

your own local body? Could you come to terms, and resume work without reference to an outside body?—I dare say such a thing could be done, but I do not think it would be done.

1697. I suppose, in a few words, you are not out on strike because of any quarrel with your employers, but because some one else has quarrelled with his employers?—I should think that is about it.

1698. Do you regard that as assisting a body with which you are affiliated in any way?—Yes.

1699. In the way of harassing the employers of these other people—in fact, blocking the boats, so to speak?—Yes.

1700. It seems to be using a power or pressure to strive to bring them into certain courses?—I think that seems to be it.

1701. Is that or is it not akin to boycott?—I could not say.

1702. There is a certain amount of outside control as regards your union?—Yes. We have representatives and delegates from the various branches.

1703. And does this distant union correspond with you and ask for your assistance—I mean this Maritime Council?—Yes.

1704. Of which Mr. Millar is the chief executive officer?—Yes.

1705. And if the telegram came now from him that you may go to work, would you accept it? If a telegram came from Dunedin and the Maritime Council, would you be willing to go to work? I understand you have no local dispute; it is beyond you, in a distant place. If, then, the chief executive officer at Dunedin, with whom you say you are affiliated, and who controls your actions, ordered you to go to work, would you be satisfied?—That would be the end of the dispute, because he would have reasons for saying such.

1706. You would accept it then?—Yes.

1707. Without asking whether his reasons were right or wrong. Are you sufficiently informed here of the real basis of the quarrel between the Maritime Council and another body to be able to judge independently for yourselves?—I think so.

1708. What is the point you would have to be satisfied about?—Well, if Mr. McLean would allow the union to go to work and let the affiliations “sack” the “blacklegs” we would undoubtedly go to work at once.

1709. Then the question put before your local body would be that if you received a telegram ordering you to go to work from Dunedin you would then inquire if they had succeeded in dismissing every “free” labourer?—We would want to know the terms of the settlement.

1710. Have you a definition of a “blackleg”? Is he a man who has never been in a union or a man who has seceded from a union?—A man who will not join a union, but who will want to work for as good pay. Now the union men sometimes get better pay.

1711. If you had a brother who was a non-union man, would you refuse to work with him?—I do not think he would be a non-unionist.

1712. Have you ever considered what is to become of those non-union men if they are excluded from all employment?—Yes; I think so. If union principles were universal, and the co-operation was operating with full force upon the masses, there would be no room for “blacklegs” or any cause for them.

1713. It is said sometimes in connection with the unions that persistent demands are made on the employers, and that paltry and petty grievances are often brought up. Are you aware if this is so?—I cannot remember anything of the sort, though I quite believe that unions and union men as a body are as liable to make mistakes as any other body of men.

1714. You are quite satisfied with the results of the operations of the union during the last six months?—Yes, so far as I can grasp the situation.

1715. You indorse all that has been done by them?—Yes.

1716. But you would be glad if it was over?—Yes.

1717. Do you consider that it would be wise to appoint boards of arbitration to deal with these matters from both sides?—Yes; so long as they should not be fettered by either side. I do not think either party should be fettered.

1718. You think they should take the decision of the board and act upon it?—I do not think compulsory arbitration ought to be the means of settlement.

1719. *The Chairman.*] Should both parties agree to submit the points of dispute to arbitration and generally to select the arbitrators? What is your view on that subject?—I think that if the men agree to go to arbitration, or to place the matter in the hands of a board of conciliation, both parties ought to abide by the decision, but without its being made compulsory by law.

1720. *Mr. Brown.*] Have you ever asked for arbitration in this particular case—for the employer to submit the matter to arbitration?—I do not think in this present dispute, so far as I am aware, that there has been anything offered in that direction.

1721. Are you aware that employers have been blamed for not entering into arbitration, not necessarily here, but elsewhere?—It seems like something distant in my mind that something of that sort has been offered.

1722. You have seen the public press accounts that come over from Australia constantly about the disputes?—Yes. I am pretty well versed in the trouble on the other side.

1723. If both sides do agree to go to arbitration, you think they ought to submit to the decision arrived at?—Yes.

1724. Do you know why, in the arbitration of July last year, when the equivalent of 4s. per ton was arrived at, it was not accepted. I mean the time that Major Kadell acted as umpire?—It was because the men did not think it was an arbitration case; it was a reference case.

1725. The figures came out showing an equivalent. They got independent parties to act for them and decide. Did they review the decision before they declined to accept it?—The masters declined to agree.