

The resignation has been accepted informally, as appears from the correspondence, and it will be accepted in the usual formal manner by Order in Council tomorrow.

STRIKING POSTAL EMPLOYEES.

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. D. D. McKENZIE (Leader of the Opposition): I received a telegram yesterday from Calgary which I handed to the Acting Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Maclean), thinking he might be able to give some reply in regard to it to-day. I did not show it to the Prime Minister, as I thought the Acting Minister of Trade and Commerce would be present, but he is not in his seat just now. This telegram, which has reference to post office matters in the city of Calgary, reads as follows:

With the exception of one, the entire staff of Calgary post office withdrew from duty on May twenty-sixth, and Government states men cannot return. These employees belong to an organization officially recognized by Government and their constitution includes strike weapon, which has never been objected to. Government's action cannot be construed as anything but an attack on labour—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. I would ask the hon. gentleman to be good enough to summarize his question, because the telegram he is reading in the nature of things, involves an attack on the Government, and that is not in order on the Orders of the Day.

Mr. McKENZIE: I have read all the bad there is in the telegram. It goes on:

Unless immediately reconsidered, grave consequences must necessarily ensue.

The telegram is to the effect that the Government knew the men belonged to this organization, with a provision that they could go out on strike. Now the men are shut out because they went on strike.

Sir ROBERT BORDEN (Prime Minister): I have received communications of a similar character, and I have made replies to them which I would have been very glad to bring down to the House had I known my hon. friend intended to ask this question to-day.

The situation so far as the postal employees are concerned, whether at Winnipeg or elsewhere, is very simple. In Winnipeg they went out on a sympathetic strike although they had no grievance of their own and they were given a period of between two and three days within which to return to their duty. They were distinctly and emphatically informed that if they did not

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return to their duty by Monday noon, the 26th of May, they must regard themselves as permanently retired from the public service. I understand that a very considerable number of them were disposed to return, and seventy of them did return. The others were deterred, I understand, by the assertion made to them by interested people that the Government was "bluffing" and would not dare to carry out its proposal in regard to the men who had thus deserted their duty in the public service. A very distinct intimation was sent by telegram to Calgary, to Edmonton, and to every other western city in which strikes had not then taken place, but where there seemed a possibility that the employees in the public service would go out on a sympathetic strike. That telegram has already been communicated to the House, and will be found at page 2957 of the unrevised Hansard of the 27th of May, 1919. I need not read it again.

It was a distinct and emphatic intimation to the postal employees that if they undertook to go out on a sympathetic strike, disregard their public duty, accept the direction of another authority than the Government, dislocate the public service of this country, and occasion widespread public inconvenience, they must regard themselves as permanently retired from the public service of this country.

I have had a great many communications on the subject since, and I have sent replies. I do not think it is worth while reading them to the House, but I am perfectly prepared to do so at any time if my hon. friend so desires. I can only say that the Government, having taken this position, and taken it, I think, with good cause, would render no good service to the public interest by withdrawing from it. There was the most plain and positive intimation to all these employees as to the result of the course which they proposed to take, and having given that warning I do not think they are at liberty to blame the Government of this country. They have no one to blame but themselves and those who induced them to engage in this sympathetic strike. I greatly regret that they find themselves in their present position.

CONFERENCE BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED SUGGESTED.

On the Orders of the Day:

Mr. E. LAPOINTE (Kamouraska): I desire to communicate the contents of a tele-