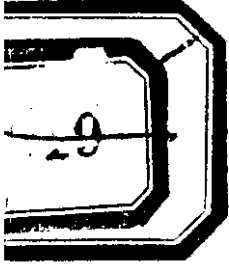


TRANSPORT WORKERS—COURT OF INQUIRY.



VOL. I.

REPORT
AND
MINUTES OF EVIDENCE
OF THE
INQUIRY

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



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**Appointment of Court of Inquiry and Rules of Procedure.
(Transport Workers—Wages and Conditions of Employment
of Dock Labour).**

Whereas by the Industrial Courts Act, 1919, the Minister of Labour is empowered to refer any matters appearing to him to be connected with or relevant to a trade dispute, whether existing or apprehended, to a Court of Inquiry appointed by him for that purpose :

And whereas negotiations have been proceeding between the National Council of Port Labour Employers on the one hand, and the National Transport Workers' Federation on the other hand, on the subject of standard minimum wages and other alterations in the conditions of employment of various classes of Dock and Waterside Labour :

And whereas the National Council of Port Labour Employers and the National Transport Workers' Federation, having failed to arrive at a settlement, have requested the Minister of Labour to refer to a Court of Inquiry the proposals set out in Part I. of the First Schedule hereto, and have agreed to the conditions for Inquiry (hereinafter referred to as the "Agreed Conditions") set out in Part II. of the said Schedule :

Now, therefore, the Minister of Labour, by virtue of the powers vested in him by the said Act, and of all other powers enabling him in that behalf, appoints the persons named in the Second Schedule hereto to constitute a Court of Inquiry, and hereby refers to them the said proposals set out in Part I. of the said First Schedule.

And whereas the Minister of Labour is empowered by the said Act to make rules regulating the procedure of any Court of Inquiry appointed thereunder :

And whereas it is expedient that, in addition to the said Agreed Conditions, certain other matters touching the procedure of the said Court should be regulated by rules, the Minister of Labour further directs that such matters shall be regulated by the following rules, that is to say :—

- (1) The Court may require any witnesses to give evidence on oath, and the Chairman or any person duly authorised by him may administer an oath for that purpose.
- (2) Five members of the Court shall form a quorum.
- (3) The report and any interim reports of the Court shall be made to the Minister of Labour in writing, and shall be signed by such of the members as concur therein, and shall be transmitted to him as soon as practicable after the conclusion of the Inquiry; and any minority report by any dissentient member or members of the Court shall be made and transmitted in like manner.
- (4) Subject to these Rules and to the said Agreed Conditions, the Court may regulate its own procedure as it thinks fit.

Dated this 22nd day of January 1920.

Given under the Official Seal of the Minister of Labour.



D. J. SHACKLETON,
Secretary.

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FIRST SCHEDULE.

PART I.

1. That the minimum for day workers and pieceworkers shall be 16s. per day on the basis of the National Agreement for the 44-hour week.
2. When working on there shall be paid time and a half, with a minimum of four hours, and the following conditions to be observed:—When the men take a half-hour for tea they shall cease work at 8.30 p.m. and be paid four hours at time and a half.
Where one hour is taken for tea the men to cease work at 9 p.m. and be paid for four hours.
NOTE.—The object being to arrange for three hours' overtime, for which four hours shall be paid at time and a half; and further, that if the men work any time after 5 p.m., and cease before 8.30 p.m. or 9 p.m. respectively four hours to be paid.
3. If men work any time after 8.30 p.m. or 9 p.m. a full night to be paid. "Full night" to be as defined in local agreements.
4. Where men work on regular shift-work, not less than time and a half to be paid for the second shift, and in the case of pieceworkers, rate and a half.
5. Saturday afternoons and Sundays up to starting time on Mondays to be paid for at not less than double time, at day or overtime rates.
6. Steps to be taken to secure the reduction of overtime to reasonable lengths, and systematic overtime to be abolished.
7. Where men work or are paid for two shifts in succession they shall not be permitted to recommence work for 24 hours, or two shifts, from the time of ceasing.
8. Permanent men shall have their wages adjusted in order that they shall be in the same relation to casuals as existed prior to the establishment of the 44-hour working week or the signing of the new national agreement.
9. Where overtime conditions as outlined in the present proposals vary with local conditions and are found after local negotiations to be impracticable, districts to be given power to vary the proposals, provided that the total amount paid for overtime shall not be less than herein proposed.
10. Where in any district the men are working under conditions more advantageous than the present proposals the new national agreement shall not operate to depress such conditions.
11. This application is deemed to and shall include all workers loading and discharging general cargo and handling same at quays and wharves, overside and in warehouses, and at docks and wharves. Such application shall include all employees embraced in existing local agreements and whose Unions are affiliated to the National Transport Workers' Federation and employed by the various authorities, Employers and Employers' Associations cited in the terms of application, and being in receipt of the above application. The application shall provide for, among others, dock labourers, cranemen, warehousemen, and all others employed in docks and river traffic, manipulators of machinery, and maintenance staffs employed by dock authorities and other employers engaging the afore-mentioned classes of labour and taking part in the various operations of transport.

PART II.

Agreed Conditions for Inquiry under Part II. of the Industrial Courts Act, 1919.

1. PARTIES—
 - (a) The National Transport Workers' Federation and its affiliated Unions, so far as representing workers concerned in the application.
 - (b) Firms and authorities, and those for whom they act as agents, or as stevedores, &c., directly or indirectly employing and paying the workers concerned in the application.

2. REPORTS—

Interim reports shall be issued from time to time on the various points of the application, so far as is practicable, in the following order :—

- (1) Minimum wage rates.
- (2) Overtime rates.
- (3) The other conditions of employment.

3. EVIDENCE—

Each side shall submit all books and documents thought relevant by the Court.

4. COUNSEL—

Counsel may appear on behalf of either party.

5. FINAL REPORT—

Inquiry to be concluded and Final Report to be issued as soon as practicable.

SECOND SCHEDULE.

The Rt. Hon. Lord Shaw of Dunfermline (*Chairman*).

Sir Joseph G. Broodbank.

Sir Lionel Fletcher.

Harry Gosling, Esq., C.H.

A. Pugh, Esq.

Frederic Scrutton, Esq.

John Smethurst, Esq.

Ben Tillett, Esq., M.P.

Robert Williams, Esq.

Secretaries :—

Mr. Norman Macpherson.

Mr. G. H. Ince.

TO THE RT. HON. THE MINISTER OF LABOUR.

SIR,

WE have the honour to submit the following Report :—

Preliminary.

2. The Court of Inquiry appointed by the prefixed letter of appointment, held a preliminary meeting in private on Thursday, 22nd January 1920 at St. Ermin's Hotel, Westminster, at which the procedure of the Court was determined. Subsequent to this meeting and before the opening of the inquiry visits were paid to the London Docks and the Liverpool Docks. On 27th January the Chairman of the Court, accompanied by Sir Joseph G. Broodbank and Mr. Gosling, visited the Royal Victoria Dock, the Royal Albert Dock, the West India Dock, the Millwall Dock and the London Dock; and on 28th and 29th January, the Chairman, accompanied by Sir Lionel Fletcher and Mr. Gosling visited the docks at the South and North end at Liverpool.

3. The Inquiry opened on Tuesday, 3rd February at the Royal Courts of Justice. Sir Lynden Macassey, K.B.E., K.C. and Mr. Bruce Thomas appeared for the National Council of Port Labour Employers, and Mr. Ernest Bevin and Mr. J. Sexton, C.B.E., M.P. for the National Transport Workers' Federation. The National Council of Port Labour Employers, a newly formed organisation, was for the purpose of the inquiry a comprehensive organisation representing all Port, Harbour and Dock Authorities and all the employers of Dock Labour who had been served by the National Transport Workers' Federation with the application which forms the terms of reference of this inquiry. The London Chamber of Commerce, the London Waterside Manufacturers' Association, the United Traders' Association of Liverpool, and the London Dock Pilots and Watermen's Union were also represented.

4. The Court held twenty public sittings, the evidence being concluded on 11th March. The number of witnesses examined was 53, which number included 34 on behalf of the National Council of Port Labour Employers, 15 on behalf of the National Transport Workers' Federation, two on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce, one on behalf of the London Waterside Manufacturers' Association, and one on behalf of the Ministry of Munitions.

Scope of Claim.

5. The application contained claims under 10 heads, and it was in the hope of a settlement of these that this Court of Inquiry was set up. The first of the claims was in the following terms: "That the minimum for day workers and pieceworkers shall be 16s. per day on the basis of the National Agreement for the 44-hour week."

Limitation of Inquiry.

6. It became evident that there were public considerations which pointed to the great advantage of a Report being given at the earliest date on this head. The Court could not be blind to the fact that unrest upon a considerable scale might be allayed by such an individual answer, if promptly given. It addressed itself accordingly to limiting the Inquiry in the first instance to this issue, so as to enable the results to be communicated *ad interim* to the Ministry.

Upon the other issues to be settled, reliance was placed upon the good sense and goodwill of the parties in the direction of adjustment of matters of difference. As things have turned out, and after a full investigation, which was conducted with keenness but without acrimony, there seems good ground to hope that that reliance will be justified.

Interpretation of Minimum.

7. The language of the claim is open to a wide construction. Sir Lynden Macassey was well within his rights in interpreting "a minimum" as a universal national minimum which swept away all considerations of special circumstances and which admitted of no exception. In amplification of the grotesque results which he argued might follow from such a settlement, a table was put in of the small ports of the Kingdom, and it was added that there were in addition 874 creeks, estuaries, &c. in which loading and unloading and other forms of labour such as that performed by

one or other of the grades of dock labourers took place. In the opinion of the Court the matter must be approached by both parties in a sensible and practical spirit.

All that is meant by the fixing of a minimum by this Court is what Mr. Bevin, on behalf of the claimants, agreed was reasonable, namely, that the workers at all the greater ports of the Kingdom who have consolidated as claimants in the present case should be looked on as presenting a united front, but that while a figure upon that footing is settled, it is manifest that in regard to many at least of the smaller ports and all of those creeks and estuaries, these might be treated as exceptions to the application of a standard minimum, and no difficulty was expressed with regard to the possibility of preparing a schedule of these exceptional cases. After all, this will not, it is presumed, reach even 10 per cent. of the dock labour of the country. The report which is now made is upon the footing that the parties in this reasonable attitude will, with the assistance of the Ministry, see that a schedule of this kind is set up.

It would be improper to compare the minimum now asked to be set up with the lowest figure of wage obtained in the scheduled ports. A great evening-up of under-paid work will take place, and the parties indicated that, once the principle of the minimum was settled, this could be done by them without difficulty. In London, for instance, the Port of London Authority pays 11s. 8d. per day, whereas Ocean Shipowners pay 13s. 9d. per day, while in Glasgow the general rate of payment of a docker is 14s. per day. It may be noted that the pledge given on behalf of the men was in these terms (to use the words of Mr. Bevin addressing this Court): "I am conscious that whatever your decision may be, if the principle of the minimum be established some people in some parts are going to get more on the first settlement than others. We have faced that, and we have discussed it with the whole of our men. It was assumed by the Chairman of the employers at the previous meeting, to take a striking illustration, that if Liverpool received 12s. per day, and Glasgow 14s., if you decided on 16s. a day Glasgow would say '18s., because I was above Liverpool before.' That is not so, my Lord. That is clearly understood by every member of the Federation in every port in the country." In these circumstances to start with 11s. 8d. as a general datum of difference with 16s. while ignoring all the other cases of higher wages and lesser differences would be productive of serious error.

Elements directly bearing on Claim : Output and Casual Labour.

8. It became plain as the Inquiry proceeded that the question of a minimum wage could not be dis severed from two other considerations directly bearing upon it. The first of these had reference to the serious problem of output, and the second to the problem—equally serious—of casual labour. Both of these things are not only vitally connected with dock labour, but they are also of deep importance to the industrial and social well-being of the community at large.

Their bearing on the issue was quickly made clear. Unless increase of output could be obtained, the ports, it was contended, might be confronted with such a situation of financial strain as might seriously cripple trade, and destroy all the advantages which might be supposed to follow the fixing of the high minimum asked. The result might be to paralyse the very industry whose progress and development it was the interest of both parties to promote. As to casualisation, it met the Court at every turn as a specialty which bore fundamentally upon the main wages question.

9. The Inquiry, although thus conditioned, but affecting as it did every port, dock and harbour in the Kingdom, and a labouring population of about 125,000 men, was of necessity wide, and considerable detail had to be faced. Both parties respected the limits laid down, and showed a business-like determination to make the investigation helpful by its thoroughness. The Court was further assisted by the powerful advocacy with which each side supported its case.

Definition of Standard of Living.

10. The true and substantial case presented by the dockers was based upon a broad appeal for a better standard of living. What is a better standard of living? By this

is not meant a right to have merely a subsistence allowance, in the sense of keeping the soul and body of the worker together, but a right to have life ordered upon a higher standard, with full regard to those comforts and decencies which are promotive of better habits, which give a chance for the development of a greater sense of self-respect, and which betoken a higher regard for the place occupied by these workers in the scheme of citizenship. The Court did not discourage this view; on the contrary, it approved of it; and it is fair to the Port Authorities and employers to say that its soundness was not questioned. In the opinion of the Court the time has gone past for assessing the value of human labour at the poverty line.

11. The result of the evidence given was rather peculiar. At first it appeared that the figures laid down by the claimants were out of all proportion to any reasonable increase on pre-war figures of remuneration. A budget was presented in which the standard family was taken as that of a man having a wife and three children, none of the children being at the age of being able to contribute to the family income. It must be observed that a minimum fixed as applicable to such a type is fixed as for a period in the life of the family at which the outgoings are the heaviest, with no corresponding incomings from the family itself to lighten the burden. A minimum accordingly so fixed is one under which a bachelor workman at the one end of the scale, and a workman with one or two of his family in employment at the other end of the scale, would stand very largely to gain.

The Court mentions this because it must prove a modifying circumstance in consideration of the topic by employers and by workmen as a whole. And it has greatly added to the difficulty of settling a general and single figure, and has, in fact, given the Court much anxiety. If, for instance, the bachelor case could have been separately treated, probably no one would have seen any objection in principle to doing so. But to provide that that class of workman was to receive less remuneration than his married comrade would, in the conditions in which dock labour is selected, prove an impracticable proposal. The cheaper labour would tend to have the better chance of the job. And the ranks of the unemployed casual would be more and more filled by the very men whose needs were the greatest, namely, those with dependents.

Cost of Living.

12. When the case of the employers was presented, however, no attempt was made to object to the typical standard of family just mentioned. On the contrary, that standard (one often chosen in economic discussion) appeared to be accepted. On behalf of the workers a figure of 6*l.*, and on behalf of the employers a figure of 3*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.* out of London and 3*l.* 17*s.* in the London area, was presented to the Court as the expenses of procuring a decent standard of life for a family of man and wife and three children, and Professor Bowley defended these latter figures with great ability. With much frankness he stated the great difficulty of settling with accuracy the clothing figure of 12*s.* 6*d.*, and he said that a figure for household expenditure could not well be estimated. He certainly did not exaggerate it when he allowed this item, on which so much of the comfort of even the most frugal household may depend, to be entered at 3*s.* 4*d.* a week. On the other hand, Sir Leo Chiozza Money, a witness for the claimants, suggested a poverty line budget so high as 5*l.* 3*s.* As often alluded to, there does not seem to be for some years what might be called a reasonable expectation of a substantial cheapening of the cost of living. The Court was accordingly confronted with the problem at once elementary and far reaching of the standard of life as already defined. On this, as mentioned, both parties led their evidence and submitted their views. The difference between the parties thus stood, say, between 3*l.* 17*s.* on the one hand, and 6*l.* on the other. The claim made is for a minimum daily wage of 16*s.* It has been difficult to obtain accurate information as to the exact number of hours, or say of half-days, worked per week by the docker who comes under the ordinary denomination of a casual worker. It appears to the court, however, that that average may stand at about 8 half-days out of the 11. The 16*s.* per full day claimed would, on this average, reach a sum of 3*l.* 4*s.* per week. Upon the footing that the workmen obtained work and continued at work, however, during the whole of the 11 half-days a sum of 4*l.* 8*s.* would be reached.

