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C. L. WHITING, KINGSTON, ONT.

November 20, 1909.

Dear Sir:

Your letter in reference to our Conciliation and Labour Act to hand. My experience in the practical working of the Act is limited, as I have been on only one Board. The man who has had the most experience and who has been the most successful conciliator is Prof. Adam Short, late professor of Political economy in Queen's University here, and now a member of the Civil Service Commission at Ottawa. If you have not written him, do so. He will be glad to give you the benefit of his experience.

My own opinion is that the law as it stands is very useful in providing intermediaries who have authority to intervene between the contestants, ascertain with some accuracy the points in dispute and the merits of each case, and promote an amicable settlement between them. Much depends upon the tact and skill fairness and open mindedness of the members of the board and especially of the third man. In practise we have found that a very large percentage of the cases have been settled in this way. Where the parties are irreconcilable and a report has to be made it becomes more difficult; but even here the strike has been postponed until the parties have cooled down a bit, and we have found that if one side is prepared to accept the report and the other side is not, but strikes or locks out in the face of it, public opinion is against the side so acting and is a force likely to bring them to time.

I don't know of any changes which I would myself suggest at present.

I would not give the Act a greater application than ours until you had tested its utility in your own experience.

Yours very truly,

W. L. Mackenzie King Papers

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