

So much has been said about him in the press and elsewhere that I can add little, except to say that we have lost a wise counsellor whose good judgment and sound advice brought us through difficult times and would be invaluable now.

The two speakers who preceded me today have not had a great deal to say about the matter that I propose to deal with at the outset. This session was called for the purpose of discussing the Korean situation and the railway problem. I should like to speak first of the latter, because of its effect upon the western and eastern provinces. I am afraid that what I have to say may not be popular in central Canada. I know that most Canadians, even some of the railway workers, were incensed that a small group of citizens, through their leaders, should paralyse the country's economy and disorganize the essential and vital business of Canada from coast to coast, thereby causing untold anxiety and distress, and all this when nerves were strained almost to breaking point with the problems of defence and aid to other nations. For it is a known fact that to keep up a nervous tension in all walks of life has been one of the chief instruments of a dictatorship policy.

When war is being waged, as it now is in Korea, railway lines and communications are bombed and disrupted, with great risk and loss of life to those who must accomplish the task. But this is not so of these leaders of a small group. They can accomplish the same result without physical harm to themselves, knowing that the people of Canada have no choice but to allow them protection. For my part, I have always believed in collective bargaining and compromise, but not one-sided compromise. If, as representatives of the people, we do not pass legislation to make impossible in time of crisis the recurrence of a situation similar to the one in which Canada was placed by a small group, we shall deserve the censure that we certainly shall receive—and in fact have received.

Most people I have talked to feel that the railway employees have a minimum of grievances.

An article appearing recently in a railway unions newspaper mentioned the fact that since 1939 increases in railway wages were less by 25 points than in other industries; but what I think was omitted from this article was the fact that employees in other industries during the depression had their wages cut all the way from 20 per cent to 50 per cent, while the railways maintained much the same wage scale as that prevailing in 1928 and 1929.

The members of this house know that during the thirties the government loaned \$60 million to the Canadian Pacific Railway to keep its workers on the payroll and guarantee them a high rate of pay. During approximately this same period young men on the farms were guaranteed \$5 a month. Even up until five or six years ago the average farmer was receiving an income of less than \$1,000 a year and during the depression years it was less than \$400 a year. Now that he has a chance to improve his financial position he must meet increased freight rates and a higher cost of machinery. Similar conditions must be faced by the white-collar worker, by those on pensions and annuities and by widows with small incomes, all of whom are in no position to strike when the whim seizes them.

To return to the situation facing the wheat, fruit and dairy farmers, no forty-hour week is possible for them if their products are to reach the Canadian table daily, fresh and wholesome. These men produce by working long hours, seven days a week, often with the help of their families and with no guarantee of financial return. As may be seen, there are many hazards of weather and of the human element between the sowing of the crops and their reaping. Further, the men who grow the grain and raise the cattle for market are greater in number than the railway workers; and these producers are the railways' best customers and they are responsible for a large portion of the railways' income.

In Winnipeg recently I talked with a man whose twenty-year-old son gets \$275 per month as an engine-wiper and will shortly get a job as a fireman at \$325. Even the boy's father felt that was too high a salary for a twenty-year-old lad. In this connection I ask for the permission of the house to quote from a Regina paper a statement given to the press by the union leaders of that city. It is as follows:

The striking unions' central committee made a statement Friday morning protesting against the "myth" that railway workers are highly paid. Members said that occasionally workers do get large cheques, but this comes after long hours of overtime. They said the hourly wage scale for railway employees ranges from 86 cents to \$1.22, while monthly rates range from \$123 to \$348.

The article continues with the following statement, which I wish to emphasize.

"No doubt our modest income will appear large to some people who are receiving lower incomes. There is a tendency to be envious of the position of railroaders, but it must never be forgotten that the incomes we have attained have been the result of long years of organization and struggle," they explained.