

25. Can you account for the fact that the contractors cannot get as many men as they can employ?—The conditions are so bad that you cannot get them. Mr. McLean has refused to give what we asked, and the men will not stop.

26. What conditions do you refer to?—We have asked for the bank-to-bank clause and for six hours in wet places.

27. But you get the six hours in wet places if Mr. Gavin judges that a place is wet, do you not?—Yes.

28. What are the other conditions?—We want to be paid full time for short shifts; we want forty-six hours to be full time for a week.

29. Have you met Mr. McLean about that?—No, I was not secretary of the union then.

30. With regard to housing, you might tell the Committee what the houses are like—the house where you live, for instance. How big are they?—About 12 by 12, I should say. They have one window, one door, and a chimney-place.

31. Have you heard any complaints from the men about the houses?—Yes.

32. What is the complaint they make?—That the houses are draughty—a lot of them are not lined inside.

33. Have you lived in any of the houses about other mines?—No.

34. Have you heard the men complain that on Sunday they have to go and get wood to keep them warm for the rest of the week?—Yes. We all go to get wood on Sunday, as a rule.

35. The men do not stay much in the houses, do they? Are they not mostly in the boarding-houses and the billiard-room—away from their huts?—They do not stay at the huts much of an evening; they generally go out.

36. Have you got anything to say about the sanitary arrangements?—Yes. A notice has been up outside the tunnel that any man committing a nuisance in the tunnel is liable to dismissal, as sanitary arrangements have been provided; but I have not seen any sanitary arrangements there for some time.

37. Do they not simply use the main drain there?—That is so.

38. Is that sufficient sanitary arrangement, in your opinion?—No, I do not think it is.

39. *Mr. McLean.*] You say that some of the huts are draughty, and so on. Have the union ever made any complaints to the management in connection with any of the huts, or has any individual ever made a complaint?—Yes.

40. To whom?—I do not know whether they made a complaint, but I believe that Mr. Archie McLean has informed the men that the timber is on the road with which to fix the huts up.

41. Do you know of any one that has ever made any complaint to the management in connection with the draughtiness of the huts, or anything wrong with them at all?—It was brought up at a union meeting that I should ask about the huts.

42. Did you do it?—No, because this explanation was offered about the timber coming, otherwise I should.

43. It is quite evident, then, that the management had the matter in hand and was going on with it: is that so?—Yes.

44. Is it a fact within your knowledge that some of the men destroy the huts—cut them up, break the windows, &c.?—Yes, it is a fact.

45. They do not look after the huts in any way?—That is so.

46. Some men go into the huts and wreck them, and go away, and the management does not know of it until they have gone: is that not so?—Yes.

47. *The Chairman.*] With regard to the ventilation of the tunnel, is there any general complaint?—No, I have not heard any general complaint about the ventilation.

48. Have you any suggestion as to what should be done in the way of improving sanitary conditions in the tunnel?—No, I do not know exactly what should be done.

49. You say the sanitary arrangements are not altogether satisfactory?—No, I do not think they are.

50. What do you think could be done to improve matters at all? Or is it that there are bound to be difficulties with sanitary arrangements in a tunnel of this kind?—I do not know what to say, exactly.

51. No decision has been come to by the union as to any further requirements?—No.

52. *Hon. Mr. Fraser.*] You said that the men did not approve of the bonus system because they looked upon it as a kind of "coercion wage." Is there any compulsion for a man to earn a bonus?—No.

53. He need not earn it unless he likes, need he?—If the gang with which he is working earns it, I suppose he takes it as well as the others.

54. I mean, working extra hard: I suppose that is what the bonus system meant, did it not—by working harder the men could earn more money?—Yes.

55. But unless they choose to do so they need not?—I do not think there was any complaint about trying to make the men work hard.

56. It is your own remark that I refer to—that the bonus system was objectionable to some of the men—that they looked upon it as sweating, as a coercion wage. Did you mean that?—They looked upon it as that, but I do not think any one has complained of the shift-boss trying to make them work hard in order to earn this extra bonus.

57. I did not mean that. There was no compulsion upon a man to exert himself in order to win this bonus—he could do it or not as he pleased—or, rather, the whole gang: if they did not choose to work harder than formerly it simply meant that they would not get the bonus?—That is so.

58. Then, did I understand you to say that the men wanted the extra wage without it being in the form of a bonus?—That is so.