

It has been stated that the legislation passed by parliament created a precedent. While the legislation is only of a temporary nature enacted to deal with this particular dispute, I believe this precedent to be a healthy one particularly when the result of it so well illustrates the regard our people have for the law. Within thirty-six hours of the opening of Parliament the Railways had resumed operations, the men were back at work, and the freight trains were rolling on their way. It is hoped by every one that the provisions of the Bill whereby an arbitrator is to be appointed will not be invoked and that the points of difference will be settled by the negotiations which are to take place between the railway representatives and the labour leaders.

What will be the effect of the recent dispute upon the economy of our mainline railways. This question cannot be accurately answered until the negotiations have been completed or the arbitrator has handed down his decision. Undoubtedly it will have some bearing on the question of costs and I would not like to express any opinion thereon until the matter has been finalized.

Here let me take this opportunity of paying tribute to the trucking industry for its marvelous job during the nine-day railway strike. There was never any doubt in my mind that the trucking industry was well organized and was capable of assisting Canada not only in an emergency such as the railway strike, but of fulfilling in an efficient manner its every day responsibility to the shipping public of Canada. The Federal Government was criticized for not appointing a co-ordinator of highway operations to centralize the movement of freight and conserve transportation to essential products. This, of course, the Federal Government could not do as it has no jurisdiction over highway transport and furthermore the industry showed that it was capable of fulfilling its responsibility without any federal assistance.

The railways are great employers of labour. They are also great purchasers, the biggest buyers we have. Their needs are tremendous. When you consider that the Canadian National Railways spent around \$200 million last year for new equipment, ties, fuel and general materials, you will have some idea of the contribution the railways make to industry and to the economy as a whole, apart altogether from the work they do. And don't forget that they are substantial taxpayers.

Notwithstanding all their difficulties, the railways are continuing to give this country yeoman service. Now and again travellers and shippers may have cause for complaint. In such a vast and complex system, mistakes will happen: a train may be late, a package may go astray, an employee may give a gruff answer; no organization, no individual, is perfect. But on the whole I think you will agree with me that we have every reason to be proud of our Canadian railways. They are run efficiently, economically and courteously. Every officer and employee has a sense of public responsibility. In so far as lies within their power, they not only maintain but continuously strive to improve the high standards of service we have learned to expect of them.

May I close on this note. As we go into the last half of the present momentous century we can humbly yet very proudly declare that Canada is on the march. A great destiny is before us. We have the people, we have the natural resources, and we have the productive capacity to reach to leadership. Transportation is the giant by whose strides we can measure our progress as a nation.
