

strike occurred. Indeed, this bill asks that negotiations be continued for a further thirty days, and if at that time an arbitrator has not been agreed upon the government may, at the request of the parties, extend the period. In the final analysis the government asks the railways to resume operations and the men to return to work. I am hopeful, honourable senators, that this request will be met.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. John T. Haig:** Honourable members, I hope that I will not say anything that will arouse an acrimonious debate in this house, but the fact is that the railways are the life-line of Canada. Confederation would never have been but for the bands of steel which cross this country. The Maritime Provinces entered confederation on condition that a railway be built from that area to the central provinces. British Columbia made a similar demand before coming into confederation. The Prairie Provinces were not settled to any extent at that time, but that area could easily have been serviced by an American railway line. The distance from where I live to the nearest American railway is only about 65 miles. My honourable friend from Lethbridge (Hon. Mr. Buchanan) is, I think, about 25 miles from an American railway.

**Hon. Mr. Buchanan:** I am about 55 or 60 miles away.

**Hon. Mr. Haig:** In any event, the present Prairie Provinces were then territories and did not bother with terms.

We start out with the railway system as the life-line of our country. In the course of our development two provinces have never felt the impact of the freight rate structure on their products. I refer to Ontario and Quebec, which because of their proximity to the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River, have never suffered from transportation problems in the same way as have the outlying parts of Canada. British Columbia, for instance, has been relieved to some extent by reason of her ability to ship via the Panama Canal route, but the people of Western Canada and of the Maritime Provinces are very seriously affected by the operation of the railway systems, and particularly by the cost of shipping freight. I would point out to honourable senators that if it were not for the Crow's Nest Pass agreement, which is now in statutory form, the farmers of the three Prairie Provinces would not be able to continue their grain operations. The rates under this agreement concern only the shipment of grain east and west.

**Hon. Mr. Aseltine:** Export.

**Hon. Mr. Haig:** Export grain, shipped east or west. Because of the Crow's Nest Pass agreement the whole impact of the freight rate structure does not fall as heavily as it otherwise would on the three Prairie Provinces.

I would say, honourable senators, that ninety-nine per cent of the people of Canada will hail with delight the passage of this bill tonight.

**Some Hon. Senators:** Hear, hear.

**Hon. Mr. Haig:** The only question that comes to my mind is whether the provisions of the bill are fair to all parties concerned. During the past fifty years, as was pointed out by the honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) this afternoon, there has been great development in labour relations. We must face the fact that labour has a tremendous backing. We sincerely feel that the men and women who labour are entitled to a fair day's pay in return for a fair day's work. That is fundamental. Provided a man does his job well, there should be no discrimination against him just because the boss does not like him. I need scarcely remind honourable members that the children of a labourer father who comes home at five or six o'clock in the evening, have just as much regard and esteem for their father as have the children of the father who comes home in a limousine. Furthermore, the children of the labourer have the same rights in this country as the children of the father who rides in a limousine.

**Hon. Mr. Euler:** Of course. That is fundamental.

**Hon. Mr. Haig:** I do not want to cast a vote in this house, or elsewhere, which would in any way destroy the fundamental rights that labour has acquired in its dealing with organizations which employ it, except in circumstances where the union has usurped the right of parliament to deal with matters affecting all the people.

I have no objection to clause 2 of the bill, which provides that the railways must resume operations and that the men must go back to work. As to the increase of four cents per hour, as provided by section 3, I am not very much concerned. What I am concerned about is the fact that we are approaching a new development in labour-management relations.

The honourable senator from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck), I think referred this afternoon to what is known as the Lemieux Act. I believe that Act went further in protecting the rights of labour than any other piece of legislation. The measure before us meets that Act head on. The honourable leader of the government has said that