

Railway dispute; recent developments

1. The Minister of Transport reported that the heads of the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National Railways had met the previous day with the railway unions represented by Mr. Mosher, and that morning with the international union represented by Mr. Hall. The President of the C.N.R. had restated the railways' position and had enquired whether the unions had any counter-proposals to make. It was reported that Mr. Mosher's group had indicated that they might consider reducing the wage increase demands from 10 cents to 7 cents an hour. Mr. Hall's group had no counter-proposals whatever to offer. It was understood that discussions would resume at 3.00 p.m. that afternoon.

2. The Prime Minister submitted the replies to his letter of August 16th received from Mr. Mosher and Mr. Hall. Mr. Mosher had stated that, if the Government saw fit to appoint a special commissioner, his unions would cooperate to the fullest extent with a view to reaching a satisfactory settlement. It was his opinion that a competent mediator could either establish a basis for settlement or determine the unlikelihood of being able to do so before the strike deadline of August 22nd. He added that the groups he represented would not accept a postponement of the strike deadline. Mr. Hall, in his reply, had stated that the unions he represented could not agree to postpone the deadline set for strike action. He expressed willingness, however, to enter into further discussions with the railways before August 22nd if this was thought to be of any value.

(Letter, A.R. Mosher to Prime Minister, Aug.17, 1950; telegrams, F.H. Hall to Prime Minister, Aug.17, 1950)

3. Mr. St-Laurent outlined briefly the various increases in wages granted to railway employees since 1946. An increase of 10 cents an hour that year had been followed by a further increase of 17 cents an hour in 1948. Since the latter date, however, there had been a rise of approximately 13 points in the cost of living index and if the same criterion were used as in the past the railway workers might understandably expect a further increase of approximately 7.4 cents per hour. It was to be noted that, under the

000050

RG 2, A5a,  
Vol. 2646

Privy Council Office  
Bureau du Conseil privé

National Archives of Canada  
Archives nationales du Canada