

course taken by the government today will undermine negotiations in the future and will bring about a heavier burden on the freight users of this country that was otherwise necessary and that the course taken today, namely that of compulsion, was not necessary.

The Prime Minister interrupted me on earlier occasions to ask about a statement by Mr. Hannam, a telegram that the Prime Minister had received or an editorial in the *Western Producer*, in order to try to stir up trouble between the trade union movement and the elected farm organizations. The Prime Minister used to have in his statements a word that he used time and time again when he was on the opposite side of the house. He said that he was in favour of parity, including parity prices for the farmers and parity for the workers. In a couple of election campaigns he went out and said this, "Elect me and you will get parity, not charity".

The farm organizations and the people who work on the farm ask for parity for themselves. The trade union workers involved in this dispute ask for parity wages in relation to the durable goods industry. I think it is possible to have a united Canada and that it is possible to have friendly relations between farmers and workers by providing each with a just share, by providing each with parity, and not by trying to divide, stir up trouble and cause disunity as the Prime Minister appears to have been trying to do.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I rise on a question of privilege. A suggestion was made by the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat that the meetings were confidential. That suggestion is not based on fact. That statement is entirely incorrect.

Mr. MacInnis: I wonder whether the hon. member who has just taken his seat will now permit a question?

Mr. Argue: Yes.

Mr. MacInnis: I have reference to his remarks about the Prime Minister's statement and the answers of Mr. Hall. Does he not agree that the Prime Minister has only indicated to the workers that Mr. Hall at all times stood fast on a mandate that he had received from his workers?

Mr. Argue: I could not hear the hon. member's question.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. MacInnis: I will put it again. The question was this. I refer to the remarks of the Prime Minister and the answers given by Mr. Hall to which the hon. member made reference. Do these not in his opinion underline the fact that the Prime Minister was

Maintenance of Railway Operation Act

only bringing to the attention of the railway workers that Mr. Hall at all times during the negotiations had stood fast on the mandate given to him by his workers? What is the harm in the Prime Minister's pointing out this fact to Mr. Hall's supporters?

Mr. Argue: I do not think it had anything to do with that question whatsoever.

Hon. Lionel Chevrier (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, I have no intention of delaying this debate, nor of taking up an undue part of the time of this house. However, before I enter upon the remarks which I intend to make I should like to bring to the attention of the house, as well as to the attention of the hon. member for Assiniboia (Mr. Argue)—who has just resumed his seat—that sometimes it happens that not only he but those who sit with him are uncertain of the position which they take.

At page 243 of *Hansard* of November 28, dealing with the matter of compulsory arbitration, this is what the hon. member is reported as saying:

I think compulsory arbitration is undemocratic, is not in keeping with our concept of freedom in this country, and should be resorted to only in case of the severest national emergency.

This would indicate that he is in favour of compulsory arbitration upon that condition.

Mr. Argue: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order, or a question of privilege. I have felt that at no time is it necessary to get into an impasse that would require compulsory arbitration or forced labour in connection with this dispute. If it had been handled differently, this situation in parliament would not have arisen.

Mr. Chevrier: That is not a point of order, sir. The remarks made by my hon. friend are there for anyone to see.

Like those from this side of the house who have preceded me in this debate, I too listened to the Prime Minister (Mr. Diefenbaker) yesterday afternoon, last evening on television and again during the course of his remarks today.

Mr. Diefenbaker: I must have had a good audience last night with all three of you listening.

Mr. Chevrier: I did not want to miss the Prime Minister because I knew he would be saying some interesting things.

I want to refer to two or three of the things he said on that occasion. I believe during the course of his remarks he said, "definitely and positively we are not taking sides". I say to him now that without doubt, by virtue of the terms of this legislation you,