

Mr. CHURCH: I was on the train myself going home anyway. The men did not consult me. I did not know there was a strike on until after it had happened. I took no part in the deliberations. I was not a member of the committee. I did not attend any of the meetings. The train has nothing to do with it. I was going home anyway, was travelling alone. Many people were on the train and a lot of them were talking to the men and I asked them if a general strike was on. The strike had been on they said since five o'clock—it was then nearly twelve.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I do not want to accuse my hon. friend of this, but he has accused me of using the big stick, and I want to know from him whether or not he did go back with these men on the train that night. I may be misinformed, but I have been told that he did go back with them and that if he did not give them certain advice, at all events he led them to believe that they would have his support if they went on strike. We may just as well be fair on this matter.

Mr. CHURCH: You are most unfair and what you say is not true. I took absolutely no part in the strike, and I did not know there was going to be a strike until two hours after it happened. I never saw the men's committee until six o'clock and they will bear me out. The strike happened at five o'clock in Toronto and I was in Ottawa. I am not going to allow the minister to sidestep the issue. I was not in their confidence. I met them casually in the rotunda of the Chateau Laurier and they told me there was a strike on in Toronto and they could make no headway with the minister. I did what I could to adjust things.

Mr. STEWART (Argenteuil): I am not sidestepping it at all. Will the hon. gentleman—

Mr. CHURCH: I must protest against being interrupted at every sentence without my consent. If there is one minister of the Crown in the present government who interrupts on every and all occasions and unduly it is the Acting Postmaster General (Mr. Stewart). I did not go back with the men, I was going back home myself as I do weekly. Now, to come back to the question under discussion. I reiterate that I never knew of the strike nor took part in it, nor was I ever consulted by the men. The committee acted themselves and of their own volition without consulting me. I did not see the com-

mittee until six o'clock. The strike was on at five and I advised them against it. I went to a meeting in the city, on my return for a week end, and in the presence of thirty-five of the men's committee, Mr. Stapells of the Board of Trade being also present. On the second day of the strike—Friday—I advised them strongly to go back at once. I argued with them for an hour and tried to show them the wisdom of this course. They did not like the advice I offered and felt that the advice I was giving them was bad. I can call upon Mr. Stapells, the president of the Board of Trade, who was present at the time, to bear me out in this regard. The men from the days before the strike consulted him, not me. I was not even in Toronto the day of the strike. Let me say that during my association with the council of the city of Toronto I was faced with many a strike in almost every department of the public service and in private enterprises, and I always did everything in my power to prevent strikes and settle matters amicably. My record in the city hall, as the taxpayers of the city of Toronto can testify, has consistently been that of a conciliator, and an advocate of a fair deal for labour. I always did my best to bring about a satisfactory settlement of every strike that occurred during my term of office, and some of the larger strikes that took place in the city of Toronto were satisfactorily adjusted during my regime. The Minister of Labour and the Acting Postmaster General are very much exercised over this matter, but they need not become so heated. Of course, I realize that the Acting Postmaster General has a department of his own to look after that will keep him busy; he has merely taken charge of the Post Office Department as a sort of side line, and has had no experience in industrial disputes. But this is not very satisfactory, for we have had no consideration this session yet of postal affairs nor so far of postal estimates. So far as the strike in Toronto is concerned, it was unfortunate for the men themselves that they took the advice of certain outside leaders and went out, because I think that under the circumstances they should have waited a few days longer. When I was mayor of the city of Toronto the question came up as to the advisability of the men in the post office allying themselves with the union of the United States, and I took a firm stand against it not only in regard to the Post Office Department but in the Police Department and in the Fire Department as well. Colonel Denison, the late