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Published by Ronald Caplan on 1992/1/1

the new Union. I never heard up to this moment that there was between the Company and its employees a question of wages, and I persist in believing that upon this point I was well informed. In what way the Federal Government should suffer as a result of this strike is more than I can understand. We cannot be held responsible for it in any way whatever and it seems to me that it would be very unfair to take any other position. Leaving this matter aside, I was glad to have your letter, as it is a long time since I have heard from you. Believe me. Yours very sincerely....

Father Fraser writes again, Sept. 23, 1909 Dear Sir Wilfred • I thank you with all my heart for your kind letter of the 20th instant. You have been certainly misinformed when you were led to believe that the unfortunate strike here was based on the question of recognition or non-recognition by the Coal Co. of the new Union. The fact of the matter was that the Coal Co. through their tyranny, persecution, greed, and niggardliness towards their employees had driven the latter to seek assistance from the new Union. It was not the fear of any injustice that inspired the Company to oppose this Union: but the conviction that the Union was sufficient strong to see fair play and justice given to their employees. It is simply bluff and hypocrisy on the part of the Company when they set up the cry that they are opposing this new Union because it is a foreign organization which is seeking to control Canadian industries. If this new Union were a weak miserable organization like the Provincial Workmen Association which became a tool to the Company and a traitor to the poor miners, the Company would soon recognise it; if it were even a Chinese Union. The Coal Co. simply want to hold their employees, as they have assuredly done for the last few years, in bondage and slavery and they do not wish any assistance given them to better their condition. Let me tell you dear Sir Wilfred upon my honor as a priest that the masses of the Coal Co. employees have been treated worse than dogs. If a man has any use for a dog, he will give him the necessaries of life: but this is more than the Coal Co. have done for their employees • I mean the masses. No doubt some few of their favourites have been well paid and treated well but I re-

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peat it: the masses have been for the last few years treated worse than dogs. Why, last winter half of the poor miners would have been starved to death were it not for the relief given to them by the new Union. These men were willing and able to work but while the Coal Co. were employing every kind of miserable characters from the slums of European cities, they would only give the natives two or three shifts during the week. I have known many of the poor miners here to come to myself after pay day on Saturday nights during all last winter •



showing me their pay sheets in which there was not a cent coming to them and declaring to me that they had not a morsel of food in their houses for themselves and families to pass the Sunday and that they could not get a cent's worth from Co. store which they had been dealing for years as long as there was nothing coming to them and asking me to give them 50 cents or so to get a little food for themselves and families to pass the Sunday. I have known likewise many to leave their houses on Monday morning without breakfast and without a morsel for their wives and children and go into the dark pit to work hard all day without anything in their cans but a couple of cold potatoes or a piece of a cabbage. Can you blame dear Sir Wilfred the poor people for seeking assistance under such trying circumstances? I enclose you a few of their pay sheets picked up at random from which you can see for yourself how the poor miners have been treated by this great and powerful but soulless corporation. I wish I was by your side for an hour and I am sure I would thoroughly convince you of the inhuman cruelty of this Co. towards their employees. There is no doubt but political capital is being made out of this trouble by interested parties; but as far as the poor miners are concerned, there is no thought of politics. They simply look for their rights. God intended this coal property to be means of livelihood for the people. The government were made Trustees of it to have it better administered according to the Divine Will. They have given it in trust to the Dominion Coal Co. who use or rather abuse it to their own greed and avarice and not for the good of the poor natives

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