

Hon. Mr. CALDER: Further than that, unified management cannot come into effect until Parliament itself approves of it. When that time comes the honourable gentleman opposite will have his chance to vote in accordance with that confidence of his which he has expressed so strongly this afternoon.

The main purpose of a debate such as we are now engaged in is the clarification of all the facts and issues involved, in order that every member may exercise his best judgment when the time comes to cast his vote for or against the proposals before us. I am sure that, whatever may be our individual opinions on the question, all will agree that the real issues at stake have gradually but surely taken shape as the debate has proceeded, and little more now remains to be done than to record the decision we have reached. The issues are now pretty well crystallized, and not much further discussion is needed in order that every honourable member may have a clear understanding of them.

As I witnessed the earnest, forceful efforts of our two leaders to drive home their points, pro and con, I could not help feeling a regret that circumstances are such as to require that I should not engage in the debate in a similarly vigorous manner. I must exercise restraint that I should much prefer to cast aside.

All honourable senators who have preceded me in this debate have indicated the very complicated nature of the problem which your committee was called upon to consider. It involved a mass of figures and an array of technicalities and other difficulties that at times were somewhat appalling. However, with patience and perseverance we concluded our work, and I am certain that when our inquiry closed every member of the committee had a much broader grasp of the entire railway situation.

To attempt to discuss this problem in all its aspects and to sift and analyse the mass of evidence presented would, I am sure, necessitate an unusually lengthy statement. This, so far as possible, I intend to avoid. It would be impossible to deal at all adequately with the situation in less than two or three hours, and so those who have spoken have tried to confine their remarks within at most an hour. However, on this occasion, when the matter is before us for general discussion, I feel that those of our members who were not members of our committee are entitled to an expression of my views respecting at least some of the more important phases of the problem as presented to us in evidence.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN.

We now have before us two reports. I shall not refer to them at any length. As the suggested report presented by my desk-mate (Hon. Mr. Beaubien) sets forth clearly, logically and systematically a summary of the main features of the material evidence submitted, as well as the conclusions reached and the reasons therefor, it seems to me that any extensive analysis or elaboration on my part, of the many details of this report, would serve no useful purpose. The report speaks for itself. I may say that I have read the report with the greatest care, in the light of all the evidence and of the duty we were called upon to perform, and I have no hesitation in saying that it meets with my full approval.

At the outset of my remarks I desire to direct attention to, and briefly comment upon, a few of the statements contained in the original report presented by the right honourable member from Eganville (Right Hon. Mr. Graham).

In the first place, it seems to me that the lengthy references to the various services performed by both our railways, but more particularly by the National system, might have been omitted, as all the services are well known, fully understood and appreciated.

Large railway systems in new and developing countries the world around are always planned, built, expanded and operated for purposes generally similar to those referred to, and unless I am very much mistaken the government of every country concerned has always contributed very substantially to these undertakings. The contribution has been made by cash subsidies, guarantees, land grants, exemptions, and loans, and by various other methods. Here in Canada no person will deny that so far as all these pioneering services, as they may be called, are concerned, the State in the past has given an abundance of assistance to the companies in order that the services might be performed and carried on. Under the circumstances, and for very obvious reasons, your committee did not to any appreciable extent deal with this phase of our railway development.

The problem that faced your committee was not to inquire into the reasons why our railroads exist, where their rails are laid, what services they render, or what assistance has been given to them in the past by the State. The only question that confronted your committee may be paraphrased and summarized in this way. We have in Canada two railway systems, each performing well-known and desirable services that must be continued. Owing, however, to a very marked change in economic conditions, both systems have