

know what was fair and equitable under the circumstances, and yet, with all that information and with all those reports and with all the warnings the Government has had, and with the broad knowledge of the strangulating effects of a railroad strike, it sat back and waited as if transfixed with fear for the inevitable strike which has certainly taken place. It is a shocking thing to think how idly the members of the Government gazed. It is true the Government sat by, and it is true that on August 22 the official report of the unions was that they would strike on August 26. The Government for weeks ahead knew that this was coming, and it should have had ready, as we had ready in 1960, legislation to nip the strike in the bud, legislation which would have prevented this strike from taking place, legislation which would have sent the workers back again to proper collective bargaining when they knew there would be no nonsense under all the circumstances. Yet they delayed; they did nothing.

Then, even when the strike is on us, on August 26, without any legislation prepared, without any plans made, they still stood dazed, and did nothing except call Parliament for August 29. Then, with all these days, with all this information before them, with all these reports from people whom they had confidence in, all we had from them when the great day came, when Parliament assembled on August 29, was one of the most astonishing bills ever produced. Contrary to all the advice they had received, contrary to all the injunctions that they had heard of, they produced a bill offering 6 per cent for 1966 without any outline of any other plans for the future, and ordering the workers back to work. It was unrealistic, so unrealistic that it shocked the conscience of even the public that was suffering as a result of the strike.

And then we had a third stage; for three days the Government sat and listened to a barrage of effective criticism, of helpful criticism, and stubbornly maintained the position that it took originally, that it would be 6 per cent for 1966 and no further concessions. They heard the Tories in the other place through their great leader make a reasoned speech outlining that the plans, the recommendations in the report of Mr. Justice Munroe as to wages, should be implemented in this bill. They stubbornly refused to do so until in their own Liberal caucus a rebellion broke out that forced them to capitulate and bring about this bill which was finally passed today.

Hon. Mr. Smith (Queens-Shelburne): Were you there?

Hon. Mr. Choquette: He does not have to be there.

Hon. Mr. Walker: There were so many leaks from your own caucus, even from some of my honourable friends on the other side of this house, that I had a full report within an hour of what took place. Obviously my friend was not there or he would not be laughing.

Hon. Mr. Smith (Queens-Shelburne): I was there.

Hon. Mr. Walker: Then there was a fourth stage of this inability to take proper action today when there was a complete volte-face, when the Government could not do enough to solace the Opposition, could not do enough to accept the suggestions of the Opposition. The Government comes out of its reverie at last and at the very last moment, when realism is forced upon it by the argument of the Leader of the Opposition—who, in order to save time, was the only one to speak on behalf of the ninety-five Conservatives—it makes amendments to the bill increasing the 6 per cent for 1966 to 18 per cent for two years. It finally adopted the Munroe formula, and then to save face,—it is an old eastern custom to commit hara-kiri if you cannot save face—it said that the railway workers should have known all along that the government always intended to give them 18 per cent. Did you ever in your life hear such ridiculous nonsense? Even senators on the other side had no idea that they meant 18 per cent when they said 6 per cent, and if they had no knowledge of this, how could the railway workers be apprised of it? Are they supposed to be mind readers?

The harm has been done now; by noon tomorrow the economy will have suffered a week of strangulation. It cannot now be helped; it is all behind us. Most of us on this side, though I think there may be one exception, want the bill to pass. It is not because we are satisfied with the bill, not at all. But we want to get the trains rolling again.

Many of us would like to see spelled out some of the ancillary terms which had been outlined in Mr. Justice Freedman's report, or, at least, to have some guideposts given for those who are going to engage in collective bargaining, as to what the opinion of Parliament is in connection with such matters as pensions, life insurance, holidays, job securi-