

to Canadian National Railways, being a national company and belonging to Canada, I think we have the full right to amend this article. I am completely in favour of it.

Mr. MACKASEY: Mr. Chairman, I am sincerely hopeful that when the board of directors is set up under clause 7 as it presently exists there would be two or more French-speaking Canadians on that board. However, I would like to think that it is done as a result of enlightenment and that it is as a result of education within the railways.

I was just hoping that French-speaking Canadians would be named to this directorate strictly on the facts, and the facts are of course that no race, either English or any other, has a preponderance or monopoly of any virtues in this country, including education itself.

This particular organization is set up basically by two companies, Canadian National Railways and the Canadian Pacific Railway, and certainly Canadian National Railways have been the target of an awful lot of justified criticism in the last few years on the question of nationality. However, Mr. Gordon has shown a degree of enlightenment, perhaps as a result of the pressure of parliament and public opinion, which is encouraging and which I think is prevalent and spreading through industry in this country.

To deny the two companies the opportunity of showing that they do not prefer either of the two founding nations is unfair. If we try to eliminate what we think is an unfair situation by legislation, we are denying Mr. Gordon and Mr. Crump—or the new president of Canadian Pacific Railway—the right to take the position voluntarily; we are denying them the opportunity of saying in effect, “We have made mistakes in the past, but we are doing what we can now to rectify them.” If we were to enact this legislation we would be saying then that they are doing it only because of legislation. What about all the companies for whom we cannot legislate? This is what concerns me greatly.

I will be the happiest man in Quebec if when this is set up we could say, “This is the start of a new era in this country, an era in which all are treated equally not because of legislation but because of education.” That is why I am against this.

Mr. REGAN: I hope the mover and seconder of this motion realize that it would be a far reaching and dangerous precedent. I think they have not thought it out to its conclusion. It is a move that started out with sentiment and genuine concern for what has been done in the past, but surely directors of companies should be selected on the basis of their skill and ability and the contribution they can make. These should be the qualifications, not the accident of birth.

I am wholly in accord with what Mr. Mackasey has just said, but if we are to legislate that every company that is incorporated by parliament is to have people as directors who have one racial strain in their background, then surely we give rise to consideration by other groups that they should be represented. I can conceive that a time might come when this particular railway—as has been mentioned by someone—might have all French-Canadians as directors, but surely the directors should be chosen from among the officers of the company. Another time might it not be the case that by accident more than one would have French-Canadian background?

This is racist legislation, and very, very bad legislation; and I certainly oppose it.

*(Translation)*

Mr. BEAULÉ: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask that question because I think it is very important. So I will put a direct and pertinent question to Mr. Macdougall. As a new company will be set up in Ottawa I am sure you already have the names of the people suggested to manage that company. Have the