

such that no man can occupy a public position there unless he is in favour of public ownership.

Mr. COPP: What about you?

Mr. HOCKEN: Why I am the champion public ownership man of the city of Toronto. Everybody there will tell you that I have gone farther in advocating public ownership in Canada than any other man except the editor of the Toronto World. He was the originator of the whole cult of public ownership, but I have always been a pretty close follower. I am quite plain in declaring where I stand, but I do not hear hon. gentlemen opposite declaring where they stand. They are doing their best to-day to escape the obliquy which they expect will fall upon them for their attitude on this Bill. Perhaps that is good politics; I am not well versed enough in politics to say.

Mr. McKENZIE: Has public ownership even been an issue at a general election in Canada?

Mr. HOCKEN: Not in a federal election, but it has been an issue in some provincial elections. At all events, it is an issue right here to-day; that is the issue which we are debating.

Mr. McKENZIE: There is no such issue here.

Mr. HOCKEN: The issue is whether we shall have public ownership of railways of this country, or whether public ownership shall be throttled; and the motives of those who are raising technicalities and discussing side issues are just as plain to the people of this country as they are to the members of this House. I do not like to see a man blow hot and cold; I have no use for a Laodicean. I like to see a man one thing or the other; I like to see him affirm his convictions and stand by them; and I would like to see hon. gentlemen opposite who are in favour of public ownership get up and declare themselves.

There are powerful interests in this country opposed to the nationalization of railways, and those interests centre largely in the city of Montreal. If you take as an index of their attitude the press of the city of Montreal, there are very few friends of public ownership down there. I do not know whether that accounts for the attitude of hon. gentlemen opposite or not. In the province of Ontario, practically from the Ottawa river to the St. Clair, and north to James bay as far as population exists, the people are in favour of public ownership and the nationalization of the railways.

While we regret that so much money has been put into the Canadian Northern, and that the road has not yet reached the point we might have expected, we are satisfied that to-day there is nothing else for us to do but to take it over, put it on a good basis, and operate it; and we look forward to the day in the not distant future when the road will pay.

Our railways, I understand, are to be kept free from politics, and I believe that the way the Government has adopted is the best way for keeping politics out of the road. I believe that the men who have been placed at the head of our railways will manage the system in the public interest.

Mr. McMASTER: Does the hon. gentleman know who these gentlemen are in whom he has such faith?

Mr. HOCKEN: I do not know them all personally but I know those who are in the chief places. They are expert railway men, and I have a very high regard for their business ability and integrity.

Mr. EULER: Does the hon. member know or does he believe that these men are believers in public ownership?

Mr. HOCKEN: They have accepted a public trust, and I believe they will observe it just as faithfully as the hon. member observes his oath of office.

Mr. McMASTER: May I suggest that that is a somewhat Laodicean answer?

Mr. HOCKEN: No, it is a straight answer. I believe they will perform their duty towards the Dominion of Canada just as faithfully as Lord Shaughnessy performs his towards the Canadian Pacific. I think that the Government have chosen the one man for president of the road. He was in the road at the start, has been in it at every stage, and knows every detail of its business. The men associated with him are all men of ability—railway experts or financiers—who are capable of giving this country good service; but they must be supported.

I am not surprised that from the other side of the House there should be a good deal of doubt expressed as to the attitude of Canada concerning public ownership, for I find the principal Liberal organ in the city of Quebec avowedly hostile towards public ownership of railways. I think I have a right to assume that Le Soleil speaks for the party represented by gentlemen opposite, and it comes out distinctly opposed to the purchase of the Grand Trunk, which