

ment recognised our union—that is, the Minister for Railways instructed the local officials to employ our union men when available, but some of the men belonging to the association got him to withdraw the recognition. This, consequently, has had a most damaging effect on the membership of our union.

143. *Hon. Major Steward.*] You left the association for the reason that you were dissatisfied with the way things were going on?—No; I left it because I could not get any work; they would not give me any work.

144. Suppose you wanted to join, would they accept you?—Not now; I have gone over the limit of twelve months.

145. Suppose you wanted to join again as a new member?—I question whether they would allow me; they would say I belong to the casual union.

146. How many casual union men have joined this association?—There are some of our members who are members of that association yet.

147. How can they belong to both?—It is quite easy to pay their contribution for the sick and other benefits.

148. Then, you make an allowance from your union too?—We have no benefit society.

149. *The Chairman.*] One rule says that persons who are bullied or menaced in any way can apply to the committee?—Yes.

150. Do you know of a case where a man has been bullied, and of punishment being inflicted upon the persons bullying?—All I know is this: that the workmen's section of the committee has ignored these affairs.

151. In your opinion?—Yes; whatever the manager of the Stevedoring Association says shall be done is done. They ignore any recommendations from the working section of the committee.

PETER DEVEREUX was examined on oath.

152. *The Chairman.*] What is your occupation?—A stevedore.

153. Do you belong to the Lyttelton Lumpers' and Wharf-labourers' Association?—Yes.

154. Have you belonged to that association long?—Since it started.

155. Are you an office-bearer?—The chairman.

156. What is your opinion of the value of the association? Is it of great use to the men?—Well, I believe it is about the best thing we have ever had in Lyttelton, so far as the men are concerned.

157. What are the points you particularly think are good in it?—When we had the unions in vogue in Lyttelton it was only the first-class men who were employed. If I was a better man than you I would be employed, and you could stand back. There was a lot of growling about the employers, and every boss had his own favourites for the work. The way it is now, one man employs all the labour, and it is no benefit to him whether they are good men or bad men: he is told to give every man work. Then, again, there are a lot of old men in Lyttelton who, were it not for this association, would not be employed at all. It is only the other day that we could have broken up this association if we had been inclined to do so. We had a meeting with the employers, and they told us we could break up the concern if we liked. They said these old men would not be employed, and we asked them why, and they said, "Business is business; we are bound to get the best for our money."

158. If a man wishes to join your association he must make an application to the secretary of the Stevedoring Association?—There is a rule in the book to that effect, but they do not do that. When a man wishes to join the association he sends in an application, which comes before the committee, and if the committee thinks there is any room for this man to come in they put the matter before the general body, and the general body elects him.

159. The committee is not controlled in any way by the Stevedoring Association?—There are supposed to be five on the committee, but I have never seen them; they are in England. Mr. Stead is in England, the manager of the New Zealand Shipping Company is in England, Mr. Johnson takes no part in it. Mr. Barnes and Mr. Lambie take up the work.

160. *Hon. Major Steward.*] So, notwithstanding the rules, in the actual working the men's representatives are in the majority?—Yes; every time I have been there. I was on this committee when it first started, when there were five representatives from the Stevedoring Association, but there are not now. That was six years ago.

161. *The Chairman.*] Still, the names remain on the committee?—Yes; but Mr. Cunningham is dead, and I do not know that anybody has been appointed in his place.

162. If you had a disagreement with the employers' representatives you could not get work inside the association?—No, but somewhere else.

163. Not at wharf-lumping?—Yes; there is other labour besides what they employ.

164. Is it not a rule that the two hundred men belonging to the association must be provided with work before others can obtain work?—When we had a union you could not get work if a union man wanted work, and it is only natural if an association man is standing by that another man will not get work until he is provided for. You would do the same if you were an employer of labour.

165. *Mr. Fisher.*] Suppose any difficulty in the nature of a strike were likely to arise, do you think the Canterbury Stevedoring Association would consent to be represented by two men when they are entitled to five?—I should think not.

166. Very well, as these rules tell us, and I ask you whether it is or is not a fact, does not the Canterbury Stevedoring Association govern and control the Lyttelton Lumpers' and Wharf-labourers' Association?—If there was such a thing as a strike to-morrow, and we thought the Canterbury Stevedoring Association was not treating us fair, we would defy them as we have done before. But, so far as I am concerned, I have been twenty-two years on the wharf at Lyttelton as a wharf-labourer, and I believe we are better treated now than ever we were, and I believe