, any commercial industry or even to use a general expression, any public utility whatsoever. The question now before the House is not a matter of public interest, that is to say a profitable one from the people's point of view. If the present Government had really meant to practice what is called nationalization, they would have found out from the very beginning, some means for taking over the Canadian Pacific railway which brings rather high dividends and, by doing so they would have succeeded in making of the Canadian Northern a paying concern. As to the increased burden which they intend saddling upon the people of this country through the purchase of this railroad, I might say it is scandalous, if such a term is a parliamentary one, because in the long run the masses are always those who have to foot the bill.

I am not appealing just now to the high magnates of finance, for to-day these gentlemen have succeeded in piling up colossal fortunes through profiteering at the expense of the people in general, the country over, in towns and villages, are, in consequence, and I might say, for having knowingly robbed the people, made the recipient of favours at the hands of His Majesty.

The people who are called upon to pay, who must always pay anyway, are asking themselves at the present hour, and rightly

so, whether the proposal submitted to the House is really in their own interest, when it has been shown by all those who have preceded me in the course of this lengthy debate, that all we have to do is simply to apply the Act of 1914, which you have yourself, Mr. Chairman, so well defended in those days.

The Act of 1914 is either good or bad, but the mighty dollar, that earthly domineering divinity who has it in his power to move even mountains, and finds it an easy task to control a government, and have it decree that this railway is to be taken over by the State, so that Mackenzie and Mann's millions may remain untouched, and that these gentlemen may keep on junketting through out the various countries of the world.

Mr. Chairman, I do not know whether they are the object of as much consideration in foreign countries as in ours, but, after all I think the idea is to safeguard the interests of these two gentlemen who, as I just said a moment ago, have been the recipients of His Majesty's favours.

Of course, I fully realize, Mr. Chairman, that the poor man who, in a time of stress, of scarcity, would enter a store and steal a loaf of bread to feed his family, would be quickly sent to jail for six months; but the gentlemen who robs a bank or a country, through a railway deal or otherwise, would become the recipient of the favours of His Majesty.

Mr. Chairman, the principle of public ownership, whether by the State or by municipalities excludes all idea of profit from its operation. I understand that this proposal does not allow of any profit making since the company is insolvent. If such be the case why should the Canadian people be called upon to foot the bill? Are the people able to do it? Are the plain people in the towns and rural districts in a position to do it? Why should the Government exact that from them because these two men have grown rich at the people's expense? Now they are intent on safeguarding the millions these men have accumulated for reasons I am not ready to expound but which may be readily suspected.

Mr. Chairman, I heard the other day, or rather I read in Hansard, that the Prime Minister had decided that this session was too far advanced for us to attend to the increasing of the soldiers' pensions. Since the report has been issued the cost of living has increased to such an extent that it is very hard for the soldiers' families to make ends meet. It matters very little, of course