

a stated case being brought by someone who takes the initiative on the part of the Government or the Department of Labour.

Hon. Mr. Lambert: Is it not possible for the labour representatives themselves to bring a case before the Board of Transport Commissioners?

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Why should the labour representatives bring such a case? Labour has already spent large sums of money defending its rights. It is no more responsible for the public safety than you or I. I have some responsibility; that is why I rise in my place today on a supply bill in order to bring this matter to public notice. All of us, I think, are in some degree responsible, and certainly the Department of Labour is responsible.

Hon. Mr. Brunt: Would the honourable senator permit one question?

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Certainly.

Hon. Mr. Brunt: Does the honourable senator advocate that the Government shall step in, cancel and set aside the settlement which was made in Montreal last Monday evening? No Government representative was present when this settlement was made. Is the honourable senator now urging that this agreement, which was reached by the firemen's union and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company be set aside and cancelled?

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: How anybody could draw such a conclusion from my words I don't know.

Hon. Mr. Brunt: Well, the honourable senator blames the Government.

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: I said in my opening remarks that the contest between these parties was a thing of the past; it has been settled. But the problem as it affects the public is still open, and public danger and protection are matters of Government responsibility. I am not suggesting a cancellation of the settlement. The parties have agreed between themselves, and I am not touching on that subject at all. We are not concerned with their interests; they can take care of themselves. All I am talking about is John Q. Public, whose interest was not represented, except incidentally, either before the commission or the board of conciliation. The public interest was used as an argument only, and now I am calling attention to this most important question. If I may be permitted, I will read a further portion of my report:

There are few workers in the industrial life of Canada who bear so terrible a responsibility as that of the locomotive engineer in charge of a modern train. I know, for I have defended engineers charged with manslaughter for having overlooked a meet or miscalculating the time of

arrival of an oncoming train. The engineer of a freight train in road service is furnished with a timetable of approaching trains, from which, as varied by dispatchers' advices, he plots his own progress from one passing track to another. There may be several trains approaching each of which has right of way superior to his own, and all of which may be on schedules varied by dispatchers' orders. He is required to dodge from station to station, letting these superior trains go by, and he is expected to make time. In addition, he watches the track ahead, observes the whistle posts, and the various train signals, while he supervises the mechanical operation of his big machine, which is not always in perfect mechanical condition; all this while he actually operates the locomotive with his foot on the throttle and his hand on the brake, as engineman in road service.

It is a major change that is being proposed, and all I am doing is calling the attention of the authorities whom I hold responsible for public safety to what is going on, and saying that we of this chamber, so far as I can speak for us all, will hold the authorities responsible for any increase in the number of deaths on our tracks. Too many people are killed at level crossings. Too many accidents occur in yard service, where the staff of the train are required to cross the tracks, where there are actual roads across the tracks, and where people, including children, are frequently to be found. The service is a dangerous one, and to put such a locomotive under the operation of one man is, I think, a very doubtful procedure. As to what action should be taken I am not now ready to say, but the proper action should be taken, and by the Department of Labour or the Government itself. I call their attention to this condition, and I shall personally hold them responsible for the results.

Hon. Mr. Haig: May I ask the honourable senator whether his report, with others, was not submitted to the royal commission, composed of judges, who reviewed this matter?

Hon. Mr. Roebuck: Oh, I don't know whether or not they did me the honour of reading my report. How can I tell that? Nor do I know what evidence was presented to them. All I do know is that they made a report, which I have read, and with which—as I have the right to do—I disagree. It is true that I was in the minority, but I am frequently in that position, and it does not greatly disturb me. However, I have not changed my views with regard to the interests of the public in this regard because of the reports made by the other jurists.

Hon. Jean-François Pouliot: Honourable senators, our honourable colleague from Toronto-Trinity (Hon. Mr. Roebuck) has said something with which everybody must agree—that the number of railway accidents, especially at crossings, is quite disturbing. But one may not forget that the railroads