

arbitration provided a board of arbitrators mutually acceptable can be secured.

The strike took place on the 18th July, and by the 23rd July the government had succeeded in getting one of the parties to consent to have the differences referred to a board of arbitration. Had Mr. Hays been ready to take the same step at the same time there is no reason why the strike should not have ended then. When I received this letter from Messrs. Murdock and Berry, I at once communicated its contents to Mr. Hays, and I asked him pointedly whether, the other party having agreed to refer the matter to arbitration, he would not also agree to do so. In reply he said:

Your telegram of the 23rd received, while as you know from many conferences urging your action before the strike took place and from our offer repeated and urged upon the committee, we were desirous of arbitration and so avoiding the existing trouble, the time for such action has now passed, and it is only necessary that we should have the protection to which we are entitled to enable us to resume the full operation of the road.

CHAS. M. HAYS.

Had the government been indifferent, had the government been prepared to take Mr. Hays' word, the matter might have ended with that letter, but the moment that reply was received from Mr. Hays the government communicated with the customs officials throughout Ontario as to the movement of freight in their respective towns, and from all of whom replies were received stating that the Grand Trunk Railway system was practically tied up, that trains were not moving in some, that factories had closed down, and, in all, that inconvenience, loss and distress were being experienced. The government then took action as a government, and a meeting of the cabinet was called, and Sir Richard Cartwright, who was acting Prime Minister, in a communication pointed out to Mr. Hays that the reports of the government officers demonstrated that Mr. Hays' telegram did not correctly describe the situation. Sir Richard Cartwright wrote:

The government has been carefully considering the whole strike situation, and whilst it is the wish of my colleagues and myself to cause you as little embarrassment as possible, we cannot but feel, in view of the situation as disclosed in these messages, all of which are from an official and strictly impartial source, as well as from many other urgent representations, that it is eminently desirable that some settlement of the present dispute should be immediately effected, and that if this cannot be brought about by a conference between the parties, the matter should be left to arbitration as already suggested by the government.

Mr. Hays had refused the offer of arbitration, and the government came back at

him and pointed out that he should accept arbitration at that particular stage, and Sir Richard Cartwright concluded:

I very much hope that you may find it possible to co-operate with the government along the lines suggested in its endeavours to deal with the critical situation which has arisen, through the interruption of operations over a large part of your company's system.

On that day the Minister of Militia was leaving for the maritime provinces and he agreed to take this communication in person to Mr. Hays so as to impress upon him how determined the government was that the strike should be ended and ended speedily. The Minister of Militia took that letter to Mr. Hays on July 27, and the same afternoon I received this telegram:

Messrs. Garretson and Lee held conference to-day with Mr. Hays without result. May I be permitted on behalf of the men on strike to request that as a minister of the Crown and representative of the people you come to Montreal and by further effort try and arrange an honourable settlement either by arbitration or negotiation.

JAMES MURDOCK.

As a result of that telegram, I left on the following day for Montreal, and the Minister of Militia and myself did our utmost to bring together the two parties with a view to a settlement. I point out to my hon. friend (Mr. Northrup) that instead of being indifferent and doing nothing to bring about a settlement, the government was as active as it could be from the moment the strike took place. The only step we could take at the outset was to bring all the pressure possible on each side to get them to agree to a joint conference or arbitration and the communications which passed between the government and the parties were the means of helping to focus public opinion on the situation, and enable the public to discover which side was right and which wrong in refusing to take advantage of the government's offer. In this way public opinion combined with the active intervention of two of the ministers, eventually succeeded in bringing about a settlement, and instead of the government being criticised by my hon. friend (Mr. Northrup) he should have complimented it on its activity and success in ending the difficulty in so short a time. The hon. gentleman (Mr. Northrup) said that the government should have used the big stick, and although he did not define what he meant by that expression, his meaning apparently was that the government should have done all it could to compel the Grand Trunk railway to agree to a settlement on reasonable terms. But, if we are to judge by results, I think my hon. friend (Mr. Northrup) has plenty of evidence to show that the big stick was used, and used pretty effectively on that occasion. There is no doubt at all that Mr. Hays did not intend to settle that strike. I have no hesi-