Items of Budget.

13. There is a difficulty in coming to a fixed figure in view of the necessarily shifting elements of the calculation. It should be mentioned, however, that the subject of rent is one which can hardly be treated apart from those general considerations which must be before the mind of the Government of this country in any schemes for the proper housing of the people. It is in this view that the claim for rent was made the subject of special handling by the witnesses, and of special inquiry by this Court at the Ministry of Health.

In one of the schedules of family expenditure put forward, namely, that of Professor Bowley, the figure was stated as 6*s.* 6*d.* for provincial towns and 10*s.* for London; in one put forward by Mr. Sexton as applicable to Liverpool it was stated as 7*s.* 6*d.*; in one relied upon by Mr. Bevin it was stated as 10*s.*, while remarkable evidence was given from Preston and from Leith that all of these figures might be considered much too high. A communication was therefore directly addressed to the Minister of Health, and a reply was received from that department to the effect that a figure of 10*s.* could not be said to be in any respect an over-statement of the sum of money likely to be required for decent housing of a family of this class. The Court does not see any reason to question this authoritative view.

14. This is a sample item, taken from the budget, of what are, so to speak, the considerations on the spot. But as applicable to the more general items of food, clothing and the like, there are wider considerations which are vital to the problem of the cost of living and not only beyond the range of the question of output to be presently referred to, but also beyond the control of the best disposed employer or worker.

15. Such are the effects of the war. These include the ravages of productive territory, the destruction of human and mechanical power, and the locking up, and lack of replenishment and transport, of supplies, especially over great spaces of Europe, while in our own country there is the one outstanding fact: we are confronted with a colossal obligation, a debt of nearly 8,000 millions sterling. These things need not be elaborated; they will test all the nation's recuperative power. And during the ordeal it would be foolish to base calculations upon the footing of a quick return to easier conditions of life. In these circumstances the question of a sliding scale does not arise.

Casual Labour.

16. It was strongly contended that the minimum now to be set up would be pointed to as the ground for claims in other industries. This may be the case, no doubt, but the following consideration has to be kept in view: dock labour is in a very large proportion uncertain labour. The employees in that branch of industry often run the risk of finding themselves without work at the end of any day or even any half-day. This raises the whole question of casual labour, and it has serious relations to the claim of the workers. This is said for this reason: that, as will be presently explained, the Court is of opinion that the time has arrived when the industry out of which the payment of wages will come must also bear a charge in respect to maintenance of unemployed casuals. The amount of that charge no doubt will depend upon the energy and enlightenment with which the casual problem is tackled by all concerned. With such energy and enlightenment it may be reduced to small and vanishing proportions and expense. But meantime the position, even on the point of finance, is one which has to be faced, and which enters into the problem of a general wage fixing.

The Court therefore makes no apology to the Minister for dealing with this question of casualisation. In its opinion, to decline to deal with it or to treat it as irrelevant would be to shirk a difficulty and a trouble of large dimensions and of wide social ramifications, but yet one without a settlement of which the prospect of peace at the docks or of amelioration or of contentment will be hopeless.

17. The Court is of opinion that labour frequently or constantly under-employed is injurious to the interests of the workers, the ports, and the public, and that it is discreditable to society. It undermines all security, and is apt to undermine all self-respect upon the workers' part. It is only among those who have sunk very far, and whom the system itself may have demoralised, that it can be accepted as a working substitute for steady and assured employment. In one sense it is a convenience to authorities and employers, whose requirements are at the mercy of storms and tides and unforeseen casualties, to have a reservoir of unemployment which can be readily tapped as the need emerges for a labour supply. If men were merely the spare parts of an industrial machine, this callous reckoning might be appropriate; but society will not tolerate much longer the continuance of the employment of human beings on those lines.

The system of casualisation must, if possible, be torn up by the roots. It is wrong. And the one issue is as to what practical means can be adopted of readily providing labour, while avoiding cruel and unsocial conditions.

So serious has the position become that it has evolved habits of mind and body on the part of the workmen themselves which are detrimental to them and on a wide scale deeply injurious. Many workers have got into the habit of thinking that day labour is a sign of independence, and that labour secured even for a week leaves them devoid of that liberty to do nothing which they have come to prize. As in so many other cases mentioned in this Report, this habit of mind is in no respect sanctioned by the leaders of the men, and as properly urged by them, one of the true lines of reform in this trade will be the abolition of the daily wage system and the substitution therefore of the payment of wages weekly.

Weekly Payment of Wages.

18. The practical difficulty in the way of this conversion is that men have become habituated to subsistence money so as to enable them to avoid hunger. A notable pledge was made by the representative of the claimants to the effect that if a weekly payment of wages were instituted—which it was agreed would carry in its wake responsibility on the part of the workman for making his own subsistence a matter for thrifty outlook—the leaders of the men would counsel the abolition of the old bad hand-to-mouth habit of pay. With the assistance of a joint industrial council and the correlative local bodies to be hereafter recommended, the Court does not think that the Ministry need fear the elimination of the old method.

As matters stand, however, the daily wage asked to be fixed is the wage of a class upon the footing that this unemployment and under-employment, lamentable as they may be, do actually exist. Casualisation, in short, and that on a large scale, seems to have become part and parcel of the dock industry, and this has been accentuated since the outbreak of war. It was, and it remains, one of the most appalling problems which confront all those engaged in social amelioration or philanthropic effort. Since the war it has reached the dimensions of a serious social disease. The spectacle of men who, after all, have the obligations of citizenship resting upon them, being assembled at the dock gates, uncertain whether they are to enter the ranks of labour for even half a day or be left a prey to those temptations which spring from idleness, poverty and a sense of neglect, is not one which can be treated by any independent and humane mind with equanimity.

Remedies :—(1) Registration.

19. The beginning of a remedy, and the condition of it, is a system of registration of all workers at the docks. The Government is not without most substantial aid upon this subject. The Court begs to report its opinion that such a system of registration should be adopted, and that the plan now in operation at the Port of Liverpool, and that recommended for London in the most valuable Report recently of Mr. Justice Roche's Committee, afford assistance in laying down the lines on which registration should proceed. It may be mentioned that four members of this Court were also members of that Committee.

Remedies :—(2) Maintenance.

20. It is not for this Court to enter into these details. As bearing, however, on the financial question before it, it feels that it is its duty also to record its view in favour of the adoption of the principle of maintenance. The amount can be settled by the parties or upon reference to the industrial council machinery already alluded to. It may be pointed out that once maintenance is part and parcel of a registration scheme, the objections to registration may quickly disappear. The Court accordingly reports its opinion that registration and maintenance should both be adopted, and this in regard to all the labour employed at all the ports of the Kingdom.

In this system the workmen as well as the ports and employers are deeply interested. It would impart, in the Court's view, steadiness to the industry as a whole, together with great improvement in its conditions. It would become a matter of interest both for the port and for the employers that all the available labour on the register should be employed, so as to avoid a mere dead-weight of pay to casuals. With regard to the workmen themselves, admission to and retention on the register would become an object of just effort; and it would equally be an object of effort upon their part, when once on the register, to adapt themselves, by such mobility as is possible, to the requirements of the port, and rise from the maintenance list on to the list of full employment. This matter of mobility is of no slight importance, whether as bearing on the question of casuals or on the question of output, and the conditions facilitating this could be well remitted to the care of those acting under the industrial councils scheme.

Alleged Effect on other Industries.

21. Entertaining these views as to casual labour, it will be seen that the Court is not in a position to give much effect to the argument derived from other industries. A serious problem of readjustment confronts the dock trade; and as matters stand, the analogy with other industries fails at the crucial point, namely, that, in those, regular and steady employment prevails. It must be added, however, that, a substantial number of the employees who are claimants in this inquiry do have regular employment, and that the Court has had to do its best, in view of the solidarity of the claim as presented by all classes of dock labour, regular and irregular, to reach a daily minimum which shall be just all round. The Court now finds itself bound to face the question of output. It confesses its view to be that this question is of more importance than the claim itself.

Output.

22. It desires to state broadly that unless a reasonable hope can be entertained that output shall be largely increased, it remains extremely doubtful whether the industry could justifiably be charged with the amount of the claim put forward. The Court, however, is of opinion that such a reasonable hope exists; and it thinks it to be its duty to submit to the Government the result of its investigation and labours upon this topic.

The radical connection between output and the wages' claim is this: Witness after witness indicated that the increased debit for wages was a thing which the industry could stand if only output were attained. A fair sample of the evidence may be given from Lord Devonport. When asked: "Supposing you had an arrangement—I just want you to try and suppose it so as to get some light on the subject—which would be honoured by the men, and the loss, which has been put at no less than one hour per man per day, were avoided, that would be a very substantial help to all the ports in which that occurred, would it not?" His Lordship answered: "Yes. I have heard it said over and over again: 'We would not mind high wages if we got the work.' I am not imputing anything, but that has been said at every street corner in the kingdom—'we would not mind high wages if we can only get the work'—they mean by that the output."

Payment by Results.

23. In order to facilitate the desired output of which the country stands in imperative need, attention should be given to the system which has given satisfaction

in many of the aspects of dock labour, namely, payment by results. It is understood that payment by results is impracticable in some aspects of dock and waterside labour, but, where practicable and desirable, consideration should be given to the extension of the system. The Court recommends to the Joint Industrial Council the consideration of the extension of this system of payment by results.

Responsibility for Loss of Output.

24. It need not be concealed that great alarm is felt on the subject throughout the country, and by port authorities themselves. It would be a mistake on a very large scale to lay the blame for all the decrease of output upon the men. No unprejudiced hearer of the evidence would venture to do so. Various causes, in addition to the reduction of hours to 44 per week, have contributed towards this disastrous result.

Responsibility for loss of Output :—(1) Government Departments.

25. In the first place it is right to begin with the action of the Government departments themselves. Congestion at the ports of this Kingdom means immediate loss and possibly suffering to all who are either consumers of produce or engaged in commerce. The Chairman of the Port of London Authority roundly charged Government departments with producing congestion by a lack of due consideration either for the requirements of our people or the accommodation of our ports. The departments to whose laches he appeared to make allusion were as follows, viz., the Ministry of Munitions, the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Shipping, the Board of Trade, the Royal Commission on the Sugar Supply, and the Ministry of Food. The Secretary of the Court was accordingly directed to offer to each of these Departments the opportunity of appearing and making any explanations.

Only one department gave evidence in response to this invitation. Sir Arthur Goldfinch, the Director-General of Raw Materials, was good enough to appear and to give evidence on behalf of the Ministry of Munitions with regard to the alleged congestion in the case of wool.

It is not for this Court to enter into any controversies between Lord Devonport and the departments or between the departments themselves, or to permit any political considerations or political utterances to divert its mind from the one issue, which was very serious, namely, the production of confusion, delay and disorganisation at the Port to such an extent as to increase the hazards of the employment, its uncertainties, and the amount of casualisation. In the opinion of the Court such an increase did occur. In Sir Arthur Goldfinch's evidence, which was firm and frank, he admitted that the enormous storage of wool, a bulky article apt to incommode the general storage at the Port of London, was accounted for to a considerable extent by the fact that the auction sales for the article were suspended. It is to be borne in mind that the Government was itself the owner of the article to be sold, and the Court does not see its way to accept the suggestion that if the familiar auction sales were not carried on during the war the Government was thereby excused from otherwise disposing of its own property.

While the other departments did not send evidence, note may be taken of the reply of the Secretary to the Royal Commission on the Sugar Supply. In an outspoken communication he said he was not prepared to dispute the substantial accuracy of Lord Devonport's statements, and he added that all that his department "could do would be to show that it is in no way responsible for the heavy demands on the Port of London Authority's warehousing accommodation that is threatened in April in respect of raw sugar. The blame, such as it may be, must be with the Ministry of Shipping."

The charge with respect to meat was very pointed and grave. It not only affected the congestion at the Port and the relative casualisation mentioned, but it affected also, as indeed did wool, the cost of living, which is at the foundation of the claim in issue. The charge made was that the Government, also the owner of an overwhelming supply of meat, has declined to realise the same or to throw open the stocks to consumers, but preferred, and prefers, to store in refrigerator stores or turned valuable vessels into floating warehouses.

With the motives of the departments, administrative or financial, this Court has no concern, and is able to offer no explanation, because both of those departments alleged to be responsible in the matter of meat, namely, the Ministry of Food and the Board of Trade, to whom letters by the Secretary of the Court were addressed, have not answered the communication. It must not be taken that the Court presumes to express any derogatory opinion on these matters. There may be and there may have been reasons of State of a cogent character which forced the line of action commented on. No one except those possessed of the most intimate knowledge could venture to treat lightly the enormous difficulties and confusions with which during and immediately subsequent to the war these departments were confronted. The Court contents itself with passing from these matters with the statement that in its view the action of the Government departments has substantially contributed to the loss of output and the increase of casual labour.

The element of hope in the situation on this head, however, is very strong. Probably the results of this Inquiry may be followed by still further attempts upon the part of the departments to relieve the congestion, to meet the immediate needs of the consumers, and so to remove that disorganisation which is so costly, and so different from the smooth and regular conduct which this industry requires. This will be the Government's contribution to that reasonable hope of increased output upon which the solution of the problem depends.

Responsibility for loss of Output :—(2) Port Authorities and Employers.

26. The next class of persons to some extent responsible with regard to the loss of output are the port authorities and the employers themselves. The Court cannot see its way to make any pronouncement derogatory to these institutions and classes of citizens who share with the great bodies of men employed the credit that under their aid and by their efforts the trade of this country has risen to its enormous dimensions. Nor would anyone desire to observe upon the handling of traffic and upon the administration of trade at our ports during the war without a grateful realisation of the enormous services which, in combination with the shipping industry of the country, were rendered during the war. It will never be forgotten how those authorities and that industry faced calamities of unforeseen dimensions in the loss of ships, and difficulties in the commandeering of property in ports and on the high seas by the Government which might well, under less able and courageous management and work, have imperilled the continued existence of our world-wide commerce, of the supplies of the necessities of life to our island people and in particular of that *entrepôt* trade which is the envy of the world.

Representation of Labour on Authorities.

27. But there is—and it is a serious matter—a defect. The port authorities and employers are engaged in daily contact with enormous bodies of men, and with a system, to which they cannot be blind, under which the fringe of unemployment is great and under-employment is greater. In the opinion of the Court the organisation of all the ports in the Kingdom would be strengthened by the admission of, or an increase in, the direct representation of labour on the governing bodies. It appears to the Court manifest that the labour situation might be ameliorated, conditions of labour might undergo advantageous reform, and loss of output might be avoided, if the direct representation here recommended in principle were introduced. The extent and manner of such representation would be for the national council to determine.

Absence of Confidence.

28. There is, in short, a fact of much significance which the parties and the Government have to face, namely, the absence of confidence between employers and men. The men's memory has not to go far back to recall conditions of labour which were such as made their minds revolt against an employment which recognised such conditions, and even against a society which permitted them. Members of this Court can recall a period when men, gathered at the dock gates, fought fiercely for a tally which when obtained might only enable them to obtain one hour's work and so limit their earnings for the day to 4*d.* Such days are past: but while causes disappear, effects linger. And among these effects is that confidence is not yet created or not yet restored. And while the war has undoubtedly raised the public estimation of the value of dock labour, it has unfortunately, with all its confusions, prevented employers and authorities from devoting the attention which might otherwise have been given to the problem still outstanding and still serious of the amelioration of the conditions of labour. That such conditions require to be ameliorated no one can doubt. When it is mentioned that men failing to obtain labour at 8 o'clock in the morning are driven on to the streets or back to their homes

for five hours till the next chance comes, with no certainty even then of any other result, and when it is remembered that there does not appear even yet to exist on any appreciable scale within the docks, ports and harbours of our Kingdom any refuge, place of rest, or even proper or sufficient canteen accommodation, although in the case of thousands of men their homes may be miles away from their place of labour, it will be seen that a sense of umbrage is almost bound to linger, manifesting itself it may be in breaches of contract which are in terms indefensible.

Industrial Councils, &c.

