

yesterday by the honourable senator from Vancouver (Hon. Mr. McRae).

During the sittings of the committee one new expression, at least, crept into the discussion. It is one that I think may bring us nearer to a clear view of the possible solution which every citizen is awaiting in anxiety and no little discomfort. Someone has introduced the expression, "rationalization of the railways." I should like to translate that expression into simple language, as "getting some common sense into our attitude toward the railways." Such a viewpoint, giving fair and equal consideration to both the government-owned and the privately-owned railway system, would, I believe, enable us to do away with most of the evils inherent in both systems, or, at any rate, most of the evils which result from the necessity of having both systems. I think that viewpoint would be more in agreement with the ideas of the man in the street, the ordinary citizen who pays his full share of the costs of the railways and of all the other disastrous things which we and our colleagues in the other House and our predecessors in political life have inflicted upon him. It is this viewpoint of the man in the street, the individual taxpayer, that I should like to set forth in the few remarks which I contribute to this debate.

The whole question, to my mind, can be brought down to one single statement of fact, namely, that we have too much railway transportation in Canada. There lies the evil. It has been pointed out in both Houses of the Canadian Parliament with unflinching regularity for more than twenty years. It might be said to resemble the weather in that everyone criticizes it, but no one does anything about it. Everybody has agreed that the situation is serious, but so far no one has the courage to prescribe the remedy to cure the trouble.

I submit that this is not a matter for panaceas and quack remedies. It is a straight and simple question of putting common sense into public administration. This is no political problem. It is a straight question of economics. The politician will object that any government which attempted to solve this problem would commit political suicide. Perhaps so. But I should be inclined to go further and say that it is time a man arose in Canadian public life who had sufficient courage to commit political suicide if necessary in order to save this Dominion from national suicide.

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. RAINVILLE: As Talleyrand said, "Pesez les hommes, ne les comptez pas"—"weigh the men, do not count them." This

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is as applicable to-day as it was when the words were first spoken.

Can such a personality arise at this moment? For all we know, the man may be sitting in our midst, he may be sitting in another chamber, or he may be living outside of Parliament at the present time. But of one thing we may be sure: if we politicians do not find him, the people will sooner or later, and it will be a sorry day for us if the people impose him upon us.

I might remind my honourable hearers of a great statesman who, during a time of great national crisis, a little over two decades ago, chose duty rather than party, thus sacrificing his political career that Canada might live. Sir Robert Borden lived and died honoured and esteemed throughout this Dominion and the world by friends and adversaries alike.

Some Hon. SENATORS: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. RAINVILLE: I grant you we cannot discuss a problem like Canada's railway burden without taking cognizance of the upheaval which the whole world is going through, and which affects social, economic and political conditions in all nations. This has frequently come to the surface in this debate, particularly when we have run into discussions on the merits or demerits of public ownership.

I am no partisan of public ownership. I have many reasons for not favouring it. The principal one is its dismal failure wherever it has been tried. But in this connection honourable senators will, no doubt, listen with interest to a quotation from an article by Louis Rougier, published in *La Revue de Paris* under the title "France, réveille-toi"—"France, awake!" Mr. Rougier speaks of a return to "liberalism." This word, obviously, is taken in the philosophical sense, not in the narrow sense associated with it in Canadian party politics. He says:

A return to liberalism can be accomplished only by a reversal of public opinion, when the individual will at last realize that public ownership is nothing but a lure; that the public, far from benefiting from its own bounties, is only the wasteful paymaster of the system, and its too complacent victim.

By maintaining fantastically onerous administration machinery, a police system excessively annoying to the public; by supporting bankrupt enterprises with subsidies and at the expense of the whole economy; by running vast nationalized enterprises at a loss; by the practice of an economic policy evolving from protectionism to prohibitionism, public ownership, always short of money, devours the country's savings and leads the people into general misery under ever-increasing restraint in the midst of growing insecurity.

Quoting at length from Roman history, Mr. Rougier in one place cites the last words