

and that is another reason why I want to see a strong state-owned and operated railway system in this country. I am quite prepared to concede if you like, for the sake of argument, that a railway may not be run as economically and efficiently by the Government as by a private corporation, but I would rather that it should be run a little less efficiently and economically so long as it is owned by the people of Canada and operated in their interests rather than owned and operated in the interests of a private corporation.

Mr. EULER: Because hon. members on this side are not absolutely satisfied with all the clauses of this Bill, would the minister say that they are necessarily opposed to the principle of public ownership? Because, if so, I desire to protest against such an assertion I am just as much a public ownership man as any hon. member in this House, and I would go a little further—I would also acquire not only the lame ducks but the Canadian Pacific Railway as well.

Mr. ROWELL: I would not think of suggesting anything of the kind. The clauses of the Bill should be discussed on their merits, each and every one of them. The hon. member for Maisonneuve, to whom I rose to reply, based his opposition on the grounds which I am answering, and on which I say I am opposed to him and on which I join issue. I stand for public ownership and operation of this railway system, expanded and enlarged until it is made a thoroughly complete system able to compete on equal terms with the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Mr. McKENZIE: Will the hon. minister answer my question? We are putting a Bill through this Committee that empowers a body of the ablest railway men we can get to build railways anywhere in Canada. They have authority under this Act to build over every inch of the ground included in those forty-four charters. Why do we encumber this new institution with those wrecks? Because we on this side are opposed to this wreckage being thrown upon the country, we are told that we are opposed to public ownership and to any progress in the West. That assertion is nonsensical, it is without a shadow of truth, and I hurl it back into the teeth of any man who chooses to fling it across the floor of the House.

Mr. ROWELL: Which of the clauses that have been adopted gives the power suggested by my hon. friend?

[Mr. Rowell.]

Mr. McKENZIE: Every part of the Bill.

Mr. ROWELL: We are going through this Bill clause by clause; which clause that we have passed in Committee gives the power that my hon. friend suggests?

Mr. McKENZIE: We were given to understand by the Acting Minister of Justice (Mr. Meighen) that this Bill, together with the Railway Act, confers all the power that the company and the Government require to build railways throughout the country. If that is not true, it is not my fault.

Mr. MEIGHEN: The hon. gentleman was given to understand nothing of the sort. We come to clause 23 later—and I may add that it is proposed to offer an amendment to clause 23. That has already been made known to the Committee. No clause which has been passed gives the power the hon. gentleman describes, and he ought to know that. I think he does.

Mr. McKENZIE: This Bill gives power to expropriate lands for the purposes of the beds of railways; what is that for? Does the Minister of Railways (Mr. J. D. Reid), who knows so much about railways that he does not know whether he has a manager or not, or if so, what the manager's salary is,—does he tell us that we have been discussing for hours all the machinery necessary to the acquirement of rights of way from the Atlantic to the Pacific, but that the Bill does not enable us to build the roads?

Mr. J. D. REID: The hon. member knows that we were discussing expropriation after the charter had been granted by this Parliament.

Mr. BUREAU: This Bill must be taken as a whole; we cannot read one clause and put another aside. Section 23 gives the company, with the approval of the Governor in Council, power to construct and operate railway lines.

Mr. J. D. REID: I said yesterday that when we came to that clause I intended to amend it.

Mr. BUREAU: But the clause is in the Bill and we have to consider the Bill as a whole.

Mr. ROWELL: We have not reached it yet.

Mr. BUREAU: We have not reached it, but must we pass all the preceding sections without giving consideration to the power conferred by section 23? When we consider a given section we may go beyond