

What I wish to emphasize is the following:

There I must for the moment leave the matter, only remarking that I hold as strongly as ever that there can be no true and permanent solution of the problem of London passenger transport without a unification of ownership, administration and finance, in capable and independent business hands, extending to all the local passenger transport undertakings within a widely defined London traffic area.

I leave it to this house whether public ownership is or is not on trial before the commission.

Mr. COOTE: Will the Minister of Railways or the Prime Minister advise the house whether it is expected that the report of the commission will be available before the end of the session?

Mr. BENNETT: I notice in one of the papers a statement that the promise had been made in the speech from the throne that it would be. If hon. gentlemen will look at the speech from the throne they will find that this is not so. A hope was expressed that it might be so. At the moment I cannot answer the hon. gentleman as to whether the report will be ready or not. We, as a government, cannot do more than assist the commission in meeting any request it may make for information, and provide them with the facilities they may ask for in order that they may carry forward and complete their examination. Beyond that I cannot at the moment go, for it will naturally depend upon when the house rises whether or not the report will be available. If the house were to sit long enough, I have no doubt the report would be complete; but having no knowledge as to when hon. gentlemen opposite will permit the house to rise, I am not in a position to indicate when the report may be available.

Mr. LAPOINTE: Is there a possibility of the government acting on the report under the provision for the peace, order and good government of Canada contained in the bill passed this evening?

Mr. BENNETT: Inasmuch as the peace, order and good government provision will expire on May 1 and I have no reason to believe that the report will be made by that time, I think the hon. gentleman will admit that his question was intended more as an indication of his humour than as a desire for information.

Mr. LAPOINTE: My right hon. friend has given us an indication that there will be a new bill presented before the end of this session which will be an improvement on chapter 58 of the statutes of last year. Before that bill is drafted perhaps I might tell my right hon.

friend that we will have strong objections to make to his securing the authority to settle the railway problem of Canada under the provisions of peace, order and good government.

Mr. BENNETT: I may say I agree wholly and entirely with the hon. gentleman.

Mr. MANION: I do not think the remarks of the hon. member for West Lambton (Mr. Gray) should be allowed to pass without a reply from myself. The statement which he quoted from Lord Ashfield was an ordinary business comment referring to the transportation system of the city of London, England; it no more referred to the transportation problem of Canada than it did to the canals on Mars.

Mr. GRAY: It showed his views.

Mr. MANION: He was speaking in ordinary business terms. As a matter of fact, Lord Ashfield has done extraordinary work for the government of England and at the present moment is regarded as close to being a government representative in connection with the transportation work in that country.

I referred to the commission in order to complete my statement, but I made no reference to the ideas of its members in regard to public or private ownership. I tell the committee quite frankly that I have no idea as to the feelings of the members in this regard. Mr. Loree has been quoted before, and it might be naturally concluded that he would tend toward private ownership because for many years he has been the head of a fairly large privately owned railway company. But on the other hand, as I pointed out earlier in the evening, Professor Walter Murray is an openly avowed public ownership man. I know nothing whatever as to the feelings of the rest of the members. Sir Joseph Flavelle was quoted by a previous speaker as being a private ownership man. As a matter of fact, Sir Joseph for some years was a member of the board of the old Grand Trunk Railway, appointed by the government of that day. I do not remember at the moment just which government it was that appointed him.

Mr. LAPOINTE: The Union government.

Mr. MANION: That government was made up of very good Conservatives and very good Liberals, so that he was appointed by a combination of both.

These men, outstanding in the business and professional world, were selected as a royal commission to deal with the railway problem of Canada. I doubt whether a more outstanding or abler commission has ever been appointed in this country.