

I will vote against this proposal more heartily than I did before, much more heartily. So far as I am concerned, I am bound to say that this is the worst imposition that has ever been offered the House of Commons of Canada. Are we going to be made subservient to the Senate in a grave matter of this sort? And that is exactly what will happen. The members of that body do not have to appeal to the electors at all; they are there during their lifetime and, if they saw fit, willy nilly they would maintain in opposition to the elected representatives of the people a board which in the judgment of the latter should be dismissed, a board handling, as I said on a former occasion, just as much money as the government of this country is likely to handle.

May I say to hon. gentlemen who have been critical of the railway situation that I do agree with certain things the Prime Minister has said. I agree that we have overbuilt in Canada. I would ask my hon. friend from East Algoma however this question: Would he incur again in his lumbering business the same obligations he did in more prosperous days? We all know that hindsight is always better than foresight. I would point out to this house however that notwithstanding the severe losses incurred by the Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Pacific the people of Canada have enjoyed lower rates than those that have prevailed on the other side. We must admit therefore that there are advantages in the government railways, and if the government are to divest themselves of all responsibility for this institution then I say to them, turn it over to private enterprise at once and have done with the whole thing. I do not know whether the institution can be made a success or not, but I do know that no such method as is now proposed can be adopted by the government without their incurring very grave displeasure. I say that so long as the government are determined to maintain the national railways as a government institution they will have to accept the responsibility—any government will have to accept that responsibility. It cannot be otherwise. This attempt to remove it from political control is in my opinion so much hooey; it cannot be done, and that is one of the penalties we shall pay for government institutions.

Mr. ERNST: I thought "hooey" was banned.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): I mean this bugaboo that is always trotted out about

political control. I do not believe there has been very much political control. I do know that municipalities and communities have got what they should not have got, but they have got it from the Canadian Pacific Railway as well. I could cite dozens of instances where they received from the Canadian Pacific treatment they were not entitled to. I say, however, that if hon. gentlemen are genuinely opposed to government control they should say so outright; but if we are to have government control and operation, let the government take responsibility through the governor in council.

Mr. MANION: This clause has been debated fully to and fro but I should like to point out to the committee something that has already been mentioned by the Prime Minister. In the dismissal of any of these trustees exactly the same method is used as that which would be followed in the dismissal of a superior court judge. Let me read this extract from the British North America Act, section 99:

The judges of the superior courts shall hold office during good behaviour, but shall be removable by the governor general on address of the Senate and House of Commons.

While of course a judge holds a very high office, I would point out that from the standpoint of financial responsibility, from the standpoint of our whole financial structure, the trustees who are going to be put into power in the Canadian National Railways are in a much more important position. Without any doubt the object is to place the handling of the affairs of the Canadian National Railways as far away as possible from government pressure, from political pressure or from public pressure. That was the thought in the minds of those who drew up this clause. The right hon. leader of the opposition and the hon. member for North Waterloo have, perhaps unintentionally, put an interpretation upon my word which was unfair. I was continuing the discussion which took place the other day in connection with the possibility of there being a Senate of a different political colour than the government of the day. It was stated that they might block a dismissal. Generally speaking, I think it can be assumed that the Senate will take as honourable and as highminded an attitude as this chamber. The hon. member for North Waterloo has suggested that any dismissal should be made by a resolution of the House of Commons only, but I think he will admit that any government in power having a decent majority would be able to get any reasonable resolution passed through the house.