

of that policy in all its significance—the result depicted in the lurid pages of the report of the Transportation Commission. We have the result in a burden on the backs of the people of this country, the heaviest any young country ever bore with respect to any single enterprise, a burden from under which it is going to be tremendously difficult for us to emerge, and it will take us a very long time indeed. You can look anywhere over the length of this Dominion, at either coast, in any province, almost in any city, and see blazing instances of extravagance, an extravagance wholly at the expense of the taxpayers, an extravagance which is the principal chain that ties the feet of Canada to-day. Because of the condition which we had reached, because of the effect of that condition on world money markets, because of the fear expressed in relation to it, because of the world-known rate of extravagance at which the Canadian National was going, something had to be done, first, to expose the situation, and, next, to suggest a cure. The Duff Commission made a very, very thorough inquiry. Now they have made their report. At the moment I am not going to comment on that report. I am not sure that in every regard it is what I should like. The people of Canada are jealous of the National System; even those who criticized the very thought of government ownership in 1919, even those who were elected to the other House because of their declared and eternal enmity to any such system, became adherents of government ownership, became almost idolaters of the then management. And indeed, though in a way the travel has been hard and though the errors have been blazing and terrible, I do not think government ownership of utilities is to-day any more unpopular than it was in 1919. I have no doubt the members of the Transportation Commission, in framing their report, kept well in mind that the Canadian people are still jealous of the Canadian National System. If the National System is to be continued under separate management, then, in my judgment, no very serious criticism can be made of the report. Certainly there are many features of it that are to be highly commended; there are some that involve difficulty. An attempt will be made to put into effect all the recommendations if possible, certainly all that are practicable. That is the legislation which is referred to in the Speech from the Throne, and which in due course will be brought down for our consideration.

I close my comments on the subject with this statement, that certainly I have suffered grief in previous years, knowing the end to which the National Railways were hurrying. I do not know that there is anyone in this country more keenly anxious for their success than I, and I do earnestly trust that with the approval of all something can now be done to restore conditions that will enable them to be run economically, as any business enterprise ought to be run, under principles and through an organization that will be adhered to and supported by men of all parties and by all classes of people in this country. But if we again allow things to go as they have been going, then it will not matter much whether we are believers in government ownership or not; we shall have reached a stage where it will not be possible for this country to pay its debts.

At this time I am not going to make reference to any other features of the Speech from the Throne. There are certain of them of very great importance, but not peculiarly interesting to the Upper House. The subject of redistribution is of course one entirely for the House of Commons. The subject of waterways is not of very immediate interest to us now, inasmuch as there must be approval first by the Senate of the United States before anything is submitted to this Parliament at all. I do not pose as an authority on the St. Lawrence Waterway, but if on a balance sheet presentation something is to be gained for the benefit of this country by the construction of that work, then I think the terms are such as are fair as between this Dominion and the United States. However, this, along with other features of the Speech from the Throne, will come before us for more careful treatment when they are in specific and separate form. For the present I thank the honourable senator for the fairness and thoroughness of his criticism, and I trust that the same fairness and the same thoroughness will characterize the treatment of the Speech from the Throne on the part of all other honourable members of this House.

Hon. J. S. McLENNAN: Honourable gentlemen, after the two brilliant speeches to which we have just listened with great interest, I feel somewhat uncomfortable in speaking on the various points dealt with in the Speech from the Throne. In common with those honourable senators—although I may not be able to express my sentiments in such apt terms—I desire to congratulate my friend from Acadie (Hon. Mr. Poirier) on the graceful manner in which he moved the Address in