

Legislation Respecting Railway Matters
national interest by not convening parliament.

They are always expecting to do something. Job security is one thing that affects labour men everywhere. They are frightened that automation will reduce or perhaps remove their jobs. This has been the situation during the last two years. Tonight the Prime Minister says: We have ideas on this subject but we are not going to tell you at this time. We have a right to know so that labouring men across Canada will know what the policy is. I look over there at the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin), a man with wide international experience, and I can just imagine how he feels after what he said in 1960. I think I ought to recall that to him. I do so, of course, with that natural diffidence that he always displays. What did he say? Well, in 1960, the matter was before the house. We introduced legislation to stop the strike before it started. The Prime Minister has said we had lots of time; he had plenty of time too.

I repeat what I said this afternoon. My information is the Prime Minister was told by labour leaders on Sunday night, August 21, that the strike would start on Friday next. They knew officially on the Monday. The Minister of Labour, in a very attractive television appearance, admitted he knew unofficially on Sunday.

Mr. Nicholson: I did not.

Mr. Diefenbaker: Well, I have the record here and I should like to read it for the benefit of the house. I must say it is broken into a lot of sections. They knew and they failed to act. What did they do in 1960? On that occasion the Prime Minister of today said:

What we are faced with in this legislation is compulsory—

Mr. Pickersgill: Would the right hon. gentleman give me the page, please?

Mr. Diefenbaker: I will always give you the page.

Mr. Pickersgill: I should like to follow the right hon. gentleman.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I quote:

What we are faced with in this legislation is compulsory action—

Mr. Pickersgill: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker; I think we are entitled to have the reference.

[Mr. Diefenbaker.]

Mr. Speaker: Order; I understand that the Minister of Transport is raising a point of order.

Mr. Pickersgill: My point of order is that when a reference is made to *Hansard* it is a courtesy to give the page number so that hon. members may follow.

Mr. Diefenbaker: That is true, and if I can approximate the page, I think he can find it.

Mr. Pickersgill: We know how accurate the right hon. gentleman is.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I have the reference; it is page 349. The minister has the book opened at the right page. You never ask a question unless you know the answer. I continue to quote from page 349:

What we are faced with in this legislation is compulsory action, compulsory implementation of a minority report.

Then, he goes on to speak about the powers of those who sit opposite today. I continue to quote:

In the first place, I think we would have been more successful than the government has been in settling this dispute through discussion and agreement.

● (9:30 p.m.)

This is when they were thinking about it. With the responsibility they have today, we now have an answer for that. He continued:

If, however, we had not been successful in our intervention in settling this dispute by negotiation or agreement, what would we have done in that situation after negotiations between the two parties had broken down? I shall be happy to put on the record what we would have done.

It is interesting to find the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill) reading that page because he is realizing how incongruous was the argument of the Prime Minister a few minutes ago.

First, we would have introduced legislation which would have made this strike unnecessary—

The Prime Minister forgot that, though the Minister of Transport is now studying this particular page of *Hansard*.

—because we agree with the Minister of Labour that it is impossible to contemplate the unhappy consequences of a railway strike at this time. Second, we would have based that legislation on the report of the conciliation board, because we do not believe that parliament should compel men to continue to work for wages which are lower than the conciliation board found to be fair and reasonable—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Pearson: You gave them nothing at all.