

The mover of this amendment stated that the principle of the representation of labour was recognized in the Senate. I claim that it was not recognized in the Senate, because the Minister of Labour should belong to the House of Commons. I know the Minister of Labour very well, and I have great confidence in his ability as well as in his practical knowledge. If any one should be appointed on the Board of Directors apart from the great financiers of the country, or men who have experience in the management of a railway, those who have the most knowledge are surely the railwaymen of the land.

Many of them have grown up with the road from boyhood; they have served their apprenticeship and have acquired the most valuable kind of knowledge for a position of this sort. I hope that hon. members will not think that this proposal is put forward for a political purpose. I thought I heard someone laugh on the other side of the House, but I must have been mistaken. Judging by the present conditions in the labour world, I am afraid that if the Government does not grant to the labour organizations what they have a right to expect, they will take the means to get it. This may seem radical, but any one who has studied the feeling of unrest there is throughout the country must realize that there is only one way of salvation, and that is by co-operation to the fullest extent. The Government may not have said that it will not appoint labour men; I do not know whether it has or not, but I am afraid there will be influence enough brought to bear to prevent the appointment of labour men to this directorate. Ever since I have been in this House I have said that a Minister of Labour in this Government would not make a success of his department unless he was a practical man. The Government, fortunately, have seen fit to appoint a practical man to the head of that department. Now what applies to the Department of Labour surely ought to apply to one of the greatest enterprises this country has ever undertaken. The Government have everything to gain by adopting this amendment. They will find among the railway men some of the ablest men in America, and able not only for their practical knowledge; some members of the Government would no doubt be surprised at the technical qualifications of some of our railway employees, and perhaps they are more advanced in finance than some of the ministers may think. Those of them who have acquired a home of their own know exactly what a dollar is worth, and might do better

in financial matters than others whom the Government may appoint to the board. I do not know of any government, federal or provincial, that has made a mistake through trying to get all classes of society represented on the commissions it appoints. Furthermore, a practical knowledge of all the great economic questions of the day will perhaps be worth more than all the technical knowledge put together. I am proud to second the amendment, and I trust the Government will accept it.

Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN (Minister of the Interior): Among all the remarks made by the mover and the seconder of this amendment I am able to find only one with which I very cordially agree, namely, that we have at the present time in charge of the Department of Labour a gentleman of very great practical ability, of devotion to duty, and of fidelity to the cause of labour. With anything else that has been said I am afraid I must differ. In fact, I must express surprise that so strictly logical a mind as that of the hon. member for Kamouraska (Mr. Lapointe) could be brought to support the amendment now before the House. The amendment is to the effect that the Government in appointing the directorate of this board must accept at least two members chosen by the railway employees. Had the hon. gentleman really meant that the amendment should be considered as a practical step, he would have added to his amendment provisions that would have enabled the Government to ascertain what the recommendation of the railway employees would be. Without the machinery for its ascertainment, the amendment would be impossible of execution, for there would be no way in which it could be carried out.

Mr. E. LAPOINTE: At the present time the employees of the Government railway vote every winter for two representatives of the Pension Board in connection with the Provident Fund.

Mr. MEIGHEN: Through what organization? There are at the present time, I am told, fifteen or seventeen different organizations of the railway employees, absolutely distinct in every way. Are these fifteen different organizations going to make their recommendations?

Mr. E. LAPOINTE: My hon. friend ought to know that it can be done very easily.

Mr. MEIGHEN: I am quite free to remark that the method of doing it was not