

AFTERNOON SESSION

APRIL 28, 1952.

The CHAIRMAN: We have a quorum, gentlemen; we will carry on. Are there any further questions on operating revenues or operating costs?

Mr. FULTON: Have you finished with paragraph 1?

The CHAIRMAN: If not, I will declare the item carried.

Mr. FULTON: Paragraph 1, you mean, I take it?

The CHAIRMAN: No, it covers the whole subject of operating expenses.

Mr. FULTON: I have something that I want to raise when we get down to paragraph 23, under the heading operating expenses, employee compensation. I thought that you were taking it paragraph by paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN: No.

Mr. FULTON: That is all right. Under paragraph 23, I would like to ask Mr. Gordon whether there has been any approach by the employees—I am afraid that I do not remember the exact technical term for the employees concerned—but I mean those who went on strike—

Mr. GORDON: The non-operating.

Mr. FULTON: —in 1950. Has there been any request by them for a revision of the agreement which was arrived at as a result of the recommendation of the arbitrator? I am asking you that because early this Spring they approached me and pointed out that the agreement was made operative for two years whereas the normal contract arrived at by the ordinary collective bargaining process was operative for only one year; and since about the time the decision of the arbitrator was applied the increase in the cost of living has gone well up at a pace even faster than was usual and therefore they were severely prejudiced by their own inability to look for a revision or a new agreement except at the end of two years. But to a small group who approached me I said that I thought the proper thing to do in the first place would be to take it up with the railway management and see if they were willing to enter into talks recognizing the difficulty of the men, and they have indicated to me that this particular local would find it difficult to do that, but they indicated to me that there was some chance that their union would do it. I wonder if Mr. Gordon would say whether there was any approach for a revision of that agreement, or, if it was binding for the whole period of two years.

Mr. GORDON: Yes. We have been approached by the representatives of the non-operating trades who asked that we consider the fact that the cost of living had risen since the agreement was signed and whether we would be willing to discuss with them a revision in wages for this reason. We met and discussed the request with them and told them that our point of view was that the basis of their request couldn't be justified in that way. We pointed out that the cost of living had risen roughly 12 per cent, but that their wages as put into that agreement had risen by 25 per cent; and that if they were really prejudiced in the amount of money, so to speak, it was by reason of the fact that they had elected to take a 40 hour week instead of a 48 hour week, so we felt that there was no firm basis for re-opening agreements which were scheduled to run for two years. That is where the matter stands now; that would be the non-operating groups. We have before us currently quite a number of demands from the operating trades which are now in process of discussion.

Mr. FULTON: I do not want you personally to answer this, Mr. Gordon, because I think that it should be discussed privately between the unions and