

eyes of the members of Parliament. I would think that in the future there would be no reason why a special committee of the House should not be appointed in connection with railways and let some of the officials come and explain the operation and give any information the committee may want. But if you have to place all the expenditures in connection with the Canadian National railways before the Public Accounts Committee, let politics get into it, have the management here and keep them here for from three to five months, you never possibly could operate the Canadian National railways. We must have confidence in the management. We have to trust them. The people should have men that they have not the slightest question of doubt about and in addition to that we must have auditors that the House, the Government and the country have confidence in.

Up to the present time I have not had any interference of any member of Parliament on either side of the House to the operation of these railways. They have never found any fault as far as I know. They have tried to do their best to keep politics out and to give those who are managing these railways a chance. I only hope and trust that they will continue as they have been doing to give public ownership a chance and if they do I believe the words of Mr. Hanna will turn out to be correct, notwithstanding the difference of opinion which has been expressed by my hon. friend from Pontiac. I believe that in the years to come Canada will have one of the greatest assets in the world and that we will be in a position to keep freight rates at the minimum. We will be in a position to prevent a crisis with regard to the interchange of food products and fuel between the provinces of Canada. Having an asset of that kind so we may be able to protect and provide for ourselves within our own borders instead of having to go to foreign countries is something that this country should be proud of.

MR. CAHILL: The minister's reference to insurance shows that the Government are getting something now that they are not entitled to and which should be made public. The minister says he can get a better rate by keeping the information secret. Let me tell him that the Government is not entitled to any better rate than the law permits so there is no reason why this information should not be disclosed. The same thing applies to the purchase of ties. You can go to the meeting of the directors

[Mr. J. D. Reid.]

of any railway company, as a shareholder, and ask to see the books, and they will show them to you. In the present instance as a trustee there is twice as much reason for your getting access to that information.

There is another point I want to make. Comparing the directors of the Government railways with the directors, for example, of the Canadian Pacific railway, the latter are men that are directly and financially interested in the welfare of that line. They have grown more so from year to year. They have large interests in the Canadian Pacific railway and its affairs are of vital interest to them. Every director of that company is personally interested in the efficient operation of the line. Unless you get that selfish interest presenting itself somewhere in the undertaking you are not going to get very far. There is no doubt that all of us are selfish and our first consideration is for ourselves. We like to make money for ourselves; that is only in accordance with human nature. So I say that these Canadian Pacific directors are directly interested in the management of the railway for the benefit primarily of themselves. You cannot possibly argue, with any show of reason, that because you pick up a man who is successful in his own business, and pay him \$2,000 or \$2,500 to act as director of a railway company that he is going to give its operations that direct and personal interest that he would if it were his own private business in which he was making money. The two things are directly opposed to each other. With the directors of the Canadian Pacific the success of their line is the first consideration. It is true that they have other business connections, but this is one of their big interests. In the case of the Government Railway system the directors have other interests and the operation of these railways is only a side issue with them. Therefore the minister's illustrations are entirely beside the question. The illustrations may look well on paper but they are not the same in the practical working out.

The people you want as directors are men who are directly interested in the development of that railway. A director who has no shares is not responsible to any person. The minister can remove him but it does not hurt him if he is removed because he has no responsibility. I repeat that what we want to do is to get on the directorate people who are directly interested in the welfare of this railway system, people whose future is tied up in it and to