29. No proper machinery has existed which could mitigate this conflict or smooth a way for the arrangement of differences and the removal of troubles; the task has been hard in many cases upon employers relying upon contracts being obeyed, but finding themselves, in the absence of such machinery, up against hostilities which might otherwise have been removed. It is in this view that the Court thinks that the time is ripe for the immediate formation of a Joint Standing Industrial Council applicable to the dock workers of the United Kingdom, and for District Councils and Works Committees, all as set forth in the invaluable Report of the Committee presided over by the distinguished Chairman of Committees of the House of Commons, the Rt. Hon. J. H. Whitley, M.P. When in the present Report reference is made to Joint Industrial Councils, it may be understood that the whole Whitley Scheme is referred to. The questions before this Court were limited in the manner already described, yet over and over again it has been made manifest that the principal issue now to be determined depends upon a whole series of considerations, and the removal of a whole network of difficulties, to which, with singular forethought, the Interim Report of that Committee, dated 8th March 1917, applies. We desire not to make this reference one of vague approval, but to refer in particular to Head 16 of that Report. From a perusal of that elaborate and carefully thought out section, it will be seen that of the eleven suggestions therein contained, all, or at least eight or nine, would appear to bear directly on those problems the failure to solve which, in the direct relations between employer and employed, is as now reported by this Court a cause of serious conflict, difficulty, delay, and loss.

Labour Saving Machinery.

30. On this subject the Court is pleased to note that no difference in policy was suggested by the parties to the issue. Much enlightenment was displayed on the subject on both sides, and it appears fairly clear that the old suspicions as to the introduction of new methods, up-to-date machinery, even the mobility of labour from dock to dock, and other matters of avoidable friction, have disappeared, and that with the introduction of these Councils and a better remuneration for labour, employers will be enabled with greater security than before to bring all the ports of this country in point of organisation and appliances up to the level of the best equipped ports in the world.

In the address made to the Court on behalf of the workmen a real enlightenment was also shown as to their true interests in connection with the question of machinery, and the Court thinks there can be little doubt that sounder views now prevail among the body of the workmen upon that important matter. To increase the output by the introduction of machinery is ultimately a benefit to the nation at large, in which those engaged in labour share, but it necessarily and almost always involves a displacement of labour, and this, owing to the fact that working men, like other classes of the community, are apt to take short views, causes a resistance to changes and new methods and a postponement of that benefit which they bring.

31. The Court reports its opinion that it is within the power of port authorities, more particularly if representative working men are taken into counsel upon the subject, to make some provision for positions being found for labour so displaced. Were this done, the course of bringing the industry and the particular ports up to date and so putting our trade abreast in its working conditions with the best in the world would be facilitated. The loss which would thus arise in any port by our being out-rivalled by the adoption of more advanced methods elsewhere would be avoided. The admirable evidence of Mr. Spencer, of Glasgow, shows how in such particulars a new era of consideration, confidence, and co-operation may be at hand. This part of the subject accordingly lends its contribution of reasonable hope for higher output.

Responsibility for Loss of Output : (3) Men.

32. The Court desires to report with equal frankness upon the responsibilities of the men themselves.

The Court is unwilling to enter upon isolated cases of breach of contract, however gross, such as the refusal to clear up the small remains of a cargo except by dishonouring the bargain and exacting extortionate terms. It can easily be understood how even single instances of such a thing become a demoralising example on the one hand, and produce a loss of confidence and a sense of umbrage on the other. As confidence is restored, such conduct will be repudiated with greater and greater freedom by all decent men.

33. Other instances producing serious consequences were mentioned. Of these one will be given : In Avonmouth the arrangement for the opening of hatches before 8 a.m. so as to permit the general body of workers to enter upon their avocation, was as plain as words could make it by local agreement. Yet the rule to which the men through their representatives were pledged was disobeyed. The hatchmen not merely failed to attend, but declined to attend in terms of the bargain. The result was that considerable bodies of men who were ready and willing to proceed were unable to do so, and dislocation and delay took place, involving, of course, great loss. These, however, are special cases. The creation or renewal of confidence will produce an increased sense of duty and discipline, and such instances derogatory to the honour of the men will tend to disappear.

Breaches of Contract.

34. There are, however, breaches of contract which most unhappily are of a far wider and more general scope : one, a failure to give the contract time, and the other, a deliberate slowing down of work. Both of these cases of breach of contract are extremely serious, and they have an effect, which the outside public fails to realise, of lessening the output of work to such an extent as in the opinion of the Court materially to increase the charges upon industry and the prices of supplies to our people.

Failure to give Contract Time.

35. The arrangement between the parties on the important subject of hours of labour was not left merely to a general understanding. It seems to have been clearly present to the minds of the negotiators that it was necessary to make plain in writing the exact position in which the workmen and the employers stood on the subject notably of working hours. This reduction to definite agreement is not an old affair, with regard to which some radical change of circumstances might be brought forward as excusing or justifying a departure from its terms by either party. The National Recommendation upon which local agreements were based was made upon 7th March 1919. To give the actual words, an example may be taken of the local agreement of 22nd April 1919, for the Port of Glasgow. The provision with regard to hours is as follows :--

“ The standard working week shall be 44 hours, made up of eleven half-day periods of four hours each, viz. :—

Monday to Friday (inclusive), 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with dinner hour, 12 noon to 1 p.m.

Saturday, 8 a.m. to 12 noon.

“ There shall be 44 hours of actual work in the standard week.

“ Men shall present themselves for work during the first half-day period at 7.45 a.m., and shall be ready for actual work to start at 8 a.m.

“ In the second half-day period, work shall proceed at full swing until 5 p.m., men remaining, if required, till 5.15 to complete operations.”

This is an example of the quite definite arrangements made all over the country.

36. Yet the case of a breach of this contract is so general and widespread as to have become, in the case of a large percentage of all the dockers in the Kingdom, almost a habit. It is the chiselling off, so to speak, of fractions of time at the beginning and end of each half-day. One could understand this in exceptional cases where, for instance, the strain has been exceptionally heavy, or where the workman was seized by illness, but the system of giving short time has become, unhappily, so general, so deliberate and so habitual as to produce results which are of national significance.

In a word, it has, in the opinion of the Court, been established that the agreed upon 8-hours day has been improperly, and in violation of the bargain, reduced by 1 hour. Apart from the exceptional cases just alluded to, nobody excuses this, and the Court is happy to record that the trade unions as such and the whole body of their officials have no complicity with this departure. When it is reflected that the body of men engaged who are actually, through their leaders, parties to the present issues before the Court, numbers 125,000, it is not difficult to see that the loss, taken in the gross, which thus occurs to all concerned, and in particular to the consuming public, is bound to be heavy.

37. It would be of value to ascertain with exactitude the proportion of these 125,000 men from whose labours this deduction of 1 hour out of the 8 applies. The evidence of the exact extent of the mischief is not clear. Considerable bodies of them are on the regular staff, and in general terms it may be said that the deduction does not apply to those. On the other hand, the percentages of the deduction in some cases run into a very high figure. In the case of one of the greater ports the figure was put as reaching as high as from 60 to 80 per cent. Upon the whole, a moderate estimate would appear to be that with regard to 25 per cent. of the number of workmen employed the loss alluded to occurs. This means that in each ordinary working day in the ports of this Kingdom 31,250 hours are lost of labour which is of the utmost value not merely to the prosperity of the ports but to the needs of the nation. As a matter of figures, it may be added that, to convert that loss into a yearly one, our people at large suffer in the course of twelve months from this system to the extent of 9,375,000 hours.

It is impossible to reckon up the consequences of this loss of hours in money. Large figures were here and there suggested by individual ports, and there can be no doubt that the gross figure, direct and indirect, caused by these practices which have been reviewed would run up to many millions of pounds sterling per annum.

38. When in the ordinary business of life the common standards, say, of time, money, weight or measure are made matters of bargain, they, of course, become for each of the parties standards of honour; and there is just as little justification, say, for one man giving short time as for another giving short weight. Each is upon the equal footing of being condemned by contract, by law, and by the principles of fair dealing. These things are quite well known, and the habit of ignoring them in any department of life is a habit against which all enlightened men, and amongst these the Court emphatically includes the leaders of labour, resolutely set their faces.

39. There are, however, three elements in the case which are here again of hopeful significance: One is the improvement in wages and conditions; the second is the increase of confidence; and the third is the fuller measure of duties and responsibilities cast upon the men through their representatives in the arrangement of working conditions. Of this last, a case by way of example may be given. The payment of the men is a tedious process, surely too tedious. As pay time arrives men leave their work too soon—tempted to be first in the queue. By the daily pay system, for which of course the casual system is largely responsible, this temptation is increased five or six fold.

Slowing down of Output.

40. Upon the second point, the course of enlightenment does not seem to have made the progress which might have been anticipated. The Court cannot be blind to the fact that there is, not arising from exceptional causes but as part of a deliberate policy, the adoption in not a few cases of a system of slowing down of output. Blame in this respect can only be imputed to a minority of the men interested in this Inquiry. The great majority see the system in its true light. The system known as "ca' canny" is loss on every side. The workman gains nothing in time. Even with regard to his habits and character as well as the dignity of his calling, the things which to every decent man are really precious, loss and deterioration and injury occur. It must needs be so under a system which substitutes for honest work a scheme of make-believe. To take the illustration given, it is not a case of short time in the apparent bulk, it is time adulterated, just as the other case, say, the case of a merchant, who would make up weight by moistening his sugar or mixing it with sand. There is one answer, and one only, to all such devices: honesty forbids.

The system may be difficult to eradicate; it may need courage and great manliness to resist the temptations to it. Yet the Court is impressed with the fact that the responsible leaders of the men do not sanction it, and treat it not only as wrong but as a mistake.

41. In short, just as in the case alike of Government departments and the authorities and employers, so in the case of the men the radical changes and reforms here recommended are accompanied by a consciousness on the part of the Court that in the past, mistakes, it may be of administration or it may be of policy, have occurred as to leave great scope for most beneficial change. Upon the subject last dealt with, that of output, unless such change occurs, loss and damage to the community and to all parties engaged in the trade, with a possibility by no means remote of a serious lowering of our commercial international position, may ensue. Rival nations are legitimately in the field, and the *entrepôt* trade in particular stands much to gain and much to lose according as output is raised or is lowered.

Minimum Standard.

42. To a trade thus situated it does seem a strong demand that a claim for 16s. a day should be made upon the part of labour; but to labour, situated as described, it seems a natural and just thing to demand that its conditions should be made to square with the circumstances and the pressing and vital needs of the hour as already described. After much consideration, the Court has come to the opinion that the claim of 16s. per day should be conceded, on the footing that the hopes held out on behalf of the men of increased output shall not be frustrated; that on this footing the claim is supported by justice, and should be granted, as it is now recommended by this Court, with a broad appeal to the honour of the men.

Foreign Rivalry.

43. Indications were given that the industrial rivalry, especially between the ports of this country and those of Scandinavia, Germany, the Netherlands and France, will not very much longer be conducted under unequal conditions of labour. So that as by international effort conditions are evened up, the contest between the nations will be one more and more largely on the issue: among these nations, which shows the more efficient, intelligent, well organised labour; and, in short, as among workmen, who is the better man? It would be a desirable and advantageous circumstance that in the equipment for this fair and legitimate struggle, good habits and practices should be formed and evil habits and practices and the things which go to make and encourage them should be eradicated. The Court is quite well aware that there are risks attaching to the course which it has recommended, a course in which an appeal to honour holds a definite place, but the strength of the case on the standards of living and the reasonable hopes entertained in regard to changes in the policy and practice alike of the Government, the authorities and employers, and the men, have led to the conclusions mentioned in this Report.

Further Procedure.

44. On the point of further procedure, the Court expresses this view: it will be seen from a perusal of the remaining heads of the claim that each and all of these would be eminently suitable, failing private arrangement, of which there seems good hope, for determination by the industrial council and their correlated bodies.

It ventures to express this further opinion: this Court is the first Court of Inquiry to report under the recent Statute, and it was no doubt right that the very large questions of principle involved in the claim should be thoroughly threshed out before it. But matters of detail would, in its opinion, be better handled by bodies under the Whitley scheme, in which both parties were represented, and which will be possessed not only of general but of local knowledge, than by a Court such as that now constituted. Should the Government agree with this view the result will be that this, which is formally an Interim, will be really a Final Report.

Summary.

45. The Court, having inquired, reports to the Minister of Labour that in its opinion the results are as follows:—

- (1) That with a view to establishing a national minimum standard (to use the words of the claim) the minimum for day workers and pieceworkers shall be 16s. per day on the basis of the national agreement for the 44-hour week.

- (2) That a system of registration of dock labour should be introduced into all the ports, docks, and harbours of the Kingdom.
- (3) That the principle of maintenance of unemployed casual labour is approved.
- (4) That wages of dock labour should be paid weekly, and that this system should be introduced at the earliest possible date.
- (5) That the constitution of a national joint council and its correlative and local bodies should be undertaken for the dock labour industry on the lines of the Report of the Whitley Committee.
- (6) That these bodies should, failing agreement by the parties, be charged with the settlement of the incidental matters mentioned in this Report, and of the remaining items of claim.

Legislative Facilities.

46. The powers of many of the Port and Harbour Authorities concerned to impose tolls and charges are regulated by Statute. If effect is given to the recommendations contained in this Report, these Authorities may find it necessary to have their powers amplified. The Court accordingly recommends that the Government should give immediate facilities for the enactment of the alterations found necessary in the Statutory powers of such Authorities.

47. In thus reporting to the Minister, the Court desires to record its sense of satisfaction with the services of its Secretaries. Mr. Ince's ability, coupled with his contact with the department and with the sources of official information, has been of much value, and the labours and ability of Mr. Norman Macpherson have been ungrudgingly expended, not only to the Court but to the parties, in such a measure that the Court feels bound to declare that without Mr. Macpherson's services it might have been impossible for many months to come to arrive at this stage in its deliberations.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (*Chairman*).

E. LIONEL FLETCHER.

HARRY GOSLING.

ARTHUR PUGH.

JOHN SMETHURST.*

BEN TILLET.

ROBERT WILLIAMS.

NORMAN MACPHERSON.

GODFREY H. INCE.

Secretaries.

30th March 1920.

* **Reservations by Mr. Smethurst.**

I append my signature to the Report subject to the following reservations. On the evidence presented to the Court I cannot agree to the recommendation that a minimum daily wage should be granted, but I am in favour of recommending a substantial percentage advance on earnings, and am of the opinion that, wherever practicable, piece-rate working should be established.

JOHN SMETHURST

**Minority Report by Sir Joseph G. Broodbank and
Mr. Frederic Scrutton.**

SIR,

1. We are unable to sign the Report as approved by the majority of the Court.
2. We do not propose to criticise or refer to the detailed statements or comments in the report, and we therefore confine our observations to the recommendations.

3. *Recommendations Nos. 2 and 3, viz. :—*

“That a system of registration of dock labour should be introduced into all ports, docks, and harbours of the Kingdom. That the principle of maintenance of unemployed casual labour is approved.”

We support the proposal relative to registration and generally approve of any scheme for allowances to registered dock workers during unemployment, subject, however, to the condition that the workers participating in the benefits should be prepared to work regularly, to be mobile as to the districts they will work in, and also be willing to accept other than their usual employment within their ability when their ordinary work is not available.

4. *Recommendation No. 4 :—*

“That wages of dock labour should be paid weekly and that this system should be introduced at the earliest possible date.”

We are entirely in sympathy with the object in view but in some ports any scheme presents practical difficulties which are much accentuated by the attitude of the men to the proposal.

5. *Recommendations No. 5 and 6 :—*

“That the constitution of a national joint council and its correlative and local bodies should be undertaken for the dock labour industry on the lines of the Report of the Whitley Committee.”

“That these bodies should, failing agreement by the parties, be charged with the settlement of the incidental matters mentioned in this Report, and of the remaining items of claim.”

We agree that the question of setting up a national joint council is of great importance but it does not appear to us to be within the scope of the reference to the Court.

6. Although not mentioned in the recommendations, the Court in the body of the Report suggests direct representation of labour on the governing port bodies. We consider that this question also is outside the reference to the Court.

