

I do not want to see compulsion; neither do I want to see the government of this country try to make any man work at any particular job. Nevertheless, I do not think that any one group of men should be allowed to tie up industry in this country by selfishly trying to get more out of their fellow citizens than they are entitled to, for that is all it amounts to if their demands are out of line. I do not wish anything I have said today to be construed as a charge on my part that the striking railway workers were asking for more pay than they were entitled to receive. I have not compared their rates of pay with those of employees of other companies, and I am not well enough informed on the matter to make a positive statement. But regardless of whether the workers were underpaid or overpaid, in my opinion they had no right to disrupt industry all across Canada, and attempt to bludgeon the employers into a settlement.

I should like to hear the strike question discussed further, and have other members express their views, so that the general public may have the real facts and protect themselves against any future stoppage of the wheels of industry in Canada.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. A. N. McLean: Honourable senators, I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate the honourable senators who moved and seconded the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Parliament was called into this emergency session to deal with matters of great importance. The bill to end the railway strike which had paralyzed this country was presented by the government and dealt with by parliament in a prompt and efficient manner. I believe the Canadian people appreciate the prompt action of this honourable body and the other branch of parliament.

I should like to express my appreciation of what was said in this house on Wednesday last by the honourable senator from Vancouver South (Hon. Mr. Farris) with reference to Donald Gordon. I have known Mr. Gordon for a long time, and during the war years I had the honour to be associated with him when, as Chairman of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, he was in charge of price controls. I never worked with a man who surpassed him in ability, fairness of mind, rugged honesty and sincerity of purpose. Mr. Gordon won the deep admiration and respect of all who were associated with him for the fine and beneficial work he carried out for the people of this country during the war years. He did a more effective job of holding down prices for the consumers of

Canada than was done in any other country of the world. His record is a matter of history, and it should never be forgotten.

I should perhaps add that when Mr. Gordon was doing a big job as Chairman of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board, a forty-hour, or fifty-hour week was out of the question for him. I know that he worked sixty or seventy hours a week during the war years; and he is still working very long hours. He came up the hard way, and has always been used to work. Further, he has proved himself to be the friend of the ordinary people and to have their interests at heart, and any criticism of him in this respect has no foundation in fact. He has never spared himself in working in the interests of all the people, and thousands can testify to the kindness and sympathetic consideration shown by him when they had reason to discuss their problems with him.

As we know, Mr. Gordon recently evolved a sound and constructive plan for the re-organization of the finances of the Canadian National Railways. Anyone who has studied this plan cannot but realize what a help it will be to this great institution when it is put into effect. The plan should receive unanimous parliamentary support, because I believe that it will be a great step forward in the long history of the Canadian National Railways.

Turning to other matters, the government has been criticized in this chamber in relation to the increased cost of living. I know that one commodity which is of great importance as a food, and which is produced in my part of the country, has not gone up in price. Fish prices along the Atlantic coast, particularly in the Bay of Fundy area, have been stable for a longtime. I refer to fish around the Bay of Fundy area. Many kinds of good fish can be purchased by consumers in different parts of Canada at very moderate prices, so I can assure this house that the fishing industry of New Brunswick and, I believe, that of the other Maritime Provinces is not raising the cost of living by any general increase of prices. What we need in the Maritimes, of course, is a larger export market. We purchase the great majority of our manufactured products from central Canada, and in order to pay for these products we must export.

Last year I called the attention of the house to the disruption of Commonwealth trade by all the restrictions imposed on it by the sterling bloc, led by the United Kingdom government. I gave the loss of our West Indies trade as an outstanding example of this disruption.