

*Private Bills*

companies is most advantageous to the province of Quebec, I do not see why the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm is against it.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before the house deals with the activities of the Bell Telephone Company of Canada and section 1 reads as follows:

The business of the company shall be managed by a board of not less than five nor more than 20 directors, as may from time to time be determined by resolution of the shareholders, and each such director shall be proprietor of at least ten shares in the capital stock of the company, or such other additional number of shares, not exceeding forty additional shares—

Mr. Speaker, I cannot see how the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm could enter upon such a ridiculous course as he did a while ago, when we are merely asked to increase the number of directors from 15 to 20.

Here is a company which has a gigantic capital and manages a gigantic affair. It merely asks that the number of its directors be increased.

The hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm takes this opportunity to engage in quite a ridiculous demagoguery and deliver an emphatic speech requesting the nationalization of a company which is merely submitting a petition of an administrative character, asking for an increase in the number of its directors.

What is wrong with that, Mr. Speaker? What is wrong with the fact that a company requests an increase in the number of its directors?

When a company does good business, it is quite normal and legitimate on its part to look for an increase in the number of its directors, with a view to better efficiency which, besides, has been excellent up to the present. Now, the company is more ambitious than that. It wishes to improve its efficiency. In my opinion, it is perfectly justified in submitting to the House of Commons the bill before us, and I feel that the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm is going astray—and it is not the first time, as everyone knows. Everybody knows, Mr. Speaker, how he flies off at a tangent when a serious matter is being discussed; he always tries to divert the question and invariably places it on the level of petty politics.

Mr. Pigeon: I rise on a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member for Lotbinière (Mr. Choquette) claims I am not acting in the public interest in this house. He

has no right to question the work I am doing in the House of Commons and, if he wanted to prove he is working in the public interest, he could be present in the house more often and follow the example of the member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm.

Mr. Choquette: I am taking note of the comments made by the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm, but—

Mr. Dupuis: Ridiculous.

Mr. Choquette: —I doubt very much, Mr. Speaker, that his contribution in this house—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order.

Mr. Choquette: —is as valuable as he claims.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I do not imagine the hon. member wishes to continue dealing with the contribution made to this house by another hon. member, nor do I think such is the question now before us.

Mr. Choquette: I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I shall continue my remarks on the bill under consideration.

I do not see why the member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm is opposed to the bill, for I remember that the number of members on the C.N.R. board of directors was increased from seven to 12 under a Conservative government. The principle of Bill No. S-27 is exactly the same. I do not see why the hon. member is so strongly opposed to it—

Mr. Pigeon: It was a crown corporation.

Mr. Choquette: It does not make sense. Whether or not it is a crown corporation does not matter, Mr. Speaker, the principle is the same.

Mr. Dupuis: That is right.

Mr. Choquette: The hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm should know—even if I know he does not know too much—that a crown corporation operates independently from the government. The government may sometimes grant financial aid to a crown corporation, but it operates as independently as a private company, like the Bell Telephone.

The bill seeks to increase the number of directors of the company, because it is expanding, prosperous, ambitious and daring in its prospects and its projects, and anxious to give satisfaction to the population. But the hon. member for Joliette-L'Assomption-Montcalm strongly objects to that. I wonder