7. There remains to be dealt with the first recommendation, viz. : “That the minimum for day workers and piece workers shall be 16s. per day on the basis of the national agreement for the 44-hour week.”

We are unable to assent to the proposal to establish a national minimum rate and we object to the amount at which it is proposed this rate should be fixed.

In setting out our reasons in the following paragraphs we would point out that employers in the transit industry in which increased charges are immediately passed on to the traffic claim that they can have no selfish interest in the rates of wages, and that their views are given in the national interest.

- (1) In ports representing approximately nine-tenths of the business carried on, the minimum pay is now about 11s. 8d. per day. This compares with rates of 4s. 6d. to 4s. 8d. before the war. To raise this pay to 16s. would make it nearly 3½ times what it was before the war. It must be emphasized, moreover, that the present 11s. 8d. a day is the minimum which is paid to the least experienced worker. Men can earn much higher pay by piece-work and by qualifying for better paid work. It was shown in evidence that at present many thousands of men can and do earn from 4l. 10s. to 10l. a week.
- (2) Our opinion is that if the 16s. per day were conceded to the lowest-paid workers, corresponding increases would be claimed by all the higher grades of dock workers. An undertaking was given that the full “differentials” would not be insisted upon by the unions, and that the strength of the

transport workers' executive would be used to carry out this undertaking. But the experience in the numerous awards during the war is opposed to this expectation being fulfilled, and the claims of the higher grades, after so many precedents to the contrary, would be difficult to contest.

- (3) We estimate that the cost of admitting the claim of 16*s.* per day, including proportionate increases to the clerical and supervisory staffs, but not including the vast labour or staff employed on maintenance or new works, would be not less than 15,000,000*l.* per annum.
- (4) We direct special attention to the effect of this recommendation upon the recent national settlement of railway wages. Under this, the minimum wages of porters at goods depôts are fixed at from 57*s.* to 61*s.* a week of 48 hours, varying with district, giving an hourly rate of from 1*s.* 2½*d.* to 1*s.* 3½*d.* This contrasts with 64*s.* 2*d.*, the lowest rate of pay current in the great ports for 44 hours' work being at the rate of 1*s.* 5½*d.* per hour. The minimum rate now demanded for dockers is 16*s.* a day, or 2*s.* per hour. This is more than 60 per cent. above the average minimum of the railway goods porter. Would those railwaymen who work alongside the dockers on the same class of work (many of them for the same employer), and whose union is in the same Triple Alliance, be content with their present settlement?
- (5) We must, however, look beyond railway workers. Dock wages have always been an important element affecting wages in urban districts. Dock work may for the most part be described as "unskilled." Engineers and other craftsmen who have served an apprenticeship are recognized as following a calling superior to that of the docker. To increase the minimum pay of the dockers throughout the country by 23*s.* 10*d.* a week (*i.e.* 5½ times the difference between 11*s.* 8*d.* and 16*s.*) would be to raise it considerably beyond the level of many grades of skilled workmen and would inevitably lead to such workmen throughout the country agitating for corresponding increases in their wages. The Prime Minister has recently enforced the same point in his reply to the miner's demands (which are for 15*s.* a week) saying that if they were conceded it—

"would knock the whole wage system of the country absolutely endways because it could not possibly end with the miners."

The experience of the notorious 12½ per cent. advance to munition workers would be repeated even more disastrously, for the docker's claim is not for 12½ per cent., but for a 37 per cent. advance. An advance on this scale (23*s.* 10*d.* a week) to the 12,000,000 workers of the Kingdom would entail an addition of 750,000,000*l.* to the annual national wage bill and the cost of commodities. A new vicious circle would be created still further inflating currency and enormously increasing the cost of living.

- (6) It has been assumed that transport employers could afford to pay any enhanced wages out of their profits without passing the cost on to the community, but as a fact three-fourths of the dockers are the employees of public authorities, public warehousekeepers, and cognate port industries. The public authorities do not work for a profit, and in their case there could be no possibility of the extra charges being paid by anyone else than the consumer. As an example, Lord Devonport stated to the Court that if the demands were conceded the Port of London Authority charges, which are now 85 per cent. above pre-war level, would have to be increased to at least 140 per cent.
- (7) We desire to emphasise the inimical effect of increased charges on the international trade of the country. When the channels of foreign trade are free and the competition of the near continental ports is again resumed, the maintenance of this entrepôt trade will be endangered by the present charges due to the high cost of labour and low output. Any further increase of those charges would create a very critical position. We direct special attention to the evidence given as to the efforts now being put forth by Antwerp to re-establish her position as a trade centre, and as to the efficiency of labour now shown at that port.

(8) Considerable importance appears to have been attached during the inquiry to the presentation of rival budgets of weekly expenditure in a docker's family. These budgets seem to us to be inconclusive. They assumed the same earnings for every man—the same number and class of dependants, and the same thrift in the docker's *ménage*. The employer's budget was obviously too restricted for a family of 10 children, whilst Mr. Bevin's budget of 6*l.* a week was as obviously superfluous for a single man. The fact that work at the docks at existing rates of wages is attracting and holding more than enough men of entirely satisfactory physique appears to us to be better evidence as to whether the pay is sufficient for maintenance than any number of theoretical budgets.

8. Our suggestions for dealing with the present situation are—

- (a) That the rise in prices since the rates of wages were last fixed in October 1918 warrants a further immediate increase in the present rates, and we recommend that the previous methods of agreeing the amount of this advance should be followed now and repeated as occasion arises.
- (b) We recommend that a scheme of maintenance should be at once jointly considered—and after its effect on the ordinary rates of pay has been estimated, the parties by agreement should fix permanent standard rates of pay.
- (c) We recommend that pending such agreement (and in no case before the 1st January 1921) no reduction should be made in the rates of pay.
- (d) We are in entire agreement with the Majority Report as to the urgency of increasing output, but having regard to the experience of the 44 hours agreement related at length in that Report, we are persuaded that better output will not be secured by merely giving an all-round increase of wages irrespective of results actually achieved. We think that in many cases existing piecework rates might be increased in the hope of encouraging better results and to safeguard piece-workers we recommend that no reduction of their rates should be made unless some radical change of working has occurred.

9. It is with great regret that we have been unable to concur in the most important recommendation made by our colleagues. No one can be more convinced than we are that the future success of the transport industry depends upon the most cordial co-operation of employers and workers, but the proposal of the national minimum wage of 16*s.* a day appears to us to entail consequences so grave not only to the industry itself but to the nation as a whole that we cannot accept the responsibility of supporting it.

We have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servants,

JOSEPH G. BROODBANK.
FREDERIC SCRUTTON.

30th March 1920.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF WITNESSES EXAMINED.

Name.	Description.	Pages.
ALDRIDGE, H. R.	Secretary to National Housing and Town Planning Council	148-151
ALLEN, D. H.	Chartered Accountant, London	443-447
BAERNARD, A.	Representative Dockers' Union, Avonmouth	155-156
BOASE, W. H.	Director, Walter Nelson and Sons, Limited, Master Porters and Stevedores, Liverpool	391-406
BONHAM, D.	Representative Dockers' Union, Port Talbot	161-162
BOOTH, Sir A.	Chairman, Cunard Steamship Co.	86-114
BOWLEY, A. L., D.Sc.	Professor of Statistics, London University	178-205
BRAMMALL, L.	Docker, Birkenhead	140-145
BRITTON, Mr.	Superintendent Stevedore for Swansea Harbour Trustees	326-327
BROOKS, A.	Member of the Council of the London Waterside Manufacturers' Association	453-458
BUBBEAR, H. K.	Chief Assistant to Traffic Manager, Bristol and Avonmouth Docks	222-238
BUCKNEB, A. W.	Clerk to Tilbury Urban District Council	145-148
COOKE, T. W.	Chairman, United Trades Association of Liverpool	415
COX, C. E.	Partner of C. J. King and Sons, Master Stevedores, Bristol	238-242
DAVIES, J. B.	Representative of G. and J. Burns, Ltd., Glasgow	306-310
DEVONPORT, Lord	Chairman, Port of London Authority	330-354
DONOVAN, J.	District Secretary, Dockers' Union, Cardiff	162-164
FARRAH, B. H.	District Secretary, Transport Workers' Federation, Hull	164-166
FENTON, W.	Chairman, Humber Employers' Sub-Committee	245-263
FITT, W.	Marine Superintendent of Charles Hill and Sons, Steamship Owners and Stevedores, Bristol	242-245
GARMSTON, J.	District Secretary, Dockers' Union, Bristol	151-155
GOLDFINCH, Sir A.	Director General of Raw Materials, Ministry of Munitions	430-437
HAWSON, M.	Transport and Stevedoring Manager of Rea Ltd., Liverpool	412-413
HESELTINE, G. W.	Managing Director, Scott Ltd., Wharfingers, Hull	267-269
HOPKINS, D.	Mineral Traffic Superintendent, Clyde Navigation Trust	302-306
HOPPERTON, H.	General Traffic Manager, Port of Preston	379-387
HOPPINS, D. G.	Principal Cargo & Warehouse Clerk at Great Western Railway Docks, Plymouth	321
HOUGHTON, J.	General Secretary, Scottish Union of Dock Labourers	158-161
IRVING, J. A.	Member of Liverpool Warehousekeepers' Association	413-415
JOHNSON, D. ROSS	General Manager and Secretary, Bristol Docks	205-220
LATIMER, A.	Managing Director, Manchester Ship Canal Co.	437-443
LEWIS, M.	General Manager and Secretary, Gloucester Docks	374-377
MACDONALD, M.	Honorary Secretary of Leith Dock Labour Employers' Association	448-453
MACFARLANE, J.	Treasurer, Clyde Navigation Trust	292-299, 356
MCKIBBIN, P.	Liverpool Dockers' Union	135-138
MATTHEWS, M.	Assistant Dock and Warehouse Manager of the Port of London Authority	357-371, 458
MONEY, SIR L. CHIOZZA	Late Parliamentary Secretary to Ministry of Shipping	168-178
MORGAN, H. W.	General Manager, Swansea Harbour Trust	321-326
MURDOCH, H. G.	Chairman, Plymouth Employers' Association	310-321
NEWBOLD, J. T. WALTON	Lecturer in Economic History to the Central Labour College allocated to Lancashire	128-131
ORR, R. W.	Harbour Master, Ardrossan	387-390
PALMER, W. O.	Director of Humphrey and Grey, Ltd.	371-374
PAUL, W.	District Secretary, Dockers' Union, Southampton	156-158
PILLOCK, W. H.	President, National Cattle Food Trade Association	463
PRITCHARD, G. R.	Member of Liverpool Coastwise Employers' Association	408-412
PROCTER, S. J.	Manager and Secretary, Alexander Towing Company, Liverpool	415-420
REID, M.	Liverpool Dockers' Union	131-135
SPENCER, J. S.	Principal of James S. Spencer and Co., Stevedores, Glasgow	269-292
STONEHOUSE, Capt.	Assistant Dock Superintendent for Ellerman-Wilson Line at Hull	264-267
TETSALL, E. P.	Chairman, Dock Labourers' Association, Ipswich	377-379
THOMPSON, F.	District Secretary, Dockers' Union, London District	460
TREDWEN, E.	Senior Partner of Gilbert McCaul and Co., London	461-463
WARNER, L. A. P.	Assistant General Manager, Mersey Docks and Harbour Board	420-428

TRANSPORT WORKERS— COURT OF INQUIRY.

FIRST DAY.

Tuesday, Feb. 3, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

Mr. ERNEST BEVIN, Mr. J. SEXTON and others appeared for the National Transport Workers' Federation.

Councillor HINKLEY appeared for the Port of London Dock Pilots and Watermen's Association.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY, K.C., K.B.E., and Mr. BRUCE THOMAS (instructed by Mr. G. Grinling Harris) appeared for a Provisional Committee of Port Employers.

Mr. JACQUES ABADY (instructed by Messrs. Morris Veasey and Co.) appeared for the London Chamber of Commerce and the Waterside Manufacturers' Association, Incorporated.

Mr. CLAUD MULLINS (instructed by Messrs. Batesons and Co., Liverpool) appeared for the United Traders' Association of Liverpool after the 3rd day.

Mr. PHILIP GUEDALLA appeared for the Ministry of Munitions on the 17th and 18th days.

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speech, Mr. Bevin, may I ask you to say in a word whom you represent? You represent, I understand, the National Transport Workers' Federation?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: And you, Sir Lynden Macassey, represent the National Council of Port Labour Employers?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is a name which really is only intended to signify an *ad hoc* committee organised for the purpose of this Inquiry. If your Lordship asks me whom in fact I represent, I represent all Port Harbour and Dock Authorities and all the employers of Dock Labour who have been served with the application for the increased wages and improved conditions by the National Transport Workers' Federation. But, my Lord, I find that in the list of Authorities and other employers of labour which has been furnished to the Court certain names appear which have not been furnished with the application. The desire was that all Authorities who have been served with the application or who, if I may use the phrase, ought to have been served with the application, should be represented, and therefore I am going to ask my friend, Mr. Bevin, to agree to a list with me afterwards, so that I shall be able to put before the Court a precise list of the Dock Harbour and Port Authorities and the employers of port labour against whom he is making an application, and for whom I appear.

The CHAIRMAN: The subject of separate representation has come before the Court, and been very anxiously considered. It was manifest about a week ago that there might be the danger of overlapping by some of the men, and on the other hand the danger that an employers' or workmen's list might not include certain names on the workers' and employers' sides respectively. In those circumstances the Secretaries set to work, and they issued nearly 200 letters pointing out the exact situation to all those firms who had not, to use the old-fashioned phrase, compared expressly before the Inquiry. The result of these negotiations has been two-fold: those to whom communications have been made have put themselves alongside of the general parties to this case; that is to say, the claimants on the one hand, represented by Mr. Bevin, and the opponents—I use the term in no hostile sense, but in order just to distinguish them from the claimants—the respondents on the other hand, represented by Sir Lynden Macassey. The result of these combined operations of both parties and of the Secretaries has been to produce, much to the satisfaction of the Court, a wide agreement throughout the country as to the presentation of the case on both sides respectively. I have seldom known in my experience a fuller representation of any trade interest than is now being made at this Board by Mr. Bevin on the one hand and Sir Lynden Macassey on the other.

It is in those circumstances, however, that four applications are now made to the Court, the one by the London Chamber of Commerce, another by the Timber Trades Federation, and another by the London Waterside Manufacturers' Association on the side of the employers; and the other by the London Dock Pilots and Watermen's Association on the side of the labouring men.

The opinion of the Court is that there is no desire whatever to burke any inquiry or any proper or relevant aspect of the inquiry; on the other hand the Court will not lend itself to any course by which the ascertainment and the termination of these issues shall be prolonged and postponed when

the true issue, which is a very short and concise one, may be lost sight of. They will not have before them any proceedings under which a witness from one side is to run the gauntlet of cross-examination by quite a number of cross-examiners who represent substantial identity of interest. That would not be fair either to a worker or to an employer who did the Court the honour to appear as a witness; and that will not be allowed. There remains, however, this claim in its two aspects. These special applicants are here represented. We do not ask them to retire: on the contrary, we think they might very well serve their clients by holding the position of watching the proceedings, when, however, they desire to interpose in our proceedings or when they desire to add fresh witnesses or bring fresh evidence, they will require in the judgment of the Court to justify that application by special and exceptional grounds being stated, so as to show the Court that there is a case of a separate description from the general broad and comprehensive case represented by the gentlemen who we have now seated before us. Therefore those who have been good enough to address us in those separate interests will understand that our decision is that they are not parties to this case, that they watch; but we ask them (and I put no leverage whatever on them on this subject) to take this line so far as they can, to make common cause with that large body on either side which is ably represented. If, however, at the end of the day they see that there is some special and exceptional matter not brought before us, the Court will hear an application upon that ground and upon that ground only.

