

of quick conversion to the public ownership idea, but to me it was not at all convincing. One gentleman who spoke this afternoon said that none on this side of the House were in favour of public ownership. I may say almost the same thing about hon. gentlemen on the other side. I have no accurate knowledge of the attitude of men on this side, but I could count on the fingers of one hand—I would not need to use them all—the men on the other side of the House who are definitely on record as in favour of public ownership. Anything that the Government has done is no proof that they favour public ownership as a principle. We have taken over these roads not because we believe in public ownership—although I do—but as a matter of necessity; and the Acting Prime Minister is making a virtue of necessity. Would the Grand Trunk Pacific, the Grand Trunk, if we take it over, or the Canadian Northern have come into the possession of the people had it not been for the fact that these roads could not carry on any longer and that it was absolutely necessary for us to take them over? The Government have not shown by their actions that they are really believers in the principle of public ownership. I resent also the veiled suggestion of the Acting Prime Minister—I do not know that it was a veiled suggestion; it was made pretty openly—that the members on this side are dictated to by, or are the tools of, any private company or organization, meaning the Canadian Pacific Railway Company. I do not believe a word of it, and I do not think that the Acting Prime Minister does. Indeed, it looks to me that the accuser should rightly be the accused; the Acting Prime Minister said the other day that only two courses were open in this matter of railway ownership: either the Government must develop these roads which we have acquired into one great system and operate that system in competition with the Canadian Pacific railway, or the Canadian Pacific railway would itself operate all the railroads in the country. Why did he never at any time make the suggestion that the Government might some time own and operate all the railroads in Canada including the Canadian Pacific railway? Had he said that, there would be room for the belief that he is a real believer in the principle of public ownership. But the Canadian Pacific railway has been kept out of it all the way. "Do not touch the Canadian Pacific Railway;" that has been the attitude of the Acting Prime Minister. The Canadian Pacific railway is a private corporation, and it comes ill from the Acting

[Mr. Euler.]

Prime Minister to accuse us on this side of being the henchmen of the Canadian Pacific Railway when the evidence rather inclines us to the belief that that may be said of himself.

I believe in public ownership, absolutely. In that respect I may not be in accord with all members on this side; but I am a believer in public ownership on principle. I believe that the time will come when all public services upon which the convenience and prosperity of the people depend can no longer be entrusted to private interests, which often run counter to those of the people. That is my reason for criticising the provisions of this Bill. I want to see public ownership given a fair chance; I do not want to see the cards stacked at the outset in this public ownership game. I have had a little to do with public ownership in a smaller way. Ninety per cent of the people of western Ontario believe in public ownership. In my own city of Kitchener we own practically all the public utilities and have operated them successfully. In Ontario we are going into the operation of railways, and that is one reason why I think this Bill should be carefully scrutinized. I will come to that later, if I have time.

My strongest reason for making suggestions with regard to this Bill is that I believe the people of Canada are making demands for a much wider application of the principle of public ownership than we have to-day, and I do not want to see the project damned in its infancy. If it is a failure now, the whole future development of public ownership in other directions will be set back a generation or more. I believe that the time is not far distant when we shall own all the railways in this country, including the Canadian Pacific railway. The time may not be ripe for the acquisition of the Canadian Pacific railway; financial objections may be raised to that, but if we rise to our duty we shall own and operate successfully, in the interests of the people, not in the interests of private capital, all Canadian railways. I believe also that we will control telephones, telegraphs, and express services and own or control our natural resources, our oil and mineral deposits, etc. The common people may demand before many years—we see indications of it now among the working people and others—that the Government take over the banking interests, which, I believe, in many instances have hampered the development of this country and its interests. Insurance is also a question for nationalization. In a general way,