

141. Are there any points in the evidence which you would like to add to in any way or any you would like to refute?—Well, I, of course, just notice the general drift of the examinations. I have no particular details of any point that I wish to enumerate, but it strikes me on reading the evidence as if there were an anxiety to bring out evidence that there has been pressure brought to bear upon men to join the society. That seems to me to be the principle point to notice in the evidence.

142. Did you notice that the anxiety to bring out that point was induced by the evident reluctance of witnesses to bear out one another's testimony in regard to it—namely, that there was considerable discrepancy on points like compulsion?—No; it did not strike me from that point of view. It simply struck me that it was sought to be brought out because it has always been a sort of charge in the air against the society—that there was a certain amount of compulsion.

143. That has been fully brought out; it has been acknowledged by Mr. Kirby and Mr. McLean and others, whose evidence is unimpeachable?—Under special circumstances of course, not a general compulsion.

144. Compulsion which is stated in the rules?—Exactly; in accordance with the rules of the society.

145. Perhaps you can give us a few details on points on which evidence has not been taken?—Yes.

146. Did the Union Company issue a circular to officers and engineers requesting them to become members of the mutual benefit society?—No; not requesting them to become members. But there was a circular [Exhibit 11] issued, *à propos* of the benefit society, stating that it would be an encouragement and a help if the officers, both ashore and afloat, took an interest in it by becoming honorary members. There was never any question of membership of the society; in fact, officers are not eligible except as honorary members; and a number of members throughout the company's offices just became honorary members to give the society moral support. They derive no benefits.

147. But they have voting-power?—Oh, yes; an honorary member has a vote.

148. It was perhaps a desire for the additional voting-power that led to the issue of the circular?—No; I do not think so, because I cannot recall a case where it was ever exercised.

149. Do you know if the officers generally responded to the circular?—I do not think the officers afloat did. It was just a suggestion made to them; it was never a request. The thing was purely voluntary.

150. Can you tell us if the engineers responded?—I cannot at this distance of time. As a matter of fact, I do not know who are the honorary members. They would be on the roll of the society. It does not come in touch with our office in any way.

151. The Union Company, I think, obliges every officer to insure his life?—Yes.

152. *Mr. Fisher.*] Are the officers insured with a fund in the Union Company?—No; they are mostly insured in the Government Life Insurance. Others who were insured in other offices before the rules came into force continue so.

153. Is any deduction for insurance made from their wages?—The Union Company pay the premiums in advance every six months and collect the officers' proportion monthly. The company itself contributes a portion of the premiums.

154. *The Chairman.*] You have read the agreement come to between the Union Company and the Seamen's Union?—Yes.

155. Does it apply to all employes of the Union Company—I mean, to the cooks and stewards as well as seamen and others?—Only to those enumerated in the agreement—seamen, firemen, trimmers, and donkeymen. It does not apply to cooks and stewards.

156. The fifth paragraph of the agreement reads as follows: "On and after the 30th day of September, 1897, it shall not be compulsory for any employé herein mentioned to subscribe to or become a member of the said company's mutual benefit society . . . retaining employment." Does that apply also to cooks and stewards as well as those specifically named?—Yes; it applies to the whole service. There is no reservation. In fact, if you will look at the agreement you will find it is optional from now as regards men joining the service.

158. You have some vessels, I think, which do not sail in the New Zealand service, but in the Tasmanian and Australian trade: do you know if the compulsory clauses which compel seamen to join the benefit society are applicable to those boats as well as the New Zealand boats? Have they ever been compelled to join the benefit society as the New Zealand sailors have?—Just in the same way as the New Zealand sailors. I do not like the way you put "compelling" and "compulsory"—I mean membership is only compulsory upon men who are joining the service for the first time. You understand joining the benefit society is applicable to men who are new men in the service, and who are not members of other friendly societies. They have to join the benefit society.

159. *Mr. Fisher.*] You said you observed in reading the evidence that most of the questions were directed to the point that it was compulsory upon men to join the benefit society?—That there was pressure brought upon them. I gather in reading the evidence that it was sought to prove that pressure was brought to bear, independent of the fact that men were members of other societies.

160. Are you aware—I assume you are—that the rules themselves make it compulsory to join the society?—In the case of new members who are not members of other societies.

161. If you do object to the use of the word "compulsion," will you please read the fifth clause of the agreement between the Union Company and the Seamen's Union, just signed, which says, "On and after the 30th day of September, 1897, it shall not be compulsory for any employé . . . retaining employment"?—Exactly.

162. So the word "compulsion" comes from your own document?—Quite so. It is limited in