In closing, the Court desire only to add that it does not question in any respect the importance and the standing of the bodies who make the applications, notably, the Chamber of Commerce, whose case has been stated; but the point is that this is not a general inquiry; this is an inquiry upon a specific issue or set of issues remitted by the Ministry of Labour to this Court, and the Court is not to be held as encouraging in any respect the desire to broaden it and lengthen it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The application I have now to make to the Court is a very short one—it has been indicated to the Court, and I have mentioned it to my friend Mr. Bevin. Sir Alfred Booth, who was the Chairman of the Committee which has discussed these claims of the National Transport Workers' Federation, and who is the Chairman of the Employers' Committee, has to go to America almost immediately. He is one of our most important witnesses; and we desire, and I think Mr. Bevin would desire, certainly the Court will desire, to hear his evidence. My application, my Lord, is this: that at the conclusion of my speech, which will follow Mr. Bevin's, by your Lordship's and the Court's decision, I may be entitled, and, I hope, with my friend's consent, to call Sir Alfred Booth.

Mr. BEVIN: We have agreed to that course, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: That shall be done. You will notify Sir Alfred to that effect.

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord and Gentlemen, I think you will appreciate that this is rather an unusual environment for me to be in, and also these proceedings are very novel for the whole of the Labour movement in this country. We have agreed as the Transport Workers' Federation to submit this claim to the gauntlet of a public inquiry because we are convinced of the justice of the claim which is made, and secondly we have no

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objection to the whole question of the standard of life being open for public inquiry, which in the end we hope will serve not only to obtain what our men desire, but, at any rate, to influence public opinion to a higher conception of what that standard of life ought to be.

The claim which has led to the inquiry was submitted to the Employers' Associations of the country in October last. Our usual practice had been to meet and negotiate, to argue the case in all its details, clause by clause, with the employers with the view of trying ultimately to arrive at an agreement. In this case, however, rather a different method was adopted. On November 27 we were invited to a meeting with the Employers' Association and asked to present our case, to explain exactly what the claim amounted to, and what its likely effect would be, and what would be our attitude towards the various ports which had differential rates in existence. The employers at the end of that conference said: "We have heard what you have had to say. We have really no power to act; we must consult our constituents." Copies of the note, I understand, were printed and sent to the whole of the ports. We met again on December 18 to hear the employers' reply, and at that meeting they suggested this Court of Inquiry. We submitted that to our governing body of the Federation on December 30. I call your attention to these periods because I want the Court to appreciate the very great patience which the men have exhibited in the adoption of this new machinery of investigation. I think this is about the first time that a powerful body like that which I represent has been content, especially when the conditions were so depressing as they are at the present moment, to take the advice offered and to wait for all this machinery to be established and to be brought into operation. At a later date when we met to set up this Court we were asked for still further time for the employers to prepare their case. This was rather significant, because at the previous meeting we were told that they had considered the case in all its bearings, and they had found the claims so tremendous, and they had found that the public would have added to them such an enormous cost on their foodstuffs and their materials that it could not be borne; but, after all this investigation between November 27 and December 18, in the second week in January they asked for further time before the Court sat to prepare their case, when they had already decided that it could not be granted. Since that time, from the evidence which I have seen, very large staffs have been engaged all over the country in trying to find evidence of every little kind of delinquency, or every little kind of obstinacy in which the workers may have indulged in order to try and bring a case to present to your Court, when they had made up their minds three months ago that our application could not be granted. However, I understand that I am called upon to show the justification of the amount claimed as a minimum basis for a minimum standard of life. In the second place, I think the public are looking for some evidence or some suggestion as to ways and means of increasing the standard of life—because I am absolutely convinced that the British public are anxious to see a much higher standard of life than ever existed hitherto—without automatically increasing prices to the public. That, I think, is what the public are looking for, and while I should not admit that on the present wages which the men receive, even if it had to increase the cost to the community, our men

would not be entitled to it, I think before the end of this case we shall be able to show a new method of breaking what has been described as the vicious circle. In the past we have been told by press and politician alike that if you advance wages, then, automatically, you must increase prices. I think the figures which will be submitted to this Court during these proceedings will show that you must begin the inverse way; you must reduce profits and increase wages to break the vicious circle. Therefore I propose to deal with the case in the following order: I shall submit first, the ground of the claim; secondly, the effect of the claim, and try to explain the method of application of the claim to all the ports of the country; I shall then, thirdly, endeavour to show the justification for the claim.

The CHAIRMAN: What was the first?

Mr. BEVIN: The first is the ground of the claim.

The CHAIRMAN: For the wages?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes. Secondly, the effect of the claim; thirdly, the justification of the claim; fourthly, the ability to pay; and finally, the imperative necessity for methods of reorganisation. As I proceed I propose to hand in to you rather a long series of tables which I thought would help in the explanation of the case as we proceed.

The CHAIRMAN: We do not intend to interrupt the proceedings in any way, but will you keep in view your reference to profits, and when you come to deal with that show us how it falls within the demand? Do you follow me?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, quite.

The CHAIRMAN: That is necessary, otherwise we should be acting as the law would say, *ultra vires*.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite. In dealing with the grounds of the claim I think it essential to give just a brief résumé of the history of the dockers' calling. The earliest wages fixed by any agreement of which I have any note in this country for dockers was in 1872. I know there were agreements for certain chartered portions of our work, like lightermen, but I am speaking now of the general dock labour. At that time the wages in the Port of London for stevedores were fixed at 3s. 6d. per day, and for the shoremen, or dockers, at 2s. 6d. or 3s. per day. It was found very difficult in those days to secure any form of advance, and from that time onwards, as the Port of London and other ports developed, I think anyone who has read the history of the dockside will appreciate that it was a disgrace to the civilisation of that period. There was no further advance of any kind, and, as a matter of fact, there was a depreciation of the standard until the great upheaval of 1889; and in 1889—I have here copies of the 1889 agreement which I will hand in. (*Document handed in and marked A. 1.) The rate fixed was then 6d. per hour. You will probably remember that strike, my lord; I do not.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I remember it fairly well.

Mr. BEVIN: I was not a docker then.

The CHAIRMAN: Some of the other members of the Court will remember it better, perhaps. Would you mind my asking you this? In the 6d. per hour arrangement, was any distinction made between stevedores and dockers?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes. I was just coming to that point. The difference was this. The 6d. per hour was paid in two ways in the Port of London: the dock companies paid the 6d. per hour for each hour worked; the shipowners and contractors paid 6d. per hour and paid for meal hours. The steve-

* See Appendix No. 1.

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doers were not paid for meal hours, but were paid 8d. per hour for each hour worked. Prior to the establishment of this agreement it was quite a common occurrence for a man to be taken on and paid off with half an hour or an hour's work. This ultimately led to the establishment of what was known as the 4-hour minimum. The experience gained as a result of this strike, which was just as bitterly opposed by the employers as our advance to-day is opposed, and was fought as strenuously as it will be in all probability fought to-day—we were told that the Port of London could not stand it, we were told that it would ruin the industry, and that it was impossible to pay it—was that the very fact of that movement brought about such a reorganisation that the employers were better off at the end of two years than they were before the strike took place. Mr. Charles Booth, writing in his "London Riverside Labour," refers to this tremendous upheaval.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you give us the exact reference to Mr. Booth's book?

Mr. BEVIN: Shall I read it?

The CHAIRMAN: Give me the reference so that I may go over it.

Mr. BEVIN: I have not the page of the book with me.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you kindly see that I get it? We want the exact reference to any volume from which Mr. Bevin reads so that the Court may be in possession of it at first hand—not that we doubt it for a moment, but it is a line of inquiry which we may pursue.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I should like the reference, too, if Mr. Bevin will give it to me.

The CHAIRMAN: We will easily get it. Just note in future that when you refer to a book you will give us the reference.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite so. Mr. Booth says: "In 1887, when I was considering the dock employment as a principal East-End industry, I found the position to be very hopeless as well as unsatisfactory. The employers were content, and the men, though far from content, were entirely unorganised. The dock managers accepted the crowd that struggled at the dock gates as an inevitable phenomenon which happened to fit in well with the conditions of their trade; they could always be sure of sufficient labour, and although its quality might be bad its pay was correspondingly low. The character of the men matched well with the character of the work and its remuneration; all alike were low and irregular. The vicious circle was complete. How could it be broken? In 1892 all this is changed. The Unions founded under the greatest difficulties in 1888 have made a wonderful career, and if some mistakes have been made and some hopes disappointed, there yet remains a solid foundation on which much may be built, and an inspiring record. It may be true that as yet but little has been done from a purely material point of view to better the conditions of the dock labourer, but what the men have already achieved through organisation is not to be measured merely by advantages obtained in pay or the conditions of employment. By organisation they step into line with other more highly skilled and more highly paid labour, and so acquire a position of dignity in the State of the utmost practical value if wisely used. Already we see the effect of this in the changed attitude of the employers as to casual labour. It is now generally admitted that more regular work makes better labourers, and that better labourers are more satisfactory servants even

at higher pay." That, my Lord, was Mr. Charles Booth's observation in 1892, and that was the hope created at that period. The men who started that movement, founded it, and developed it, had one idea, and it was to make the men into better citizens and to develop that higher standard of life for which we are still pleading. But, alas! there was little progress made. There was not another advance of wages, and casual labour was nearly as bad in 1911 as it was in 1892. It is true that the Port of London Authority had been formed, and it is true that they had increased their permanent staff, but only so far as it was no risk or cost to them. They only extended their permanent staff where they could be fully employed, and no financial liability was undertaken at any stage, and is not to-day undertaken at any stage of the dock undertaking for the whole gamut of casual labour. What they have done is that they have, it is true, increased their permanent staff, and to that extent it has benefited those men who may have been made permanent, but, generally speaking, the number who are casual, and who are still left to get employment if they can or to wait the will of the tides and the sea and the ships, and so on, as to whether they get paid is in proportion to the number employed in the dock area as great to-day as it was in 1892; and so the hopes and aspirations of Mr. Booth have not been fulfilled. It is true, and we say it with pride, that by sheer weight of organisation we have effected improvements, but never yet can I remember in this dock calling a single concession ever handed out to the workmen willingly; never once can I remember even negotiations without its being by the sheer weight of organisation behind us that we have been able to obtain anything like satisfactory conditions. So the position in London was that, apart from a few shipowners' men, who had an increase of 1d. per hour, I believe, in 1900, and an agreement among themselves, the Port of London Authority and nearly all the others throughout the port remained with the 1889 settlement until 1911; and that agreement can be handed in as well. (**Document handed in and marked A2.*) To obtain just an advance of 1d. per hour meant even at that time that the whole Port of London had to be held up in order to obtain it. There were the same old arguments, the same old disputes, the same old inability to pay, the same old ruination of the Empire which we found in 1889 and every other time when we have ever negotiated.

That briefly is the story of London, but when we turn to Liverpool things are even worse. The Liverpool rates of 4s. 6d. and 5s. per day, which were the base pre-war rates, were fixed in 1885, and there was not a penny advance in wages from 1885 until after the outbreak of war, and the whole base rate conditions of Liverpool upon which war bonuses, war wages and the rest of it have been built, as I say, go back to that date. You will find in "The First Year's Working of the Liverpool Dock Scheme," by R. Williams, on page 173, a reference to the 1885 period when these rates were fixed; that is in Appendix 4. So you have a period from 1885 until 1915 in Liverpool without a single advance to meet either the growing aspirations or even the development of the cost of living which had taken place in the meantime.

The CHAIRMAN: That was from 1885 up till when in Liverpool?

Mr. BEVIN: Up to March, 1915.

The CHAIRMAN: You have kindly given us the rates of 4s. 6d. and 5s. per day in Liverpool.

* See Appendix No. 2.

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Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you kindly translate your working hours into days in regard to London, so that we may have that before us?

Mr. BEVIN: At a little later stage I will hand in a complete table showing the rate before the war and the rate now, worked out in days—translated into days.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what I am driving at.

Mr. BEVIN: I shall come to it in a few moments, but I do not want to go round the country to each port and describe it. That describes very largely the conditions right round the country. You may find exceptions—that there were advances made in places like South Wales, where the organisation of the workers was stronger in those periods; in the Port of Bristol there was one advance of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per hour from 1889 until 1911, when a further $\frac{1}{4}$ d. was given to this class of men; in Southampton the port was not developed as it is at the moment, but there again the rates were fixed on the lowest London rates at the time when it was developed. But that is not all; the dockers have had one of the highest death-rates of any class of workpeople in the country, due to the irregular life and the horrible slum conditions. Men were injured, and it was a common thing for the bullying foreman to say, "Throw him in the wing and get on with the work." I want you to appreciate this to show you the psychology of the men whom we represent to-day in their struggle for better conditions. If they dared to protest against anything which was in existence or that they desired to be remedied it was: "To the office and get your money and clear out"; and then they might stand on the stones for weeks, and the larger the family dependant upon the man the longer he was stood upon those stones by the foreman, under directions of the office, in order to stand as an example to other people for obedience. That was the policy which was followed until we could get the organisation strong enough to alter it. It is true that the principals would hide and say very often that they knew nothing about it, but they still employed those foremen, and the bigger the bully the better the job he got as foreman as a rule, until we were strong enough to stop it.

Then you had again, the very stubborn resistance to every form of protection to life and limb. I hope, my Lord, that during this inquiry, if you have time, the evidence of the Dock Regulations and the fight to get the ordinary limb protection for our men will be turned up from the Home Office, and you will appreciate the thousands of pounds that the employers are willing to expend on engaging counsel and briefing them at their thousands of guineas in order to stop the ordinary protective measures being adopted. I think in that case it is estimated that the shipowners and dockowners of this country spent over a quarter of a million of money in trying to resist a chain being put around the dock for a man to catch hold of if he fell into the water, proper ladders in ships and proper precautions to save his life, and proper gear in order that he could work in safety. They spent thousands upon thousands of pounds, and that has been the experience of the Unions who have had to conduct the case for the men during the whole time and every time they have tried to work out or effect any improvement. The shipowners have always strongly resisted decasualisation. There has been a slight change in the last five or six years due to the pressure of public opinion and the organisation, but generally speaking, however useful your suggestion might be, you found that inherent desire, due, I think, to their

limited economical output, to retain at the dock gate always sufficient men to load the ship or discharge the ship at any time under any conditions, regardless of how the men would live during the times when there was no ship there; and that, too, was one of the difficulties. As a matter of fact the Shipping Federation maintained two ships in commission prior to the war; I hope they came to an honourable end in the war, not by losing any life upon them, I hope, but at any rate it would be a great thing if they were never heard of again. The "Paris" and the "Lady Jocelyn" were maintained in commission, and the doss-houses of their great cities, while they refused decent wages to the docker, were willing to pay as high as £1 per week and more as retainers to the hired bully to blackleg us when we were trying to improve our conditions. I mention these things in order to show the struggle that we have had to reach the point which we have reached now, and that is one of the reasons why I welcome a public inquiry. I want the public to know the struggle which the men have had in trying to lift themselves above the sordid and to lift themselves into a higher state.

That brings me to the war period. Here again you have the striking comparison between the treatment meted out to the workman and the treatment meted out to the employing class generally. I will submit the conditions for which you asked, showing it translated into wages before the war and now. (**A table was handed in and marked A.4.*) In the first column you will see the date at which the wages were fixed; in the second column you will see the rate operative at the outbreak of war; in the third column you will see the months in which the increases during the war were granted; in the fourth column you will see the present rates as fixed as a result or at the end of the National Agreement.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that what is called the April, 1919, rates?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, that is so. That was following the agreement for the shorter working week. In the last column you will see the increases over pre-war. You will note that in the Port of London the men have received 122 per cent. on the lowest rates; and if I may return to that table again in a moment, I would like to point out that during the first thirty-one months of the war, which covers the first three periods to April, 1917—where you will note we received about 3s. per day up to that period to meet the ever-increasing cost of living, and on each occasion we had difficulties in our negotiations—I am advised that the shipowners pocketed in that period £350,000,000. If this is disputed I would like to ask you as Chairman of the Court if you would be good enough to get the Ministry of Shipping to produce for your guidance the memorandum which was submitted to the Government as a basis upon which they requisitioned the whole tonnage of the country.

The CHAIRMAN: When you close your speech I may have a question to put to you about that, and you will have to show this Court that that has a bearing upon your claim.

Mr. BEVIN: I will presently. I will not wait to the end to try to show that the profit has a great bearing upon our claim.

