

these men, nor expect the railway companies to do anything that is not reasonable on their part. I feel that they should have some time to prepare for the change, and I think that the date named gives them ample time for that purpose. I am not particularly anxious that the 1st of October should be the fixed date, but I named it because that was the date unanimously agreed upon by the Special Committee of the House of Commons that was dealing with the revision of the Railway Act. The particular purpose of the motion is that some definite date be named.

Hon. Mr. NICHOLLS: In common, no doubt, with other honourable gentlemen, I received a circular letter from the Brotherhood of Railway Employees asking my support to the principle of this Bill. I was very pleased indeed to tell their representative, the honourable member from Welland (Hon. Mr. Robertson), that I was entirely in accord with the principle of the Bill, because I think it fair that railway employees should receive their salaries or wages twice a month instead of monthly. After having approved of the principle of the Bill I had also been spoken to by representatives of the railways, who told me that they had decided to approve of the principle of this Bill, but they added that it would work a great hardship to bring the Bill into operation now, or at any time prior to our knowing what the after-war conditions are going to be. They pointed out that their coal bill will be this year some \$18,000,000 in excess of that of last year. The country is crying out that the railways have not an adequate equipment; yet they are paying from 50 to 80 per cent more for cars and every other kind of equipment they require than formerly. I think the honourable mover of this amendment will agree with me that nearly every class of railway employee has received a considerable increase of salary since the commencement of the war. On the other hand, the railways, or at least some of them, have come to the Government and stated that unless the Railway Commission will grant an increase in freight rates they will be unable to make both ends meet; that everything they have to purchase has increased enormously in price, while the rates they get for carrying either freight or passengers have remained at what they were before the war. I want to say, not in antagonism to the principle of the Bill, or with any feeling adverse to labour, that fair play is bonnie play, and that there are

always two sides to a question. The railway men have for years tried to get the principle of this Bill admitted, and this year it has been admitted by the railway companies and has been concurred in by the Railway Committee of this honourable House. The difference of opinion is as to when it should become operative. I think that in all fairness it should not be allowed to become operative until conditions after the war become known, or until such time as the Railway Commission will concede an increase in freight rates.

Hon. Mr. McSWEENEY: Is it not provided in the Railway Bill which has just passed the House of Commons Committee that October shall be the time when the bi-monthly pay shall commence? I think so.

Hon. Mr. NICHOLLS: I may say that I did not take any part in the debate on the question whether this Bill was in order or not. I understood that a Government Bill containing such a provision was to come before this House. However, this House has approved of this Bill coming before us by itself, and therefore I consider this to be the proper time to debate the question. The principle of the Bill appears to be a fair one; but on the other hand we know that the railways, or some of them, are before the Government for assistance to enable them to keep open, or else they will go into the hands of a receiver.

Hon. Mr. McSWEENEY: No doubt.

Hon. Mr. NICHOLLS: For the reasons I have given, I am of opinion that it is not wise to fix any specific date at this juncture. On the other hand, I understand that the committee have recommended that the change be brought into force by proclamation of the Governor in Council. If the lower House has approved of the principle of the Bill, and has entrusted it to the responsible minister to have it carried through, surely he is sufficiently in sympathy with the Bill which has been brought forward under his own auspices to see that the proclamation is carried into effect at the right time.

Hon. H. J. CLORAN: "It's a long lane that has no turning." Thirty-five years ago, which is probably before many of you were born, I advocated in the editorial columns of a metropolitan daily and weekly this very same measure; and that is why I say, "It's a long lane that has no turning." At the end of thirty-five years I find myself in the Senate of Canada, called upon by, I