

provinces have to do with all questions affecting master and servant, employer and employee, the factory acts, the mining laws and similar matters. All of these would immediately have to be brought into the federal arena and the provinces, under our constitution, would have to be parties to the change. Is it conceivable that the various provincial administrations and the people in the different provinces will, at the instance of a new party that has been formed for less than a year, suddenly yield all their control over their natural assets and the powers and rights they exercise as provinces over property and civil rights in order that a federal socialistic state may be formed in Canada? That phase of the matter ought also to be made quite clear by those who are advocating this system. I heard the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre say that he did not wish to argue the question whether it was the crown in the right of the dominion or the crown in the right of the provinces, but if you are going to have a federal socialistic state, you must argue this question, and I submit there is no other form of socialistic state that would meet what my hon. friends have in mind.

May I point out another feature which I think is important? We should not confuse opposition to socialism as stated in the resolution as being at all indicative of opposition to public ownership as such. The hon. members who have had to do with introducing and supporting this resolution have felt that there is a strong sentiment throughout the country in favour of public ownership. I think they rather hope that their socialistic state will receive support from those who favour public ownership. But may I say that public ownership is not only wholly possible, but to-day is actually operating under the system of private property and the social order that at present exist and which they say must be changed. A change to a socialistic state is not required in order to further public ownership. The wisdom of public ownership depends entirely upon the particular need that it is sought to serve, and what in time and place may most effectively serve that need. It does not follow that because public ownership may be good in one field, it will be good in every field. It depends entirely on conditions as they exist at any time and place. Let me illustrate. Those supporting the resolution speak of the post office as a fine example of what industry generally would be like if it were under complete state ownership and control in a state of socialism. The post office, when one stops to think of it, is a great utility which can

best serve, under state control, the interests of a community. The reasons are obvious. In the nature of things, the collection and distribution of mail matter, in order properly to serve the community, must become a monopoly; it would be intolerable to have fifty different operating postal agencies in a country. It is because any competitive arrangement would inconvenience not only the individual citizen but the entire community, that all postal agencies have been brought under one control. That, after all, is the real test whether there should be public ownership and operation with respect to any utility or anything. How is the greatest good for the greatest number likely to be brought about? There are some utilities that are very largely in the nature of natural monopolies. The public interest in such cases may best be served where there is an actual monopoly formed, not a monopoly left to operate as it pleases, but one that will be owned and controlled by the state or subject to state regulation as may best serve the purpose. Because there is a monopoly, it does not necessarily follow that those who own or control it will have everything their own way; they become subject to such control as the state places upon the monopoly. In the case of the post office there is a very special reason why the monopoly should be a state one; the postal service has to do with communications passing from country to country; it is an international organization, and being such, having dealings with governments of other countries, that particular monopoly and social service can in the nature of things best be performed by the state itself.

But the same is not equally true of everything else, true for example of the manufacture of boots and shoes, or of the clothes or of the construction of the houses or of the supply of the food necessary for the people of the country. Because a post office can best be managed by a state monopoly, it does not follow that all the great social services that are ministering to the needs of the people in the way of clothing, food, fuel, shelter, transportation and so forth, should also be made into monopolies and managed by the state. The same arguments do not apply; these services are not in themselves natural monopolies; it is believed that controlled competition serves the public need as a whole better than would a gigantic monopoly in the case of those particular services.

As regards tram cars, there was a time when the public ownership movement had gone only a certain length, that it was felt it would be a good thing to have rival tramway