The CHAIRMAN: You will find that that is a very serious matter for us as a Court. I myself would have thought that you would base your claim upon what you very properly say is the improved and

* See Appendix No. 3.

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heightened standard of life, and that you would not base your claim upon whether persons made a profit, because you would then be in the position of claiming to share profit. If you are out for profit-sharing that is another inquiry, but I gather that you would condemn this by the startling figures you have given on the ground that it is profiteering. If you do not mind my interposing now—or would you prefer that I left it until later?

Mr. BEVIN: No, I do not mind.

The CHAIRMAN: There has been profiteering, during the war particularly. You, I suppose, would hold the opinion that profiteering was taking improper advantage of the nation while it was struggling for its life. That is what you would call profiteering, is it not? That is to say, profiteering is truly plunder. That would be the view that you would take. Surely it is no part of your case that it is so weak as this, that you desire to fortify it by sharing plunder. You would desire to base it, I understand on that case which you are so admirably putting, namely, the increased standard of life—not a mere living wage, but the increased idea as to the standard of life, including as most relevant, if I may say so, that vital question of casual labour; but you see, if the inquiry is to be diverted into a profit-making or profiteering inquiry we will lose sight of the grounds and the reasons of your claim, and we would introduce what we are all anxious to avoid, prejudice, into this case, because you must know that prejudice is the foe of fair judgment. You might consider that. I just wished to let you know that I have great difficulty about it; but perhaps you will now proceed with your argument.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, but I should like to make this observation. If your ruling were accepted—and I have very great deference for your opinion upon that—

The CHAIRMAN: May I say that the other side of that is that supposing you are met by the argument that no trade can thrive at all if this goes on, and that it will kill trade because there will be no profit made—once you are met by that we may have some strong things to say upon the other side; but our desire is to stick to our text and keep by our word. Sir Lynden, will you kindly note what I have said. There are two sides to these observations. Our one desire as a Court is to avoid introducing irrelevant and possibly prejudicial matter, and to give a judgment which is founded upon the reason of the case.

Mr. BEVIN: With very great deference we were met at the preliminary negotiations by the argument of the inability to pay, and at the risk of losing all. I intend with your permission to show, not on the basis of profiteering—I am not debating it, I am not arguing it, and I have no intention of arguing as to how they did it; that is best known to themselves, but what I am content to show is—that the dismissal of our case behind closed doors was because they said they could not pay it without passing it on to the public, and the public are, I think, expecting me to show (because there is a greater Court than this Court in this case, and it is to that Court that I am going to appeal in this case in addition to this Court, so convinced I am of the justice of the claim) that these wages can be paid and that the standard of life can be increased without adding one particle to the cost of food; and I believe it can be done. I do not make my case dependent upon it. I am not saying whether the amount that is left will be too much, but all I say is this: Why I have taken this course is

that I want you to understand the difficulties of the men. I went to the Port of London Authority in 1915 when the cost of living had advanced 23 per cent.; I put my case, as I believe, reasonably; that was dismissed at the end of about half an hour with no further negotiations, and I was told in 1915: "3s. per week advance, and no more." They gave the men 9.52 per cent. when the cost of their foodstuff had gone up 23 per cent.; and surely I am entitled to say that it could not have been the case at that time that it could not have been afforded, and that it would add to the cost of living. That is the reason why I have called attention to this very great difference of treatment; and as a matter of fact in London in the second advance which came in July, 1916, again in 1916 it was an arbitrary decision of the Port of London Authority. They decided that they were going to pay 1s. a day. They refused to submit it to arbitration. They simply come to a decision, and it is passed to us in a letter.

The CHAIRMAN: How much was that?

Mr. BEVIN: That was an increase up to 1s. a day; it was 6d. per day again. As you will see in the first column of the table, we got 6d. in February, 1916.

(*Table handed in and marked A/4a.)

The CHAIRMAN: That was 7s. per week, was it?

Mr. BEVIN: No, the first advance was 3s. per week and the second advance brought it up to 6s. per week. That gave the men 19.04 per cent., but the increase of food—it was principally food—was, according to the Board of Trade, 65 per cent. at that time. The men had their wages depreciated at each stage. In April, 1917, the Port of London Authority, in response to an application and meeting a deputation, with no further negotiations, passed a resolution of 3s. per day, or 18s. per week. That gave 57.14 per cent., but the cost of foodstuffs had advanced to 99 per cent., depreciating the value of the men's wages; and in May, 1918, the Minister of Labour had to proclaim the Port of London Authority; he had to issue a proclamation under the Munitions of War Act in order to get them to observe an award. I mention these things to show that while the newsmen have been talking about the wickedness of Labour, this is some of the negotiations behind closed doors and the treatment meted out to us.

The CHAIRMAN: That is absolutely relevant to the argument. I would call Sir Lynden Macasse's attention to this, that the Court is pleased to have this in statistical form as an illumination of the argument. We accept these figures in the meantime, of course, subject to any scrutiny which on your side of the Bar will be made of them; but the scheme of having this tabular arrangement is, if I may say so, a very satisfactory one upon which to proceed once they are tested. Thank you, Mr. Bevin; you may proceed.

Mr. BEVIN: I have taken the Port of London as an example. In May, 1918, we brought it up to 4s. 4d. per day, but that was a national award of 2d. per hour, which applied to all ports of the country. That brought it in the case of the Port of London Authority to 82.53 per cent., while the cost of food had increased 111 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: : When did that national award come into being?

Mr. BEVIN: We decided, as a Federation, owing to the continued obduracy of the employers—and it has a great bearing upon this case presently—that if other ports paid they would pay, but we

* See Appendix No. 4.

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must not put one port in an invidious position as regards another port, so we decided to oblige them by applying it to all the ports at once, and hence it resulted in the bulk of the great ports of the country being represented at an arbitration under the Munitions of War Act, with the exception of the Port of London Authority. That was proclaimed, and at subsequent arbitrations they attended. In October, 1918, there was a further advance of 1½d. per hour, which brought the advance in the Port of London up to 5s. 6d. per day. That brought the increase to 104.76 per cent., while at that period the cost of food stood at 134 per cent., so that in each stage the work-people had a depression in wages and a depression of their wage standard in proportion. You will find the same thing happening all over the country if the ports are taken in order. The difference shown between the two sets of figures of 5s. 6d. and 5s. 3d., making 10s. 9d., and the present rate in the Port of London of 11s. 8d. is due to the adjustments which were made under the 44-hour arrangement in April, 1919.

The CHAIRMAN: With reference to the column called "Base Rate," which gives 5s. 3d., what period of time should I put down for that?

Mr. BEVIN: It was fixed in 1911. You will find the date at which each rate was fixed in the first column in the first folded form I handed in, marked A. You will there find the dates when the wages were fixed in each port—that is to say, the base rates.

The CHAIRMAN: I am looking for the Port of London. It is treated as 5s. 3d. for watermen, and then, unfortunately, it is treated as 7s. 4d. for shipowners and contractors, and then for stevedores it is treated as 8s. 4d.

Mr. BEVIN: I was going to explain that point. There were three different rates. The 5s. 3d. was the Port of London rate of 7d. per hour, based on a 9-hour day. The shipowners' discharging men, or shore men, were 8d. per hour—they worked 9 hours but were paid for 10 hours. The stevedores were paid 10d. per hour at that period, fixed in 1911.

The CHAIRMAN: Excuse my suggesting to you that we must get a mean datum; I think some of those sitting near you will understand what I mean. When we are judging of rises we must get a period of time to start from and a mean datum—that is to say, an overhead rate per man at that time, and then on the top of that overhead rate your percentages of increases in the cost of living, and so on, might have some actuarial value. Do you follow me?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: We will take this exactly as you have given it to us as a very useful table. Starting from 5s. 3d., there were men with 5s. 3d., and it is right that we should have that table; but unfortunately at the very same time there were men having 8s. 4d.

Mr. BEVIN: You see it was an entirely different class of work. If you will look down the table, when you get to Southampton you will find in the next column 11s. 8d. and 12s. 6d.; that is, for the quaymen and the shipmen. If I may give one column further you find Bristol is exactly the same rate for both sections of men. I can get you out a table before this Court rises showing the minimum in each port for the lowest grade men, but I have marked it out in that manner in order that you may have an idea of the different grading of wages as representing the different classes of work.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps you are right in this view, that the problem, as put before us on the first head of it, is to settle or to recommend our views to the Minister for the settlement of a minimum rate of wages; so probably you are right in taking the lowest as a datum.

Mr. BEVIN: I do that. That is the basis of our claim.

The CHAIRMAN: I see that, and I see the force of it quite well.

Mr. BEVIN: But when I come to explain the claim a little more fully presently, I think you will see that it is necessary to call attention to these figures in order to guide whatever subsequent negotiations must inevitably follow in the ports themselves, probably on anything that may be settled as the minimum.

The CHAIRMAN: What we have to settle is the minimum rate of wages.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so, for the lowest man.

The CHAIRMAN: Therefore, I think it is quite precisely on the point that you should give us the minimum as the datum from which your figures are taken.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite so. In that first column you will see that the minimum in London for the lowest paid man in the Port of London Authority is given as 5s. 3d.; the lowest paid man in Southampton was 5s. 6d. That figure is not in, but perhaps you will enter it. At Plymouth it was 7s. 8d.; at Bristol it was 7s.; at Avonmouth it was 5s. 3d. in winter and 5s. 10d. in summer; at Cardiff it was 5s. 6d.; at Liverpool it was 4s. 6d.; at Manchester 5s.; at Aberdeen 6s. 3d.; at Glasgow coastal traffic was the lowest, 5s.; at Dundee 6s. 8d.; at Grangemouth 7s. 6d.; at Leith, 5s. 10d., at Newcastle-on-Tyne 7s. 4d.; at Middlesbrough 5s.; at Hull 5s. in the winter time—that was due to different hours; at Goole 6s. 8d.; at Grimsby 4s. 10½d.; and at Belfast 6s. Those are some of the principal ports and the minima. Our figures operating in each port may be said to have been in operation at the outbreak of war irrespective of the date they were fixed.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite a proper way of putting it, but your details are framed as applicable to London, and one would have thought on looking at that, that this lowest rate of 5s. 3d. had only been achieved in the year 1915, but in point of fact it was achieved in 1911.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: The rates in your Table *de facto* were the rates prevailing at the time of the outbreak of war?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS: Chiefly obtained in 1911?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so, and some a little later. In the last column we have shown the increase over 1914 in each case. If we had taken the minimum figure, in London it was 122 per cent.; in Southampton 92 per cent.; in Plymouth 82½ per cent., and in Bristol 100 per cent. I think I had better explain Avonmouth, to save my coming back to it. Avonmouth, as you know, is eight miles from Bristol. The rates used to vary. The apparent advance of 140 and 166 per cent. respectively is due to a readjustment at the 44 hour settlement last April, where the Bristol men did not get the full benefit of that settlement. To get a flat rate for the port they had rather less, and Avonmouth had a little more. As you will know, at Bristol before the war the day was a 10-hour day, but they were paid for twelve hours. At Avonmouth it

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was, I think, an 8½-hour day and they were paid for 9 hours. They used to make a difference owing to the travelling arrangements, but now it has all been put on a level, which causes the difference. At Cardiff for the lowest grade men the advance has been 136 per cent.; in Liverpool 159 per cent.; in Manchester 140 per cent.; in Aberdeen 76 per cent.; in Glasgow 146 per cent. on the lowest grade—a lot of these percentages in each case is due, as I will explain later, to the 44-hour week—in Dundee, 85 per cent.; in Grangemouth, 86 per cent.; in Leith, 125 per cent.; in Newcastle-on-Tyne, 94 per cent.; in Middlesbrough, on the lowest grade, 136 per cent.; in Hull, 133 per cent.; in Goole, 123 per cent.; in Grimsby, 163 per cent., and in Belfast, 166 per cent. I shall have to return to that table again at a later stage, when I explain the 44-hour settlement, but a point which I want to make in connection with these war advances is this: During the war we had it impressed upon us that we must use our best endeavours, and I was a party to the agreement when war broke out, that we would use our best endeavours to induce the whole of our men to submit to arbitration. In nearly every case we did it. Then we found, on the passing of the Munitions of War Act, that the Court of Arbitration was restricted to dealing only with the cost of living arising out of the war. Whatever other conditions we could bring into our arguments as showing reasons for change, we would get the same stereotyped award showing so many pence or so many shillings, and all the conditions that we were trying to alter entirely wiped out. In addition, in the early days of the war the men had a very severe depression of wages, owing to the fact that Mr. Asquith, who was then Prime Minister, issued a circular in which there was practically a direction to the then Committee on Production to give no advances of wages at all, only to certain low-paid workers. The result is that if you refer back to that Port of London example table you will see that you had an enormous delay between 1915 and 1916; there was hardly any consideration of the wages claims of the men. Again, I want to call your attention to what that table portrays. It has been argued that wages advanced the cost of living. I think that table is an answer to it. Labour has been chasing the cost of living, and has never caught up, as far as I can see. We have waited until our men have been driven by sheer economic necessity, until they have been right on the verge of disrapture; and delays in wage claims during the war were so bad that very often the war itself was imperilled by the sheer economic drive which was behind the men in compelling them to go for these wages; and all the time, whenever we submitted our claim, in no case did we have an advance to meet the actual necessities of the case. As a matter of fact, the Board of Trade—the Labour Ministry at a later stage, but the Board of Trade originally—devised a beautiful little formula to try to persuade us that if we ate nothing at all we should need nothing at all. They told us at the end of their column of figures that if the workpeople only ate so and so, and so and so, and so and so, therefore the advance only need be so and so. Here were men, on the other hand—and Members of your Court, my Lord, were Members of the same Committee as myself—on the Port and Transit Committee, urging the men week in and week out to turn the ships round and to keep shipping going because the whole country was dependent upon it, and all the time the men who had to work those long hours were never given an increase

sufficient to cover the increase in the cost of living. Even Mr. Winston Churchill had to thank us for getting that Expeditionary Force to France, and had to admit that never in the history of any country was stuff shipped like it was shipped by the dockers of this country in handling those transport services in the manner in which they were handled and stowed; but in spite of that, when we were trying to show to them that if they wanted to keep the speed up, and if they wanted to keep the transport going, it was as essential to feed the docker as it was to feed a soldier or a man in the Labour Battalion across the water, we could not persuade the Arbitration Courts or employers to view the civilian workmen's position during the whole of that strenuous time in the light of common sense and reason and absolute physical necessity. We were told that it would be wrong to use the law of supply and demand, because had we done so, and had it been used, this country would have gone down; it was bound to have been defeated if Labour had exercised her power during the war, as we were so often told. I mention this now in order to enter in public my emphatic protest against the attitude; but if we had used our power of the law of supply and demand that others claimed to use, this country would have been defeated in the first year of that great titanic struggle; but during the same period I could not help feeling a slight feeling of resentment, when we were appealed to to submit all this to arbitration, to find that, in fixing the rates which our employers were to get, by the same State and by the same Government, the case was referred to the employers themselves. I find that the Admiralty Arbitration Board to fix the rates for requisitioning were all shipowners, with about one exception, and yet we were asked to submit these matters to arbitration, and the result of our consenting has been the depression of our standard of life. I am bound to call your Lordship's attention to this, because in all the stories that have been told of labour struggles during the past we are painted as the people who claimed class privilege, and who claim to be treated differently from the rest of the people in the State. We claim that we can be trusted to adjust our affairs honestly, and that we are as honest men to the State as the gentlemen who advised the Admiralty and advised Mr. Winston Churchill—gentlemen for whom I have every respect, but who, as I say, were judging on their own terms, and whom these documents indicate as the members of the Admiralty Arbitration Board—gentlemen like Lord Inchcape, Mr. J. Grant, Sir Owen Philipps, Sir Kenneth Anderson, Mr. J. A. Shields, Sir Thomas Royden, with regard to ocean liners—all, or nearly all, interested in ocean liners, as I can show, as owners or shareholders; and they are trusted to fix the rates which they shall charge the State, or advise the State to pay; and their rates were accepted by we trust what is claimed to be an impartial tribunal, with the result that we find at the end of the war that while they have added millions to their profits our men are worse off than they were in 1914, with all the sufferings they have gone through. If I may say so in passing, one of the greatest difficulties which those of us who stand as leaders have had since we have agreed to this Court of Inquiry in the ports, has been not merely from the old docker, it has not been from the man who has been at home here, but I want to call your Lordship's attention to this fact, that the most bitterly resentful and the most bitterly disappointed man that we have in our ranks is the man who has been over the top and who comes back now to find things even worse than when he

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left them, in many cases, and who finds himself still a casual labourer, who finds himself walking home without money, and who still, when he loses a week, finds that it takes him a month to pull it up—who finds all those conditions still existing.

