

at this late stage I am not going against government policy, supported by the House of Commons. I say, failing to have the clause deleted—and we could not have that done—at least let us improve the measure as best we can.

Hon. Mr. Euler: Suppose the House of Commons will not accept our amendment.

Hon. Mr. Farris: Perhaps it will not, but we should not be deterred by that thought. I have my own view as to the constitutional limits of what the Senate should do to a government bill. I think we should be very careful before making a very material amendment to a bill brought in by the government, not a decadent government, which is supported by a large majority of the elected house, and which had had the advantage of the opinion of a royal commission. No matter what our personal views may be, we should be very careful. Senator Meighen, when he was here, would not materially amend a government bill in those circumstances. He would thunder against it, and leave the matter to the responsibility of the House of Commons. But as to this small amendment proposed here, I challenge anybody to say that it is in conflict with the recommendation of the royal commission.

Mark you, honourable senators, this amendment was never suggested in the House of Commons, neither was it suggested anywhere else until my honourable friend from Toronto (Hon. Mr. Hayden) proposed it in the committee. So the only consideration it has received at all is the consideration that has been given to it in our committee and in this chamber. That fact imposes a great responsibility on honourable senators.

I am sorry that my honourable friend the leader (Hon. Mr. Robertson) is absent from the chamber at the moment, for I was very much interested in something that he did. Yesterday he referred to the wonderful work done by this committee. This little amendment is the whole crux of the committee's work; my honourable friend knew that well; yet he went out of his way yesterday to express the highest commendation of the careful study and thought that the committee had given to this question.

Hon. Mr. Kinley: The committee were not unanimous.

Hon. Mr. Farris: No, they were not unanimous. There were some honourable gentlemen on the committee—including my honourable friend who has just interrupted me—who I am afraid did not get the full import of the real effect of this. But it was not the minority that the honourable leader was speaking about; he was referring to the fruits of the committee's work. "By their fruits ye shall know them". And the fruits of that committee, after all their study, consisted of the recommendation in favour of this amendment. But today my honourable friend the leader spoke again; and you, Mr. Chairman, if you had listened to him yesterday and again today, and had been so unfortunate as to be blind would have said, "Oh, my, this is the voice of Jacob, but it is the hand of Esau". Then, Mr. Chairman, if you had felt a little farther and got hold of that hairy, clammy hand, you would have known that it was the hand of cabinet unity. That was all that was motivating my honourable friend this afternoon when he did not speak spontaneously from his heart, as he did yesterday, but stood up here and read this rigid thing that was handed on to this honourable Senate.

I say, honourable senators, that there is no reason in the world why we should be concerned with the question of government policy, and above all with the recommendations of the royal commission. Of course we are accepting the royal commission, but does that mean that we are tied hand and foot? Does that mean the Senate should blindly follow word for word the recommendations of the commission? If in our honest hearts we believe that this amendment will improve something that was not pointed out to the royal commission, then it should be passed. If, on the other hand, any honourable senators are of the opinion that it is wrong to trust the Board of Transport Commissioners, and if they think rigidity is the only solution of the question, then they must vote the amendment down. It seems to me that if we look dispassionately at this simple and rational escape clause, that may never be invoked unless some dire necessity arises, the amendment and the committee that brought it in should be supported.

Hon. Mr. Hugessen: I would formally move that the committee now rise, and report progress and ask leave to sit again.

The motion was agreed to.

The Hon. the Speaker: Honourable senators, as it is now 6 o'clock I leave the chair until 8 o'clock this evening.