

ister made the statement that the appointments would be made much in the same manner as the appointment of judges. Undoubtedly Canada has been particularly fortunate in the appointment of judges. Naturally, when these men receive their appointments they bear the political complexion of the party in office.

Mr. BENNETT: Not always.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Perhaps not always, but there are very few exceptions. Despite that fact however, I believe I may say without fear of successful contradiction that most of them, indeed all of them, have fulfilled their duties to the entire satisfaction of the litigants appearing before them, and to the public generally. However, I look upon these appointments from a different standpoint altogether. Judges are appointed to interpret the law and to settle disputes. In this instance, the men appointed will have to spend a very large amount of money. They will have to be business men, in the real sense of the word. No doubt what the hon. member for Quebec East (Mr. Lapointe) has said is quite true. Personally, while I would not trust the judgment of the Prime Minister in all matters, in the selection of these gentlemen I should prefer his judgment linked with that of the Minister of Railways to that of a panel, as is set out by the provision in the legislation.

Moreover, if three gentlemen are to be selected who are going to spend and have control over as much money as the government of Canada spends annually, and if the enterprise is likely to remain in that position, then surely the government of Canada through the governor in council should retain control over appointments. I cannot see that any good purpose would be served by delegating to any body, no matter how worthy a body it might be, the naming of the men from whom selections are to be made. There must be governmental responsibility, if this railway system is to remain, as we now term it, a national railway. So long as it is the railway of the people of Canada the government of the day must take responsibility for it. If they do not, my fear is that we will have the privilege of voting the necessary funds for the carrying on of the railway, but will have no control whatever over its management.

For those reasons I want to voice my opposition to the suggested method of selection. I should very much prefer to leave such selection in the hands of the governor in council. May I say that I heartily agree with and concur in the pro-

[Mr. C. A. Stewart.]

vision for the reduction of the board to three members. Further, I do not believe that so-called political patronage has had very much effect upon the operation and administration of the railways. True, there is some justification for the statement made so frequently to the effect that municipalities and different parts of the country exercise some influence upon the railways. With two competing railway lines in existence, that influence will be exercised again. However, I do not believe that is the reason that the national railways have suffered. As a matter of fact I am not prepared to admit that the national system has suffered much more than the privately owned system now running in opposition. I do sincerely trust that the government will agree to have control remain where it has been, namely in the hands of the governor in council.

Mr. GARDINER: Mr. Chairman, inasmuch as the Prime Minister has been good enough to ask for the opinions of hon. members in regard to this important matter, I shall state my opinion very briefly. The proposal to create a panel does not appeal to me at all, inasmuch as the two remaining trustees will have probably the greater say as to whose names shall be submitted as part of the panel. I am fully in accord with those hon. members who have suggested this afternoon that parliamentary control should continue. I am quite willing to trust any government which may be in power to find the proper men to put into these positions, when vacancies occur. One of the objections I have already voiced to the bill has been the taking away from parliament of practically the whole control over the national railways. So long as we have our present parliamentary institutions, with members of parliament responsible to their electors, parliament should exercise control. I believe the house would do well to ask the Prime Minister to accede to the request which has been made, namely that the governor in council should be responsible for all appointments made to the board of trustees, either in the first instance or to fill vacancies.

Mr. MANION: Mr. Chairman, I shall not speak until the hon. member for West Middlesex (Mr. Elliott) has spoken.

Mr. ELLIOTT: If the minister is about to say that the government has decided to have the appointment of the original trustees and of those who are appointed to fill vacancies made in the same way, then it is not necessary for me to urge what I have stated on a former occasion. Having the power to appoint