

the details as to the men who were laid off. I cannot give these details at the moment and I do not know that it would help particularly in the consideration of this bill to give that information. The information in a general way has already been brought down; that is the house has before it, in replies to various questions, the number of employees which the Canadian National had in various years and the number which it has at the present time. That really covers the information the hon. gentleman wishes so far as that road is concerned. He also wanted to know how many superintendents on the Canadian National were civil engineers. I am sorry I cannot tell; there are some who are civil engineers, but I believe even my hon. friend, or myself, neither one of us being a railway man, will realize that a man does not need to be a civil engineer to be a superintendent. According to my information superintendents on the various railways of this and other countries are chosen from various groups of employees. Sometimes they come up from the ranks of the locomotive engineers, the firemen, and other classes of railway workers. And some come from the civil engineers. The reason is, I am informed, that it is considered better to have superintendents of various trainings, it is to the advantage of the road. I shall be glad to give my hon. friend any information I can, but I hope he will not ask for information, as to matters of which I have no knowledge, and cannot reasonably be expected to get.

Mr. POULIOT: Mr. Chairman, it is a good time to understand our position clearly. I do not want to have any evidence repeated. I have here the evidence, the report of the commissioners, the report of the debate in the Senate, and of the Senate committee, and the Hansard of the House of Commons containing the discussion on this bill. I do not wish any evidence to be repeated, but I want new facts to be put before the house. I cannot get them to-day from the Minister of Railways because he does not have them at hand, but if the heads of both railways were here I could secure that information from them. What the hon. minister has said proves that my contention was right.

Now, sir, I have another ground of protest against this bill, I would say a ground of protest at large. I am strongly against the abandonment of governmental responsibility. The government must have a policy with regard to the railways. The government has to foresee. The only way to have that policy applied and applied well is to put the railways

[Mr. Manion.]

under the direction of the Minister of Railways. I do not see why the Minister of Railways is at the same time the Minister of Canals. Both of course are transportation systems, one by rail, the other by water; but canals should rather be under the Minister of Marine. The Minister of Railways has to supervise the whole railway system of this country from coast to coast and that is enough for one man. My idea about such legislation as this is that there is no reason for the government to abandon its responsibility, to put it on other shoulders, the shoulders of trustees whom they appoint, but who will not be responsible to this house. The only way to have the railway problem settled in this country is for the government to have a definite policy and then have it applied by the Minister of Railways to both railway systems and all branches of railways. On our statute books we have an extensive body of railroad legislation. It has been enacted by the parliament of Canada, both houses, it has been given the royal sanction and it is the law of the country. Now shall we vest some individuals with the powers of parliament? I am here as a member of parliament, I and my two hundred and forty-four colleagues have certain rights. We can lay before this house the complaints we have to make, we have the privilege to submit legislation to this house, but as soon as this bill is passed the powers we now have will be handed to other people who will not be responsible to this parliament. Sir, it is a sign of weakness; a strong government should have a strong railway policy and be able to apply it strongly, apply it themselves, and not lean on others to apply it. This is my second ground for objecting very strongly to this bill.

Mr. HEAPS: Mr. Chairman, this act provides for the amalgamation of the two great railway companies in Canada. I should like to address a series of questions to the minister; I presume he has the information available, because the effect of the bill is so great and has to do with so many of our people that I do not think we can over-estimate its importance. Already we have seen some of the results of this cooperation between the two companies; this afternoon the minister referred to the service between Montreal and Chicago, the first result of which was the laying off of probably several hundred employees on the two systems. So far during the discussion of this measure the minister has not given any information to the committee as to what might be the effect of this cooperation on the unemployment situation in Canada. Further, I should say it is common