

I rise, however, for the purpose of giving my hon. friends opposite, who are so eloquent in their professions of Liberalism, an opportunity of registering their votes in favour of what I consider to be a true Liberal principle. When the House was in committee on the Bill I moved that labour be given a fair share in the management of the railway, and I purpose now moving an amendment to that effect. The Government, by the voice of the Minister of Labour in the Senate, has already recognized the soundness of that principle, and at the present time a commission is travelling throughout the country investigating industrial conditions in order to apply this principle to private industries. The Government should demonstrate its good faith and sincerity by embodying the same principle in the management of the National railways which are the very property of the state. The workingman who has, by the exercise of his franchise, a voice in the management of public affairs in this country, believes he has also a right to a voice in the management of the industries which by his work he helps to build up. He claims his industrial citizenship as well as his political citizenship. This desire comes, I believe, from a high sense of service. Most students of labour and industrial conditions in the world to-day are in favour of allowing labour a share in the management of industries. They believe that by raising the employee to a state of partnership with his employer, by acquainting him with the conditions of the undertaking or the business which is common to both, his sense of responsibility will be enhanced and much trouble will be avoided. The British Government has accepted that principle with regard to mines. Let me refer, in this connection, to the commission presided over by Mr. Justice Sankey. The commission was composed of four eminent men—Mr. Justice Sankey, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Sir Arthur Duckham, and Sir Thomas Royden. Here are a few words from the report of that commission:—

It is in the interests of the country that the colliery worker shall have an effective voice in the direction of the mine. For a generation the colliery worker has been educated socially and technically. The result is a great national asset. Why not use it?

The British Government has accepted that report, and the principle of a share in the management of the British mines has been accepted and will be carried out. This Government should embody a similar principle in this legislation which it is endeavouring to induce the industrials of the country to

[Mr. E. Lapointe.]

accept at the present time. By so doing the Government would give effect to the first clause of the resolution adopted by the Peace Conference and proposed to be incorporated in the Peace Treaty. This resolution, which was communicated to the House yesterday by the President of the Privy Council (Mr. Rowell), contained this principle:—

First—the guiding principle above enunciated that labour should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce.

The best way to recognize that principle is to accept the amendment which I now purpose moving. I move, seconded by Mr. Verville:—

That Bill No. 70 be not now read a third time, but be referred back to the Committee of the Whole House, in order that the following words be inserted at the end of clause 1 of the said Bill: "At least two of said directors shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the employees of the Canadian National railways."

Mr. ALPHONSE VERVILLE (St. Denis): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the amendment of the hon. member for Kamouraska (Mr. E. Lapointe), although it seems almost unnecessary for any hon. member on either side of the House to have to move an amendment of this nature. I was not here all the time when this Bill was under discussion, but I was surprised to hear that a provision of this kind was not inserted by the Government in the Bill. Many hon. members on this side and many who were on this side prior to Union Government have, time and again whenever opportunity offered, declared that labour should, to some extent, be represented on as many commissions as possible, because the practical knowledge of the labour man was probably more effective than the technical knowledge of many men who are appointed on commissions. We have now reached a stage in the development of this country when we must, willingly or otherwise, recognize this principle that labour should be represented, and any Government, whether federal, provincial or municipal, must also recognize it and put it into operation. Any hon. member who is in business must have long ago concluded that the most valuable information he has ever received in his private business has, generally speaking, come from those who have had the most practical experience. The Minister of Labour has, time and again, and rightly so, consulted the best element of labour in the country in connection with framing legislation or Orders in Council towards a better understanding between capital and labour.