

certainly nothing has been set until May 15. If the railways are unable to pay, then railway workers will henceforth pay Canada's price of union.

Let us assume that the royal commission decided that, as the railways suggest, no increases or adjustments are possible. Where do we go from there? As the hon. member for Port Arthur suggested, we have no standard. I fail to see why next May 15 there will be any more favourable atmosphere. But what has happened in the meantime? Canadian labour has been deprived of a basic right, the right to strike when it feels it must. The right timing to decide is just as important as the right to strike, and the railway unions have been deprived of that right.

The Prime Minister has suggested that if a subsidy were given it would in a sense be putting a gun to the head of the government, and would force all Canadians to pay in order to prevent a national emergency and national economic chaos. But who else ever pays for a national emergency? We now have a precedent that the government will postpone action on the basis of the status quo whenever there is a national emergency or a similar situation under such circumstances.

The Minister of Labour has suggested that this is in the public interest. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it is. No one wishes to see a railway strike. But justice, as well as economic necessity, is in the public interest. This government has been greatly concerned with civil liberties, and rightly so. I suggest that the whole process of negotiation has been damaged. This action has brought into suspicion the whole process by which labour and management resolve their differences. Also, I think, as the hon. member for Essex East has already indicated, it is a reflection upon the efficiency and the proud record of those intelligent and responsible men who lead the unions of this nation.

It has been suggested that it is ridiculous to strike for an increase of \$3.80 a week, or \$61 until next May. This is always the argument on the part of management whenever a strike is suggested. Men do not strike for immediate gain; they fully realize the loss it will mean both to themselves and their families. Men strike for the benefit of the whole movement, for the benefit of the whole craft, and essentially for those who are to follow. An argument on this basis would prevent any forward movement of the entire labour organization. The aim should be to prevent a strike as soon as possible, but at least the government should have guaranteed out of public revenue the right of these workers to what was set out in the majority

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report. Then a decision could have been made which would not have prejudiced either side, either management or labour.

A subsidy is not popular; it is not the easy way out. Indeed, it is politically the inexpedient way out. Sir John A. Macdonald found many times when he was making a decision that it would hurt him politically, but he took the way of courage. What is needed now is a complete look at our transportation industry. I hope, along with many other hon. members, that this royal commission report will be the first step. Certainly we must also find out what is the place of the private trucking industry in this area.

I can only say in conclusion that there is something worse than subsidy. Indeed, there is something worse than a strike. Canada presents herself to the world as a model of democracy, and her labour legislation is a part of the image which she has presented. I think, and I hope, that I speak for all Canadians, not only labour leaders and union members but also for farmers, business and professional people who will take a second, sober look at this legislation and realize that Canadian democracy has suffered a serious loss.

**Hon. J. W. Pickersgill (Bonaville-Twilgate):** Mr. Speaker, this is undoubtedly the gravest matter that has come before us in the seven years I have had the privilege of being a member of this house, and I am going to make every endeavour to treat this subject in a manner which is consonant with its gravity.

I do not intend to follow my hon. friend for Essex East in replying to the Prime Minister because that would be redundant and repetitious. I intend to support the amendment moved by my hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition—

**An hon. Member:** I wonder why.

**Mr. Pickersgill:**—and to make certain arguments, that the Leader of the Opposition only indicated, in somewhat greater detail and to underline the arguments which he gave so ably yesterday. I do this because it does seem to me, if I may say so without disrespect, that in certain quarters the position of the Liberal party is not yet fully understood; and I blame no one for this. It is not fully understood because it is not capable of being expressed in a single catch phrase. However, I think if I were seeking one single word with which to describe it, the word I would use would be "justice".

I want to point out first of all that we do not differ with the government in its view that a strike should not take place. The Leader of the Opposition made that perfectly clear at the outset yesterday, and my hon. friend