

two things: first, their immediate response to the law, and second, the facility with which they saw to it that work was resumed when the statute was passed. In all fairness, I think I may say also that they are to be congratulated on the fact that this legislation was passed.

Hon. Mr. Beaubien: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Farris: The leaders of the strike movement should be very grateful to the government and to parliament for terminating the strike as promptly as possible. It is difficult to imagine, honourable senators, the damage that would have been caused to industry and the demoralizing effect on international affairs, had the strike been allowed to continue until it was settled in some way between the railways and the men. The responsibility for such a result would have fallen upon the union leaders in a way which would have caused most serious repercussions against them. I say, therefore, that the leaders have every reason to be thankful that their responsibility did not extend to the further harm which might have been done.

The Prime Minister stated that parliament was called on to deal with an immediate problem. That immediate problem was what he termed a detour. Every man knows that a detour is a temporary expedient to keep traffic moving until such time as a permanent structure is erected. It very often happens that when a bridge is made impassable by a washout, a detour is created and used until such a time as a permanent structure takes its place. So far as the detour is concerned, there is nothing I wish to discuss further. It is a *fait accompli*, and I do not think it appropriate that any further discussion should take place on that question at this time.

I do feel, however, that it is proper that we in the Senate of Canada should give thought to the morrow and the setting up of some kind of permanent structure to provide for the protection of three groups, namely, industry, labour and the public. What has happened indicates that a proper structure for that purpose does not exist at the present time. Everybody agrees that we have had a strike which, had it been allowed to continue and had parliament not been assembled in an emergency session, would have had a disastrous effect on this country. I believe that most of us thought, as we did before the war of 1914-18, that this could not happen here; in other words, we thought that what did happen could never happen to us.

Honourable senators, as the basis for discussing this issue at the present time, I call your attention to certain important considerations as a warning for the future, and also as justification for this Senate, even at a time

when other shadows hang over us, taking time out to consider a permanent structure for the future. I ask you to consider with me the thought that this strike was not the action of an irresponsible or an ignorant group of workers, action of incompetent or irresponsible labour leaders, or of desperate workers who were driven to desperate means by intolerable working conditions. None of those conditions existed. On the contrary, this strike followed a vote by a responsible group of law-abiding citizens who, as Mr. Hall has very correctly stated, had a fine record of loyalty and public spirit behind them. The strike was directed by two outstanding leaders of labour. Though I cannot say much about them from personal knowledge, from every indication they appear to be able and experienced leaders. In those circumstances, then, it is my opinion, as the basis of further discussion, that this strike, at the time it was called and under the conditions, existing was not justifiable.

Hon. Mr. Duff: Hear, hear.

Hon. Mr. Farris: I do not for one minute say that the men did not have justifiable grievances, or that they were not entitled to press their claims. But I so say that when the strike was called they did not have grievances which justified a strike then and there against the people of Canada. A strike against an employer only is one thing, but a strike against the public is another thing. If in this day of integrated industry, such action can be divorced from its effect on the public and become a contest between employer and employee, that is an entirely different matter. I can see no possible objection to turning the employee and employer loose in an arena and letting them fight it out, and may the best man win. But, as I say, it is a very different thing when the immediate effect of the strike is against the nation, particularly in a time of war peril such as we are now experiencing.

Honourable senators, I have this proposition to submit to you. If in times like these, sensible men, under responsible leadership, can bring about a strike which is not justified in its effect against the people, there is no assurance that it will not happen again. In my humble opinion, honourable senators, now, when this question is fresh in the minds of everybody, is the proper time to give thought for the future, and I submit that the senate is the proper place to discuss the matter. In the first place, the Senate is the one house of the two houses of parliament that is free to discuss these questions on their merit. Honourable senators do not have to face a possible election or other such embarrassments which may influence members of the House of Commons.

If the honourable leader opposite does not object, I will tell a story which, in this