

not help us to get on with the consideration of this matter if the minister were asked what response he feels disposed to make to that?

Mr. MANION: Mr. Chairman, I am entirely agreeable to that, because as a matter of fact it leaves it exactly where it is, except that it makes it more definite. The Prime Minister is apparently anxious, as I am, that everyone should feel that the matter is being dealt with in a way that is absolutely above board, as is the case. I am quite agreeable to inserting after the word "auditors"—I presume that is where it would be—"for the year 1934," which would make it definitely and distinctly an appointment for this year, until we reappoint them or appoint someone else next year.

I could more easily understand the position taken by the right hon. leader of the opposition if we were changing the auditors, but as a matter of fact the auditors, for whom I have a great deal of respect, were there when we came into power and had been for some years previously; they have had very wide experience, I have personally discussed with them their experience and have come to the conclusion that they are a splendid group of auditors. For those reasons I think we are on such solid ground in reappointing them that I do not feel like withdrawing from the position except to add at the suggestion of the Prime Minister the words "for the year 1934" which definitely and distinctly makes the appointment for one year. The matter should probably have been discussed last year if there was any objection, because the words are distinct enough—I was merely speaking from my own memory when I spoke first—the words are so distinct that had we gone into it it would either have been decided to leave it as it is, which is exactly what we are doing, carrying out the act of last year, or if we had wanted to leave it entirely to the House of Commons we should have changed it. But I repeat, I am advised by the legal advisers of the crown that what it means is that we should pass a statute. I do not wish to prolong the discussion, but I do not see any reason for withdrawing it at the present time. I should like to have it carried. And I feel that my hon. friends should have no real objection, particularly in view of the fact that I think these are the auditors whom they themselves appointed.

Mr. STEWART (Edmonton): Mr. Chairman, that is not the point that we are arguing. We are not objecting to the individuals who are being appointed, but we are pointing out again that this is a departure from an important principle. True it was done last year, done against our protest, interjecting the

[Mr. C. W. Bell.]

Senate into the control of the expenditure of this money. That is the objection we take. We believe that inasmuch as the House of Commons has full and complete control over expenditure and over the revenues of the country without interference by the Senate, it was a mistake to interject the Senate into the matter of the administration of the railway at all. While this present item is perhaps not very important, yet we do desire to register our protest again against anything that in any way brings the Senate into even seeming control of the public expenditure.

Mr. BENNETT: I am sure the hon. gentleman has overlooked one fact. The reason this provision is here I take it is that the Auditor General of Canada cannot be removed except on the joint address of both houses of parliament. There is the analogy. My memory is not sufficiently good as to what the causes were that brought about the present legislation, but it must be within the memory of every hon. member in this chamber that the Auditor General cannot be removed from office except on the joint address of both houses of parliament. These auditors are to be appointed by a resolution of parliament, which is the converse of the provision that the Auditor General can be removed only by a joint address of both houses of parliament. So now the auditors of this system are appointed by what amounts to a joint address of both houses of parliament, though a joint address would be an improper method of procedure; it is the resolution of parliament mentioned in the act, which of course means a statute.

It would serve no useful purpose to enter into a discussion as to why joint addresses of both houses of parliament are necessary to bring about certain results, but the question of expenditure as distinguished from the auditing of expenditure is so well known as to not require very much discussion. This is the house in which money bills originate, yet every day the Senate deals with legislation touching on public expenditures, and I suppose it will continue to do so as long as it exists. There is no bill which leaves this chamber which is not passed upon by the Senate. It has been said that it is not competent for the Senate to amend a supply bill. There was a difference of opinion as to that; one eminent authority said the Senate had that power. I have always accepted the view that there was no power in the Senate to amend a supply bill or any bill of that character.

It will be recalled that it was in connection with a subsidy bill that the Senate asserted