These are the men who have made the supreme sacrifice during this war, wounded many of them, many who have gone through the hell and mud of the battlefield, and they come back to the dock gates, and if you were there, as we are very often, you would find how bitter is their resentment at what they call the unjust treatment when they are called upon to work for the wages that we are asking for, and going through all the trouble of an inquiry to obtain.

You indicated that it would be unwise to quote the profits. I have ready here to submit from Hansard the statement of Mr. Bonar Law in the House of Commons on May 2, 1917. I think this statement is very relevant as a statement of a Minister of the Crown, and I do want to impress upon the Court that this great difference in treatment occurs. We have to face the men, and instead of being the wild red revolutionaries that we are often considered to be we find ourselves trying to defend ourselves against our inability and our lack of success, and therefore it is necessary even that our own men should appreciate and understand our difficulty.

Mr. Bonar Law, in his Budget statement of May 2, 1917, said: "In connection with the Excess Profits Tax upon one particular branch of industry, on which I must say something, that is the shipping trade, public opinion, the opinion of this House, an opinion which I share, is that there is no trade probably which has made such big profits during the war, profits which have been directly due to the war, for this reason, that this trade is now being treated in a special way. It is easy to be wise after the event, but, in my opinion, we delayed too long in taking over the control of shipping." On May 24, 1919, on the second reading of the Finance Bill, he said: "The shipowners have been allowed to make profits directly arising out of the war which we ought not to have allowed them to make. As a rule, during the three years which have elapsed since the war, big shipowners have made the whole of their capital: they have made the equivalent of 33 1/3 per cent. after paying excess profits. I myself had certain investments in ships. I was a shareholder in fourteen ships. Taking the average of those ships, all of them paying well, the rate of dividend I received last year was 47 per cent. after paying the Excess Profits Tax. For every £100 I put in I received £47 last year after excess profits had been taxed." Mr. Bonar Law said that not all shipping investments yielded this rate of profit, and when I investigated it I found that his statement was quite true; some of them had yielded much more. To take another case, the Blue Book rates at the end of 1915 (*Document handed in and marked A.6*), which will be a guide to your Committee, and which were fixed by this Committee, are here with the increase which has been granted in 1918, and I want to suggest that after May, 1917, when we were being refused advances of wages to meet the increased cost of living, in 1918 a very large retrospective sum was paid to the shipowners in spite of the fact that all the increases we had received had been paid by the Government, even in Scale No. 1. I want to make that point clear. These rates in Scale No. 1, arranged in 1915 for the shipowners, provide that additional labour charges, etc., shall be borne by the State; so the

additional wages were borne by the State, and in spite of that this increase was granted to them at a period when we had difficulty in getting a copper or two per hour in order to maintain our people in decency. I claim, Sir, that on all questions of despatch, on all questions of turning round ships, on all questions of trying to facilitate the transport trade and secure improvements during the last five years, the Transport Workers' Federation have done their best. Every officer of this Federation has been more or less a State servant during the war, unpaid, all of them ready at a moment's notice to do whatever they could to prevent stoppages of work and to speed up despatch. But what have we found? The merchants and the shipowners would not give up one iota. At port after port I have found that when you have said: "If you did so-and-so and so-and-so you would facilitate and help, it would make the turning of shipping quicker if you pooled your barges, if you pooled your carts, if you pooled your trucks; if you lend what assistance you can to help despatch it will facilitate the country's needs"; but wherever you touch the merchants' interest the only people that are expected to be mobile are labour. The only people who are expected to give up all privileges, trade union rights, conditions, and all the rest of it, are labour on every possible occasion. Even since the war we had the gentlemen from Hull before us with their port congested, with their lighters all full, and all their people out of employment, and when we suggested that if they waived an old condition of the port, the right to discharge overside, for a fortnight, they could clear it, we soon found that we were touching a vested interest of one class of employer against another, and the port could be, and could remain, congested rather than they would give that up.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you just repeat part of what you have said? I am afraid I have not followed it.

Mr. BEVIN: Take Hull as an example. The whole port was blocked with cotton seed. They have the right in Hull of discharging overside into lighters without putting the stuff on the quay, to avoid charges.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a free wharf.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, but they did fill up their lighters, they have filled up their cake mills, and the only possible way of relieving that difficulty was to put that seed temporarily ashore and use the lighters. But directly you suggested it you found a vested interest of the merchants which conflicted with the vested interest of the shipowner, and it did not matter what happened to the port you could not get over it. I give that purely as an example. I find it in Bristol, a port that I have been more closely associated with. There have been the greatest difficulties in getting the merchants to give up charter parties and rights that they claim—I call them hindrances—which have been in existence. They will say to you, "Oh! but the merchants of Bristol have had this right for 500 years, fancy touching it now," and war or no war they hang on to it like the laws of the Medes and Persians. I can assure you we have found no mobility between these inter-vested interests to help the country during the war. I went to one port to urge the pooling of lighters where there were 500 or 600 men idle while the country was waiting for food; and the war ended and they had not pooled their lighters. Each little trader was running on his own, one lot of lighters idle while the people were waiting for food. Exactly the same thing happened with cart owners. Wherever you turned you found that that little vested interest came in. We, on the

* See Appendix No. 5.

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other hand, were expected to be able to make a grain porter into a cargo man or an iron ore man; they used the man's skill in his craft to put him on to some other trade. We were asked to make every possible form of change in order to meet the needs of the Government. I mention these things to indicate the difficult nature of the work of the Federation during the war, and which has led up to this claim being made at the present moment.

Our last set of negotiations was in connection with a 44-hour week, and I have heard that it has been said that the employers claim this as an advance of wages. I want to put before you the history of that shorter working week. We had prepared that programme in 1913, and in 1914, as a historical fact, the Triple Alliance was formed of the Miners, the Railwaymen, and ourselves. We had all had bitter experience, and knew the type of fight we would have to meet. We did not want it, I can assure you, and if there had been a ready means of conciliation at our hand at that time we should probably never have thought of it. We had our bitter experience in 1912 of people driven to starvation and suicide over that bitter strike, in London particularly; and we had to get the necessary machinery to prevent so prolonged a struggle taking place again. But when the war broke out we were appealed to by the State to forego all those negotiations. We were asked, "Do not press your claims now when the country is in the throes of danger," and we said, "Very good," and we withdrew our claim. As a matter of fact, we had not actually sent it to the employers, but we had it ready. The whole of us worked patriotically, as you know. I do not use the word "patriotically" in the vulgar sense, and in fact I would like not to use it, it has been so abused, and I only use it for want of another word.

The CHAIRMAN: You will never find me taking you up for using that term when it seems justified.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you, my Lord. We submitted to the requests and we postponed any discussion until the end of the war. We kept our word. We did not submit the demand for the shorter working week until after the Armistice was signed. In December of the year before last, 1918, we submitted our request and it was negotiated, and finally a 44-hour week was established, together with another very substantial improvement in the life of the docker, and that was a guaranteed half-day in place of the old hourly system.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you mind telling me what, prior to December, 1918, was the number of hours per week?

Mr. BEVIN: The number varied in each port.

The CHAIRMAN: Again I must trouble you for what I will call the mean. Would it be one hour less per day, do you think?

Mr. BEVIN: I should think the average reduction would be about an hour a day, taking the whole country.

The CHAIRMAN: An hour to an hour and a-half per day?

Mr. BEVIN: About that, I should think, but it is very difficult to arrive at a line, as I think the other side will agree. I see your point of trying to find the line, but I do not want to give you the wrong line.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite enough; I will take it as an hour to an hour and a-half per day.

The day was reduced, as I understand, to an 8-hour day, plus a guaranteed half-day.

Mr. BEN TILLET: Nearer an hour than an hour and a-half.

The CHAIRMAN: And a half-day.

Mr. BEVIN: The week was divided into 11 half-days. Our claim is that that was an overdue concession which the men had gone without during the whole period of the war; but what is now the habit of mind of the employers who made that a separate agreement, separate from any question of cost of living, which is the point I want to make? That was not given to meet any cost of living, but was an admission of a principle which not only the transport workers, but the whole world, was striving to obtain. In America, in our own country, in France, in Germany, and in many other countries just prior to the war the 8-hour day principle had been accepted and a decision to give it economic effect had been reached. Therefore when the percentages are really examined it is essential to separate any advantage gained from the 8-hour day from any other form of concession. It has been suggested, and I have seen it in the Press, that this 8-hour day cost an enormous lot of money. Again I must turn to my authority, and I will give you the page of the report a little later on. I got this from a Port of London report. It is a minute from a Special Committee to the full Committee. I understand that the Port of London Committee appointed a Sub-Committee to inquire as to whether there should be increased charges to meet the 44 hours, and they reported to the full Board, and this was reported to the Board of Trade: "P.L.A.—The Joint Committee report that they have considered the question of providing the necessary funds for meeting the additional charge for wages contingent upon the agreement of April 23, 1919, with the National Transport Workers' Federation for a shorter working week. In view of the large recent increase of business in the Port, and the further expansion in prospect, the Joint Committee recommend that for the present no further general increase be made in the rates and charges of the Authority, but that the rates for overtime be revised in order to reimburse the Authority for the expense incurred in working after ordinary hours, as prescribed by the agreement, and that this decision be conveyed to the Board of Trade with an intimation that the Authority reserve to themselves the right to apply for further powers of charging should the course of business threaten their financial position."

The CHAIRMAN: Will you read the first part again—"In view of" something?

Mr. BEVIN: "In view of the large recent increase of business in the Port." The charges which the Port of London Authority have increased during the war to their customers, I understand, are as follows up to the 1st November, 1918: "Charges for gas and water, 7½ per cent.; charges for electricity, 30 per cent.; rent of vessels and lighters, 70 per cent.; fuel dues, by 1s. 4d. per ton; all vessels in class I., rent to commence after seven days from entrance increased by 82½ per cent.; all other dues, rates and charges, 85 per cent." I want to call attention to the fact that that was put on on the 1st November, 1918, and there has been no need, with all the talk about increased cost to the consumer, to increase the charges owing to the changes in the conditions of trade since that date.

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Now if I may turn to the claim itself (**documents handed in and marked B.1*) with regard to the claim, that arose briefly in a question which your Lordship put to me just now with regard to the lighters. The first clause deals with the 16s. per day, and our intention in that claim is that the minimum rates should go to 16s. per day. Above that line there are a number of classes of work which have always been graded according to the skill of the worker or the arduous nature of the work. We propose, if the other side agree, after the Report of this Court and assuming, as I am confident will happen, that the 16s. will be fixed, that we should not trouble the Court with all the variety of sections which would be above the 16s. I think that more or less would be a matter for negotiation and settlement. We suggest that in order to simplify the inquiry if we can. We are not claiming, and I want to be perfectly fair and frank about that, that every grade above the present minimum grades should be in exactly the same proportion.

The CHAIRMAN: I am asked by some of my colleagues to mention this to you; you mentioned 16s. per day in the course of your argument, but we may translate your argument into 8s. per half-day, may we not?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, but I want to put one safeguard: that is so, with this exception, that in about four ports of the country, which I need not mention, the pay is based on six full days by agreement instead of on eleven half-days. Subject to that, eleven half-days operates everywhere else.

The CHAIRMAN: Then your whole case is that the minimum which we are asked to fix will be the basis and form a datum line with regard to the increases of wage?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so. This is rather a big table, my Lord, but it gives you the present position of the ports. (*†Same handed in and marked B.2.*) In the first column on the basis of a half-day I give you the lowest rates, and what I should term the second rates where they exist. Had I thought of your line I would only have put the minimum, but I have put these second rates, and if you will take the lowest rate in each case given there you will get the minimum which I have already quoted, so I need not go over it again.

The CHAIRMAN: It is pretty clear.

Mr. BEVIN: In the second column I have indicated the class of men to whom the minimum is at present being paid, and in the third column as near as I have been able to get it—I do not vouch for its strict accuracy, because it is so difficult to get the figures—I have tried approximately to show the percentages of men who will be affected by the minimum. The remainder of the men between the percentage I quote and the 100 will be those men whom I have described as being in a higher class or grade, or on different classes of work.

There is another point that I want to make on these figures, and that is, that we have excluded coal shipments because the shipping of coal is subject to an entirely separate negotiation, that is to say, shipping of coal for export. Those people are dealt with by a different body. Our

Federation deals with them, but they do not come within the scope of the inquiry. In the fourth column I have dealt with the general state of employment recently from quite recent returns. In London you will find, the report says, that employment is very good, but still a large surplus of men. In each of these cases, my Lord this table tells its own story.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you going to deal with the question of casual labour?

Mr. BEVIN: I think towards the end of my remarks I propose to submit proposals which, I think, ought to lead to a solution of the question of maintenance. I have already done it in the case of the Port of London Decasualisation Committee, and I still adhere, as I have for the last ten years, ever since I took up the problem of casual labour as a study, to the opinion that there is a solution, which I hope I shall succeed in convincing your Lordship is the correct one. In Southampton you have the report, "Has been very poor; now recovering a little, but cannot be called good"; in the southern ports of Poole and Weymouth it is very slack; at Plymouth they report approximately three days per week on the average; at Bristol and Avonmouth it is fair; at Gloucester very good at present; at Newport very bad; at Cardiff slack; at Barry very precarious for some time past; at Port Talbot it is casual; at Swansea it is much below the normal; at Liverpool it is good; at Garston it is moderate; at Manchester it is good; at Preston it is very irregular; at Whitehaven, Workington, and Maryport it is moderate; at Ayr and Troon very poor; at Greenock it is fair; at Glasgow it is fair generally; at Dundee it is seasonal owing to jute cargoes, plentiful at present; at Methil it is very poor; at Grangemouth it is good; at Leith the last two months poor, previously fair, New Year prospects fair; at Hull it would be good except for congestion due to shortage of wagons; at Goole fairly good; at Grimsby and Immingham it is fairly good; at Boston it is slack; and the other ports are given. I have had that column put in with a view of trying to indicate the state of things. I asked for a truthful and accurate statement through our permanent officials all the way round of exactly how they found things, and I think that that is a report of the exact state of things which cannot be questioned. I have checked it by the returns of the Ministry of Labour in districts where it says bad and slack, and I find that it harmonises exactly with the reports of the Labour Exchanges. So that the reports given generally in this way, reduced of course from what they said to me in order to try to give a picture in a word or two of exactly the position in each case, tell their own story of casual life.

In the next column I have tried to indicate the conditions under which the men are engaged. In London 50 per cent. of the Port of London men are described as permanent and paid for holidays; but there is a system of plus in operation in London.

The CHAIRMAN: What is that?

Mr. BEVIN: I cannot tell you, and I find that none of the Port of London men can tell me exactly what it is. It is a system that was invented to deceive the inventor, and I cannot quite gather exactly how it works. Possibly when we get some witnesses on the stand we may elucidate exactly how this plus is arranged. It means that a man is working under a

* See Appendix No. 6.

† See Appendix No. 7.

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sort of task condition at the end of which he may or may not have earned something, and he does not know until somebody tells him. I say it is ridiculous, and we want it changed. If the Port of London want payment by results let them sit down with a Union official and work out a system of piecework like every other port in the country, so that the man may know exactly what he is working on, so much per ton, and have done with it. That is what the men want, in place of this wretched system of plus, which, as I say, I do not understand, and have not been able quite to fathom from the rates that I have seen.

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS: It has nonplussed you, has it?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes. With reference to the rates in London, the men are engaged daily, and there again there is a difficulty which I want you to realise in connection with this stretch of London. A lot of our men have to travel to Tilbury.

