

most unusual nature—consideration of the MacPherson commission report—which changed government thinking. We want to see that second bill, and there is no reason why the government should not make it available at once. Naturally everyone wants to know its contents.

When an order is made in this house requiring men to go back to work I believe that those Canadians involved will do so. In spite of a few who argue to the contrary, labour has been law abiding in this nation.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I ask the Prime Minister to let the house see this document that was found in an embryonic stage two days after the strike was called and which represents something, as it turned out, that had not been a previous consideration. We want to know the basis of this legislation. The government by resolution introduced a measure in this regard I believe in March of 1964. It was proceeded with again in September, but died a natural death. We want to see what the government has evolved and the changes it has in mind so we may know who is going to pay what. Is the principle that there shall be non-discrimination in freight rates in every part of Canada to be preserved? We want to know the answer to that.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Diefenbaker: We are not making a request that is unfair. After all, we are meeting because of an emergency. Rules are going to be put aside, as they should be. There are two bills; let us see them. I made that request on Friday and have been waiting ever since for an answer. Mr. Speaker, we shall co-operate in spite of the fact that we face a government which cannot govern; a government that is helpless in confusion; a government whose inaction which has culminated in this case not only in a crisis for Canada but a crisis of incompetence in the government.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. T. C. Douglas (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, in the opinion of the New Democratic Party we cannot deal with the railway strike in isolation. This strike is the culmination of a long process of indecision and procrastination on the part of the government, and if parliament is going to deal with the strike situation at this time it is our contention that it must deal also with the basic causes which have produced the strike.

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Legislation Respecting Railway Matters

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear.

Mr. Douglas: For two years the members of this party have pointed out to the government that unless it grappled effectively with the rising cost of living and the demands for wage increases, labour disputes and strikes would inevitably follow. These strikes have taken place and we are now faced with the largest to date. The fact is that the government has sat idly by for ten months during which there has been no effective collective bargaining between the railways and the railway employees.

● (3:10 p.m.)

Throughout this time the railway companies have stalled. To date they have not offered one red cent to their employees. No mediator was appointed until the strike had been announced and the Prime Minister then asked the Minister of Labour to bring the parties together. No action has been taken on the implementation of the Freedman report, which is a vital factor in providing some measure of job security for the railway employees; and throughout the more than three years that this government has been in office there has been no clear statement of a transportation policy. The Prime Minister said this afternoon that the government could not call parliament to introduce legislation to prevent a strike, but any time in the last three years the government could have done something about the recommendations of the MacPherson report. It could have provided legislation which would have enabled the railway companies to know their financial position and put them in a position where they could have made some definite financial offer in collective bargaining negotiations with their employees.

We contend that the railway strike is merely the top of the iceberg, and that underneath there are great disruptive forces at work within our society. We do not think the government can use the crisis psychology of a strike to force through legislation which will penalize one section of our population. We recognize that parliament must deal responsibly with the strike and with the effect it will have upon the Canadian economy. We contend at the same time that parliament must now, while we are sitting, grapple with the total problem and do something about the causes which have produced this strike and are likely to produce other strikes. If the government is going to introduce legislation to restrict wages and to determine wage rates for a certain group of employees in this