

made clear by the mover or the seconder of the amendment, and one would have thought that would have been their duty.

Mr. E. LAPOINTE: My hon. friend could easily devise a way of recording their votes.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The devising of the way would be the part of the proposer of the idea. To make the amendment practical some way should be devised.

Mr. E. LAPOINTE: If my hon. friend will accept the principle I will devise the way.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I will come to the principle in a moment. I am now making this point: That the law as proposed to be put into effect by the hon. member would be impracticable of execution. There would have to be machinery provided for carrying it into effect, and because the machinery is absent, the hon. gentleman cannot expect the House to accept the amendment. Presuming that there was only one organization which represented all the employees of the road, what should be done with the amendment?—and now we come to the principle of the amendment. If the principle is to be adopted, it means this: That the Government which has to appoint this directorate, and be responsible for its appointment, which has to be responsible in general for the management of the road after the appointment, is to have no say in the appointment of two of the directors. If that is the case, why should it have any say in the appointment of any? If the Government is to be responsible for the conduct of men in the selection of whom it has no voice at all, and if that applies to two of the directorate, why should it not apply to all? Why is the Government to be held responsible for the conduct of large operations by men whom it does not choose? If, in a word, the principle of Government responsibility is to stand, how can the amendment carry?

In the next place, if the amendment were to carry, it would be an admission on the part of this Parliament that while we represent, as the Parliament of Canada to which the Government is responsible, one section of the people of this country, and therefore can nominate men to represent that section on the directorate, we do not represent another section, namely, the labour element. Is Parliament prepared to take that position? Is Parliament prepared to declare that we the representatives of the people hold an altogether different re-

[Mr. Meighen.]

lationship to the proprietary interests of Canada, as opposed to the labour interests of Canada? This Parliament, if it is a Parliament at all, represents labour in the very same sense that it represents proprietorship or capital, and must take the responsibility, in appointing members of a directorate of a great Government railway system, of seeing to it that all major sections of the community of Canada are fairly represented on that directorate so far as may be necessary for the efficient management of the system. No one who understands the English language, or who knows the attitude of the Government, would, for one moment, suggest that the Government is opposed to the appointment on this directorate of men who have peculiar knowledge of the interests of those employed upon the road. It would seem to me obvious that, other things equal, it would be of great advantage to the system that there should be on the directorate men intimate with the needs of the employees of the road and peculiarly qualified to speak for them. That is one thing, but to say that these men must be selected finally, not by the Government which is responsible for the success of the undertaking but by others who have no such responsibility, is to affirm a principle that this Parliament has never before affirmed and one which I really cannot suppose that the hon. member for Kamouraska is serious in asking us to affirm. If we were to do so, if we were to take the ground—let me repeat it in another form of words—that Parliament, or the Government, is not qualified to select in the name of labour in the same way that it selects in the name of other classes of the community, either upon the basis of language, religion, occupation or in whatever manner, then we must also assume that we are not able to select in the name of any other section of the community and any other section would be in just the same position to come to Parliament and say: What right have you to select representatives on the Board of the National Railways who are peculiarly conversant with our interests in the management of these roads, or what right have you to select them if you permit one section of the community to select its own? Were the amendment to be adopted, Parliament would be landed in an anomalous and impossible position, in a position inconsistent with the best principles of constitutional government, in a position that no parliament in a constitutionally governed country has ever before occupied.