

not see that the amendments made by the Senate are important, and in amendment to the amendment I move that the Senate does not insist on its amendments to the Bill.

Hon. Mr. POWER—Does the hon. gentleman think there is any objection to parliament and the government having the information provided for by this amendment before taking action?

Hon. Mr. THOMPSON—No, I would presume that the government in bringing to the notice of parliament a proposition of that character would furnish us with all the information necessary to reach a conclusion as to whether that lease or purchase should be accepted. We could move for further information before accepting it, so that practically we have absolute control of the action of the government with respect to the purchase or lease of the branch lines.

Rt. Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—It would be desirable, looking at the very late period of the session, that we should get this matter brought to a conference as soon as possible, and I think the only possible way we can do so is by accepting the motion of the hon. member from Halifax, by which a conference can be had and a compromise arranged.

Hon. Mr. THOMPSON—If we recede from our amendments to this Bill, would we not get it quicker?

Rt. Hon. Sir RICHARD CARTWRIGHT—You would get it settled quicker by a conference than by a long discussion in the Senate.

Hon. Mr. BEIQUE—I am in accord with the advisability of obtaining the information mentioned in the amendment adopted by this honourable House. However, the point taken by the House of Commons may be well founded, and inasmuch as we cannot bind future parliaments, I would suggest to the hon. member, should a conference be held, to change the form of his amendment by making it incumbent on the government railway managing board, when making their recommendation, to furnish the information which is called for in the amendment. That would be much more

effective, because if it goes in that form, parliament, next session, or in two or three years hence, might do away with that clause altogether, whereas if my suggestion is adopted, no recommendation can be made unless it is accompanied by the information.

Hon. Mr. ROSS (Middlesex)—The question is very simple. The complaint of the Commons is that we bind a future parliament, which I do not think we can do, not to ratify any legislation unless certain information is provided. If a conference is held, we can simply say that in submitting any such lease for the approval of parliament, a return shall be laid before both Houses at least one month in advance, containing such and such information. That does not restrain parliament from ratifying the lease, but it would give us the information which it is desirable we should have, and I concur in the suggestion of the right hon. leader of the Senate, that the matter be adjusted by a conference. There is no difference as to how it should be done.

Hon. Sir MACKENZIE BOWELL—The conference would come to some arrangement by which the two Houses would agree. The reasons given for rejecting the amendment seem childish. However, it is not necessary to discuss that question. As the leader of the government has accepted the proposition, there is no use of wasting time in discussing it. The suggestion of my hon. friend can be reached by a conference, and the suggestion he makes is a good one.

Hon. Mr. THOMPSON—I should like to have the opinion of the House on my amendment to the amendment.

Hon. Mr. MITCHELL—It has been well expressed, and understood by almost every one who has spoken on this Bill, even the right hon. leader of the House, that before anything can be done in the way of acquiring branch lines of the Intercolonial railway, information must be laid before the House. The Commons have sent us a Bill which we have amended, and they return it to us stating they cannot accept our amendments. We all agree it must come before us again, and to ask for a conference between the two Houses as to whether the government will place information before