

tion enough to believe that they should take their part in cleaning up our public affairs. We want better administration; we want cleaner administration; we want to get away from distillery rule in this country, and we want to get away from the rule of great interests or anything of that kind. We must have a number of reforms, and the reform which I have advocated from my first day in this House is that great principle of public ownership. To-day the people of Canada have the greatest railway in the world.

Some hon. MEMBERS: Oh, oh.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

Mr. MACLEAN (York): Hon. members opposite are applauding me now. This great railway is in jeopardy to-day, yet it is succeeding as no other railway ever succeeded before. The west is asking for lower freight rates; the industries of this country are asking for lower freight rates, and the way to make our country great is to consolidate our railways into one, re-route them to get a greatly improved service, and have lower freight rates by land, rail, sea and air. It is not a question of railways alone; it is a question of transportation, and the people in power in this country must deal with this question in all its phases.

That is the main thing I have to say to-night; I am quite willing to do anything I can to assist the new Prime Minister in appealing to the country, and I am sure some hon. gentlemen opposite will help also. I would not be surprised if the ex-Minister of Finance (Mr. Robb) would help, and perhaps the ex-Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) would do something also.

I am not going into the merits of the whole question, but a way must be found to clean up this situation. We have been saying that parliament is supreme; I say the men and women voters of Canada are supreme in this country, and they want an opportunity of deciding the issue now before us. I have not taken much time in saying this, but I hope it will produce some response, because the country is looking for some gesture towards the clean-up of affairs which have existed in this country. Much as I admire the speech the leader of the opposition made last night, he is out of the running for the present; he has to take care of the scandals and revelations which have come out. We must have integrity in our public men; if we have it there we will have it in our whole public service, and that is the great requirement of our country to-day. I appeal to you, Mr. Speaker, and to this House to join hands in cleaning up conditions, in getting better and cleaner government and

in making Canada what it is on the eve of becoming, namely, the greatest example of free parliamentary government in the world. This country has the richest resources of any country in the world; consider our agriculture, our mines and our industries, and most of all consider the desire of our people to work out their own destiny.

Mr. J. L. STANSELL (Norfolk-Elgin): I do not profess to be a lawyer, to understand constitutional questions or to be able to debate them in the able way they have been debated by hon. members on both sides of the House. I have, however, a firm belief in the common sense of the people of Canada, and I believe that applies as well to members of this House. Most of us know very well why this particular debate has been precipitated just now; we have seen speakers on the other side of the House work themselves almost into a frenzy over the danger to our constitution. But let me say just here, Mr. Speaker, that if the same zeal and energy now displayed by the leader of the opposition for the welfare and wellbeing of the people had been displayed when he was in power, the sordid conditions revealed in the Customs report would not have existed, and this matter would not have been a live question to-day. If the right hon. leader of the opposition had had the same zeal for constitutional protection when this House was summoned last January as he displays to-day when in opposition, we might have had a different story to tell.

I can recall no member of this House who has been louder in his declaration of the supremacy of parliament than has the right hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Mackenzie King). I know of no members who have been louder in their protestations that the day has long since passed when our procedure should be determined by musty precedents and rulings centuries old than have the hon. members who sometimes occupy the seats diagonally opposite, just now conspicuous by their absence. They say: We want something more up to date, something more along the lines of common sense, something that will enable parliament to function more intelligently than it has done in the past, and not this system of party warfare. I am somewhat concerned to know what these champions of change in parliamentary procedure will do on a question like this. They know just as well as any hon. member in this House that this discussion has been brought on, in the judgment of many of us, to distract attention from the real question before the House and the country, and to attempt to gain once more by some desperate means the seats of power. In that I have full confidence, Mr. Speaker, that they will be disappointed.