

Threatened Rail Strike

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prime Minister): I am sure the hon. gentleman would agree that any designation of proposals on the part of the government would not be beneficial to bringing about that spirit of negotiation that is so desirable as between members of the labour unions and the railways. There was a full and complete discussion in this house on this matter, and I am sure the views that were expressed, as recorded in *Hansard*, by members on both sides of the house will naturally be known to the officials of the unions concerned and the railways.

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier): May I ask a supplementary question. In view of the statement the Prime Minister made a moment ago, and the fact that the hearings of the royal commission on transportation have just been completed and there will be a date fixed for argument, I wonder if the Prime Minister is still of the view, as he was on an earlier occasion, that it will be possible for the commission to hand down its report on the matters under discussion by March 31?

Mr. Diefenbaker: While I have not received official word in that connection, my hope is that there should be available, if not the complete report, an interim report in respect of those matters with which the royal commission was charged so as to enable the fullest consideration to be given by the house prior to the date mentioned as a target date during the progress of the debate on this matter.

Mr. Hazen Argue (Assiniboia): May I ask a further supplementary question for clarification. Does the Prime Minister anticipate that this interim report will be sufficient for the carrying out of all the statements he made earlier this session, namely with reference to applications to the board of transport commissioners in connection with freight rates; or can the Prime Minister now say whether the freight rate freeze will continue until the final report has been made?

Mr. Diefenbaker: Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. gentleman would not expect me to engage in a hypothetical discussion as to what decisions might or might not be recommended by the royal commission, or indeed to cross that stile he asks me to walk over before we are actually in a position to see the stile.

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): May I ask a supplementary question regarding the proposed negotiations between the parties. I wonder if the Prime Minister is going to take

[Mr. Pearson.]

any steps to put into effect the statement he made on November 30, as recorded on page 359 of *Hansard*:

If there is an agreement to raise wages it shall go back to January 1, 1960.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I am not going to re-debate the questions that were debated at that time on the orders of the day.

Mr. Argue: You made a lot of commitments.

DRUGS**ANNOUNCEMENT RESPECTING TREATMENT OF ADDICTS**

Hon. E. D. Fulton (Minister of Justice): Mr. Speaker, I wish to announce that the government has approved a new approach to the problem of drug addiction and the treatment of both criminal and non-criminal addicts in Canada. I am making this announcement also on behalf of my colleague the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

The program has two main aspects; steps that will be taken by the federal government in the field of purely federal authority, and measures that may be taken in co-operation with the provinces, if they so wish, in areas where the authority is primarily provincial. The broad general outline of the second portion has already been laid before the provinces for their consideration.

Under the first head, important changes will be made with respect to the apprehension, trial and sentencing of offenders, as well as with respect to their treatment while within, and their supervision after release from, our institutions. The full program envisages the establishment by the federal government, as soon as possible, of special institutions for the segregation and treatment of drug addicts. The timing of the establishment of new institutions, and their nature, will depend to a considerable extent on the degree to which the provinces wish to co-operate, under the portion of the program to be mentioned later. In any event, however, it is of the utmost importance that facilities for segregation should be provided in the existing penitentiary system as soon as possible. Only by segregating the addicts from the general penitentiary population can adequate treatment programs be undertaken. Such segregation will also represent a significant step forward in preventing the spread of addiction.

In order to enable the system to produce the most effective results with respect to criminal addicts, legislative changes will be made to provide procedures for the determination of the question of whether an accused is an addict, and to provide further that if so found, and if convicted of the charge of illegal possession, appropriate sentence to "custody for