

Hon. Mackenzie King,
Minister of Labour,
Ottawa.

The city of Hamilton appreciates your earnest efforts to settle strike and congratulate you on your success.

JOHN I. McLAREN,
Mayor.

Does my hon. friend from Hamilton (Mr. Barker) think that the citizens of his city were mistaken in their belief as to the nature of the services rendered?

Mr. BARKER. No doubt they congratulated the hon. gentleman on what they thought was a success. They do not think so now, perhaps.

Mr. KING. I am glad to have my hon. friend admit at any rate that they were sincere when they sent that telegram. I could quote very many others, but I mention only these two. Here is a communication from an important firm of wholesale grocers, representing the business interests of this country, and my hon. friend referred to the business interests. This communication also comes from the city of Hamilton:

Hamilton, August 4, 1910.

The Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King,
Minister of Labour,
Ottawa.

We beg to offer you our congratulations upon the success of your efforts in adjusting the differences between the Grand Trunk railway system and the trainmen. It is a great relief to the trade to have this matter settled because, instead of conditions improving, they were gradually getting worse, and had the strike continued for two or three weeks longer the loss to the trade would have been much greater. It may interest you to know that the extra volume of business that was thrown on to the Canadian Pacific railway resulted in a congestion of freight over their system that will take them from one to two weeks to clean up. The Canadian Pacific railway had practically arrived at the point where it was impossible for them to guarantee prompt delivery of goods; delays were becoming general and much longer in extent.

In view of the conditions that were becoming so bad the prompt settlement of this strike has been a great relief, and we thoroughly appreciate the prompt and aggressive way in which you kept at it. It is encouraging to the trade of this country to have a minister to so grasp the situation that realizes the necessity of prompt action in matters that concern the trade and commerce of this country.

Again congratulating you on the successful termination of this unpleasant difference.

We are, yours truly,
W. H. GILLARD & CO.
per H. C. Beckett.

My hon. friend referred to Mr. Trowern, the secretary of the Retail Merchants Association as a man of shrewd judgment. Well, here is a communication from Mr. Trowern, dated August 9, in which he says:

M. KING.

I wish to congratulate you on your success in bringing about a settlement of this unfortunate disagreement.

So I might go on, but I think these are sufficient to show the House that at the time the strike was settled, when the facts were fresh in the minds of the people, there was no doubt on the part of any one—either those concerned in the strike itself or the public most affected by it—as to the service the government had rendered in helping to bring it to a speedy termination.

Mr. BLAIN. Did the government not receive a good many communications complaining about its inactivity while the strike lasted?

Mr. KING. We had a sample of those this afternoon when my hon. friend was reading some communications which he said were sent in—telegrams from different Boards of Trade urging that something should be done; and when by chance I asked my hon. friend to read one, I found it began with these words: 'While appreciating your indefatigable efforts.' Most of the communications received were along those lines.

Mr. BLAIN. I thought it would be only fair to place those on record alongside with the compliments to the minister himself.

Mr. KING. I have no doubt about their going on record. If any can be found, I can trust hon. gentlemen opposite to see that they will all be given a place in the report. But if my hon. friend will look at the press he will find that in practically all the newspapers the government was credited with making every effort possible to bring about a termination of the strike. It was not possible, however, to settle that strike in a day. In the case of a dispute of that magnitude, with the interests involved, with the feeling existing, there is no agency under heaven which could have brought about an immediate settlement of the difficulty. When one considers the nature of the dispute, its magnitude and the bitterness of the parties, the miracle is not that it lasted so long, but that it did not last several months longer. So much for the second part of my hon. friend's resolution.

In the third part he charges the government with having failed to compel Mr. Hays, the president of the Grand Trunk railway to effectively carry out the agreement which he says was made with the government and on the faith of which the men offered to return to service. Well, as already pointed out, this third part of the resolution contradicts the second. He says that an agreement was made on the faith of which the men returned to work; but in the second part he says that the government failed to do anything to terminate the dispute. While I think that in this