

before them but neither government were prepared to take action in accordance with their recommendations. The Duff commission had the report of the Drayton-Acworth commission before its members but they were not prepared to recommend to the government and through the government to parliament the adoption of any such provision as this. The fact that in the circumstances the Duff commission refrained from making such a recommendation is the strongest argument that could be advanced as to why this parliament should not insert in this bill any provision of the kind. I am going to move that all the words after the word "cause" in the thirty-fourth line be struck out. Should this amendment carry, the section would then read:

No trustee shall be removed from office, nor suffer any reduction in salary, during the term for which he is appointed, unless for assigned cause.

The words I am proposing to strike out are:—and on address of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada.

May I give a further reason why these words should be struck out? By the passage of previous clauses, this committee has decided that the governor in council shall make appointments and shall fix salaries. It has given to the governor in council the power to increase salaries; if the governor in council is to be given the power to increase salaries why should it be denied the power to reduce salaries? Why should the reduction of salaries as well as the removal from office be made subject to the will of the Senate as well as that of the House of Commons? It seems to me that there are two fundamental constitutional principles being sacrificed by the clause in the form in which it appears. The first is the one already referred to of the responsibility of a ministry, in other words the principle of responsible government; the government taking full responsibility for its actions and not being subordinated to the will of a non-elected house of parliament. The second and a very important fundamental principle is the control by the Commons of all matters of expenditure. By this clause the House of Commons is impliedly parting with its right of control over expenditures and the taxation incidental thereto; they are being made subject to the will of the Senate. It may be that the amount involved is small but the principle is very great. This principle, probably more than any other, has occasioned long and acrimonious debate in the British parliament during recent years. The same statement, in fact, applies to most

parliaments. For this as well as for the other reasons mentioned, I do not think that this clause should be accepted in its present form.

I fail to see just why it should be necessary to reflect in this indirect way upon any ministry that may be in office. I think that in the future, members of governments will be as honourable in their actions as their predecessors, whether those actions relate to appointments or to dismissals. Speaking the other day in connection with these appointments, I said that if at any time a Liberal administration should be returned to power and I had anything to do with it, my last desire would be to remove any trustees appointed by the present government provided they were performing their duties impartially, fairly and well. If they were not doing that, it seems to me that the ministry of the day ought not to be restricted in its attitude towards them. The ministry will have to carry the responsibility of their actions whether it wishes to do so or not.

May I say a further word about this getting rid of government control? It seems to me that here another fundamental principle is involved. Either these roads must be considered as government controlled as well as government owned roads or they should be passed over altogether into private hands. If the ministry is of the view that parliament is not the proper body to control the national railways, then let them bring in a measure which will ask parliament to transfer the roads to private control. The ministry claim that the president and board of directors under the late administration and as they exist at the present time were possessed of too great a power, but it now proposes to go a step further and give still greater power to the three trustees. The complaint has been made that the board of directors have had too free a hand, that certain expenditures would not have been made if they had been subject to greater control by the ministry, but now the ministry proposes to go even further and take away all control on the part of the ministry. These three men are to be given the power to do as they please with respect to the largest expenditure that the country will be concerned in. Reference has been made this afternoon to human nature and, knowing human nature as we do, I cannot but believe that any gentlemen who may be given appointments as trustees will be all the better in administering these national railways for realizing that they are subject to the control of whatever ministry the people may be responsible for having placed in office.