

Hon. George H. Barbour: Honourable senators, I first want to congratulate the Honourable the Speaker on his reappointment to the high office which he so eminently filled during the last session. Also I want to compliment the new senators. I am sure they have found in this chamber the friendly feeling which former senators found when they first came here. To the mover and the seconder of the motion for an Address I extend my warmest congratulations on the high order and excellent delivery of their speeches.

To the retiring Leader of the Government (Hon. Mr. Haig) I would like to extend very best wishes, and the hope that he will continue to serve in the Senate for many years to come. To the new Leader (Hon. Mr. Aseltine) I want to say that if I were asked what qualifications a man should have in order to equip him to occupy this position I could not think of anything better than service in this chamber and participation in its deliberations for 22 years under Liberal leadership. I feel honourable senators will agree with me that our new leader is well qualified, and we are glad to see him in that position.

I turn now to the Speech from the Throne, one paragraph of which reads as follows:

My Government regrets to have to report that efforts to avert a strike of firemen on the Canadian Pacific Railway were unsuccessful.

I am sure all honourable senators will agree with the Government in that statement.

This country is what it is because people worked, and worked hard. Honourable senators who are here in this house did not come through life along an easy path, but rather they worked hard and produced for the country. Now, the Canadian Pacific Railway is a private organization. We also have a Government-owned railway, the Canadian National. If you travel from Halifax to Vancouver and observe the trains that you travel on, go through the different railway stations and yards—in Moncton, for instance, the Canadian National is building a freight yard which covers eight acres of ground—and take a look at the trackage in Montreal and all over the country, you cannot help being impressed by the tremendous amount of equipment that is in use.

I believe all honourable senators have received a copy of the annual report of the Canadian National Railways. In it I read that the company is asking for more money at this time when the cost of living is about the highest in any period in our history. The report contains a chart which shows that employees receive 56.8 per cent of the dollar that the railway takes in, plus 5.4 per cent in pensions and health and welfare benefits,

making a total of 62.2 per cent. I think it is time the railwaymen considered the fact that the railway needs a greater share of this revenue than it is now getting, in view of the balance sheet for this year which shows a deficit of \$29,500,000. I have known quite a few railwaymen who were looking for jobs, and there always seemed to be a dozen or more looking for the one job; but after the men were placed in a job for a while they began to look for more pay. I do not think it is always the men themselves who are seeking higher pay, but that some of the officials higher up urge them to do so.

Hon. Mr. Quinn: It is the agitators, the officials of the labour organizations.

Hon. Mr. Barbour: I mean the officials of the union.

The Speech from the Throne has this also to say:

You will be asked immediately to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act in order to extend for a further six weeks, during the current year, the period during which special seasonal benefits may be paid.

I think this Government should have a very warm spot in its heart for the St. Laurent administration, the last Liberal Government. When the present administration came into office, in June 1957, it found during the following winter that there was more unemployment than there had been in previous years. It also found that through wise planning and sound legislation on the part of the previous administration there was more than \$900 million in the Unemployment Insurance Fund. Now, it did not take much thought or planning to extend by two months the period during which unemployment benefits would be paid. That is what the Government chose to do last session. At the present session we have already passed legislation granting a further extension for the payment of seasonal unemployment benefits until June 29.

I am of the opinion that this action is not going to help the present Government. The Unemployment Insurance Act was created for a purpose, namely, to carry people over the winter months when unemployment occurred, and the employee, the employer and the Government contributed to the fund. The extension of time over which benefits may be paid will, I think, create unemployment rather than prevent it. If times next winter are about as they are now I would not be at all surprised if we have more and more people looking for unemployment insurance.

I come next to the housing bill, under which some \$350 million was allocated for the building of houses. I wonder whether