The CHAIRMAN: You mean the extent of London?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes. The men have to go to the ship. I have had reports during this winter very often of men paying their fare and travelling to Tilbury and then having to go back with nothing to do. There again it is the story of casual labour; but I want you quite to realise that it is not only men turning up at a point where they are accustomed to turn up, but sometimes there is a migration of shipping owing to trade or dock space or some other reason; ships arrive and the men may find that they have to travel to another part of London; and you know, of course, the tremendous extent of the London area. At Southampton the men are taken on every morning and paid off every night, or when the ship is finished. In every case outside the Port of London, right the way through, outside of what you would describe as the maintenance men or the dock men or the supervising staffs, you may say that 90 per cent. of the labour we represent in this claim is casual labour. The permanent men in the case of London, I believe, number about 5,000 in round figures; those are the permanent men of the Port of London Authority. I do not know what number they employ as a total, but then follow the B men, who are casual, and then follows the horrible position of the C men.

The CHAIRMAN: How many are the B men?

Mr. BEVIN: I could not give you the figure off-hand, but I should think there are 3,000 or 4,000 B men following up the permanent men.

The CHAIRMAN: They are men who are preferential casuals, are they not?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, and that rather demonstrates the point I made to your Lordship in my statement that the percentage of permanent men that the Port of London claim to employ is nothing like the total that they could absorb. But they still take no risk. None of these dock companies or anybody will take any risk with permanent men. It has always been such a small percentage that they could always keep their permanent men fully employed. As a matter of fact I have opposed the extension of permanent men in that sense in many ports because it intensified the casual labour of the remainder rather than helped. I want to make that point clear to you. I have opposed it on the ground that it was not all embracing, that you cannot deal with casual labour by employing one man full time and another man one day a week. Under those conditions it is better to employ them both half a day a week.

The CHAIRMAN: Probably you will deal with the latter, but in the meantime would you mind giving me to the best of your ability the figure as to the C men, the real casuals?

Mr. BEVIN: I would rather give you that figure at the next sitting, if you do not mind.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well; you have given us all the others.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, but I have never tested the actual number of the C men. In the next column in that table I have illustrated the method by which the men are engaged, and in the last column I deal with the state of appliances. That table will be necessary at a later stage when we go into the question of facilities. If I may make this present observation, it is that while at times employers may put in what I may describe as labour-saving appliances, they will never or hardly ever put in labour assisting appliances, which is quite a different thing.

The CHAIRMAN: Would this be a convenient time to adjourn? You have had a long spell, and we are very much interested in your exposition.

Mr. BEVIN: Just as you wish, my lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Then we will meet on Thursday next at half-past 10.

Adjourned to Thursday next at 10.30 o'clock.

SECOND DAY.

Thursday, Feb. 5, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

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The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen at the Bar, you will understand that in a Court consisting of no less than nine members there will necessarily be occasions when one, or it may be two, may be absent. Arrangements have been made under which members of the Court have voluntarily undertaken to keep themselves acquainted with the proceedings through the verbatim report which is furnished. We cannot, of course, conduct a protracted inquiry except under arrangements of that kind, because it would be impossible to arrest the proceedings of the Court by the absence of a single member, or even two members. On the other hand, the parties may rest assured that the interests of the dispute and its ultimate settlement will not be interfered with thereby. I regret to say, however, in connection with this that unhappily our first absentee is Mr. Williams, who is unable to attend on account of illness which seized him yesterday.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I have an application to make to the Court on behalf of the Clyde Navigation Trustees and the Glasgow Shipowners' and Dock Labour Employers' Organisation, both of whom are represented by me before your Lordship's Court; and the application is this, that on some occasion when the Court is not sitting and when their doing so will not interfere with the prosecution of this Inquiry, the Court or some members of the Court might find it possible to visit and to inspect the docks and wharves on the Clyde.

The CHAIRMAN: I was aware of this application, and have consulted my colleagues on the Court with regard to it. The view which we as a Court took was that it would be an advantage that the Chairman, accompanied, as he stipulated for, by one of the Labour representatives on the Court and one of the employers' representatives on the Court should visit a large contracting Port like London and a large distributing Port like Liverpool. The demand made by Glasgow is, of course, entitled to the greatest weight, but you will understand that it may be followed by demands from other ports of great importance throughout the Kingdom. We do not close our minds to the application, but we express no opinion either affirmatively or negatively with regard to it. Probably if in the meantime we proceed with our Inquiry, it will then become manifest either that we must undertake such a visitation or that we can without harm to either side dispense with it. That is the position up to date upon that topic.

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord and Gentlemen, you requested that I should state the reference to the quotation which I made from Mr. Charles Booth's book. I have, unfortunately, not a copy of his book in the Union library, but I have the diagrams together with the quotation of the condition of London in the period named, and I shall be glad to hand it over to your Chairman if the Secretary would be good enough to return it.

The CHAIRMAN: The Secretary and I have talked about this, and we have discovered where your quotation came from, and we have been put in possession of Mr. Booth's book, and I now have it. If these diagrams are not represented, as I think they may possibly be, in the end of his volume, we shall call upon you to be so kind as to let us see those in your possession.

Mr. BEVIN: I should be quite prepared to leave this book with the Secretary so that you may, if you care, peruse it.

The CHAIRMAN: The Secretary will take charge of that. Mr. Macpherson will be responsible for it.

Mr. BEVIN: The other question which you asked me just prior to the adjournment was as to whether I could give you exact figures of the A men, the B men, and the C men of the Port of London. We find that the registration of those men is kept by the Port of London Authority, and that as a Union we have never taken a similar register, but have dealt with the Labour of London *en masse* rather than peculiarly to employers, and I am sorry that I am unable to state the accurate information, but I have no doubt that if the Court applied to the Port of London Authority, who keep the register, that would be the easiest way of getting the accurate return which the Court desires.

The CHAIRMAN: I must interrupt you for one moment to say that Sir Lynden Macassey's clients, who include the Port of London Authority, may consider that we do make that request.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Certainly you shall have that information, and my friend, too, if he wants it.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin is quite right to put it in that way.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Would your Lordship give me the reference to Mr. Charles Booth's book?

The CHAIRMAN: It is in his volume on "Life and Labour in London," in the section dealing with Industry, at page 399.

Mr. BEVIN: Just before the adjournment I was just submitting the actual claim, and trying to point out the present position in the docks. You asked me for a definite datum line of wages, and I think it was accepted that the basis of consideration should be the absolute minimum rate in each port. I do not, however, want our men to be under any misapprehension in the ultimate settlement of this difficulty. I desire to make this point clear, and I think I did at the preliminary negotiations with the employers. In relation to the minimum, there are in some ports—and I do not think it is necessary to go into detail—men who are graded very close together; you may have a rate of 11s. 4d. for one man and 11s. 8d. for a very similar man. We were intending in this application for those men who were on the low grade to reduce as far as possible the number of grades to some extent, and I would suggest that the best method of dealing with it would be that at the end, if the principle of, say, 16s. be accepted, I do not think it will be a very difficult matter for the parties to this dispute to agree as to the exact classes of men and groups of men who come within the 16s., subject to reference back to your Court, if you like, if there is any dispute on those grades; but there is such a large amount of detail involved that I wanted to make that point perfectly clear. You have in London at the moment, to take an illustration, two sets of men where only 3d. per day divides them. It was the intention in this application, whatever rate was fixed for those men above the 16s., or whatever figure they were fixed

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at, to get rid of that small difference between the two by, as I have explained to the employers, bringing the lower ones up and securing a proper level. Subject to that, the application applied according to the datum line which we explained the other day.

The next point of the application to which I want to refer is the question of piece workers. It is the intention of the Transport Workers' Federation to ask the Court to make it perfectly clear that the 16s. would be regarded in the case of piece workers as a minimum. The piece workers in the dock industry have, in our judgment, been badly treated. Our experience is that when there is no payment imposed as a minimum upon the employers the organisation is accordingly as slack as the lack of payment. It is nobody's business if there is no cost to see that proper facilities are supplied for piece workers to carry on the work. We have had a great deal of experience of this in the grain trade, or the grain section of our trade. I was associated for several years with the Port of Bristol; and, if I may say so in passing, in examining the facts of this inquiry we have not only to look at the markets of the world which are open at the moment, but we have to look at the conditions which will prevail when the whole world's markets are open again; and when the men were engaged without a minimum in several of the ports the merchants, as well as the shipowners, had a large controlling interest under their charter parties in the discharge of grain, and it was a common occurrence for years if the market was rising in the afternoon for a ship to be stopped at 2 or 3 o'clock and the men sent home and told to come next day because there were no orders. To alter that in that particular port we insisted upon a minimum wage, and during this year a minimum wage has been fixed, with this result: Great complaints were made to us as a Union as to the lack of output prior to the minimum wage being fixed, but I find from the returns forwarded me that the men have increased the output of grain by an average of 600 bushels per gang since the minimum has been fixed.

The CHAIRMAN: Where did you say this was?

Mr. BEVIN: That was at the Port of Bristol. That is the one classic example which I have to bring before you. The reason, I think, for that improvement in output is that when no minimum was paid to a piece worker nobody troubled whether he had trucks to load, whether there were barges in, or whether there were cranes; it was nobody's business. We found that strongly represented in other forms of piece work all round the country. We argued, and I think rightly argued, that if the shipowner was entitled to demurrage on his ship if it was delayed, Labour, whose only capital was its labour power, had a right to demurrage on its time if it was wasted. That was the theory upon which we based this claim of the minimum wage for piece workers, and we want also that when the 16s. is conceded the piece workers shall be dealt with, as they have been under previous national agreements, largely by local negotiations, but with the understanding that they shall be given such an advance as would leave them in relation to the day workers in the position in which they are at the moment; that is to say, the rates for piece work in the various ports have been fixed by agreement, and if, for argument's sake, 3s. or 4s. per day was involved in a given port to realise this 16s., then such an advance should be given to the piece workers as would yield to them a proper proportion in relation to the advance given to the day workers.

The CHAIRMAN: Have the other ports a system of a minimum day rate?

Mr. BEVIN: In London I understand everybody is guaranteed the rate for the port; that is to say, the general cargo rate applies to piece workers.

The CHAIRMAN: They have seen it is not inconsistent with good business in London to adopt the argument practically which you are submitting.

Mr. BEVIN: I have never heard in London any argument against it. The other section to which I want to call your attention is the shift workers. We have in some of the ports a number of men who have been in the practice of working on double shift. This particularly applies to South Wales, and I think Glasgow also has a system of this character in some of its departments, and also Middlesbrough. When the ship arrives two sets of men are told off, and one set works by day and the other by night in some cases; in other cases they are working from 6 to 2 o'clock and from 2 to 10 o'clock, and so giving 16 hours or 15 hours discharge as against the ordinary day work time in other ports. We were asked at the preliminary negotiations for our views upon this shift work generally in order to cope with the traffic and give longer periods of discharge to the ships. Our view is this: We would have no objection to shift work provided maintenance were provided for the men during the period of unemployment. The method which I am going to suggest for providing that maintenance, as I indicated the other day, I will deal with under another heading. Our difficulty in agreeing without any reservation to the introduction of longer periods of discharge on ships in ports like London, Liverpool, Bristol, and other places, is this: There is only so much shipping that can come in and out of this country; we can only consume or absorb so much per annum according to our population, and our production and export. If, say, during a glut we put on a double shift, you would leave us during the slump period with an intensified difficulty from the point of view of casual labour. You would have thousands of men at your dock gates simply fighting and scrambling, and further demoralisation; so, while we are anxious to discover the best means of dealing with transport equally with the employers, I want to make this very emphatic statement: I object to overtime. I do not mean that I object to overtime at an exceptional period, but I do not think there is any value, either to the employer or to the workman or to the State, in this sort of continuous overtime, year in and year out, or during very long periods. Another difficulty which we have is this—that the railways of the country have not yet shown that they can clear from the dock faster than the men are now discharging. The canal system of the country is so paralysed by the high policy of State which has been adopted towards canals that in some reaches of the canals there is over 60 per cent. of the boats tied up instead of being used for distribution, so that first of all our difficulties with regard to the request which was made to us at the previous negotiations to consider regarding shift work were that we had no policy submitted to us to deal with the men who would be drawn to the dock and then left there standing during long periods of slump or seasonal trade; and, secondly, that the Ministry of Transport or the Railway Companies, or whoever is responsible, have not devised or brought up to a sufficient state of organisation an inland distribution to take away faster than we

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are now discharging from the ships. Another difficulty, too, is this—

The CHAIRMAN: I am very loath to interrupt you, but just in order to appreciate it, do I understand that you go so far as to make this point also—that if the canal system were, I shall not say abolished, but modified in its cruel results as you represent them, and if some system of maintenance were introduced, it would then be to the interest of the Port Authorities for the time being to put such pressure as they could so as to remove all these obstacles which now are so visible throughout the country of congestion on the railway side and on the canal side?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Both the Port Authorities and the Port and Dock workmen would make common cause in the interests of the progress of trade throughout the country to prevent that glut to which you refer?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord. We are absolutely convinced that Britain is the easiest transport country in the world. We are satisfied from investigation—

The CHAIRMAN: One of my colleagues very properly reminds me that when I referred to Port Authorities I included those trading at the port—I mean shipowners.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, quite.

The CHAIRMAN: It would then become a matter of common concern to the workmen working in the docks and the authorities employing the workmen to have such congestion as may improperly be attributed by the public to the dock worker removed by having proper organisation of railways and canals?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, quite; but if the shift system were introduced—or at least, to put it in another way, for those shift workers who are established, and apart from the hypothetical position as to whether or not it will be established on a wider scale conditionally upon these other points that I have been making—for those shift workers who are already established, we have asked that when engaged on the night shift they should be paid time and a half.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you call a night shift?

Mr. BEVIN: The second shift.

The CHAIRMAN: Taking the shift from 8 to 2, which is the first shift, and the shift from 2 to 10 which you gave us, would you call the second of those the night shift?

Mr. BEVIN: That is the arrangement in vogue at the moment.

The CHAIRMAN: The second shift would be paid one and a-half times?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so. That is what has been established. It has been established in one port where it is most predominant, and it has been based on what has already been established. At the Port of Middlesbrough it is at present in operation. It only applies in the main to men engaged on very heavy classes of work, and the double shift has not

been operative on the general class of trade in the country other than, say, in exporting ports and importing ports of iron ore and things of that kind.

The CHAIRMAN: You see I am only suggesting this because one can quite see that in the course of your very clear statement you are bringing out points which may be the subject of arrangement between both sides; but what strikes me about your point is this, that a man would always consider himself lucky who started at 2 o'clock in the day, because he would get 50 per cent. more than a man who started in the morning.

Mr. BEVIN: It is a very curious thing that I find employers very often put up that theory, but in practice it is not true; it does not operate. If you would be good enough to let your Secretary get the Report of the Adult Education Committee set up by the Ministry of Reconstruction—I do not know whether you have read it—

The CHAIRMAN: No, I have not had it, but I shall be very glad to see it.

Mr. BEVIN: It is the Report of a Committee set up by Dr. Addison, the Minister of Reconstruction, and the Report is called the Report on Adult Education. From the witnesses who were examined by that Committee—and they ran into hundreds—what struck us was the enormous number of men and the growing number of men who preferred to sacrifice their money in order to have their evenings for cultural development, and we find that in spite of all the increased rates at night. As a matter of fact, I think it was Sir Alfred Booth who said to us in the 44-hour negotiations, "This is not an hourly question, this is a means of getting more money," and suggested that we ought to go to arbitration because it involved money. Following what has happened since that 44-hour agreement, I find the Courts now complaining that in spite of the high rates at night men will not work overtime. That leads me to the conclusion that the argument which we advanced for the shorter working week has been justified by results; that the men are placing a higher value upon their leisure and cultural development now than they hitherto did upon the money which they could obtain by working these long hours; and I think you will find in practice that with all those rates which may be fixed you will not get that result. Men prefer to turn out in the morning and have their afternoon or their evening, as the case may be, off. You find a greater desire, I am sure, in the engineering trade and other trades who have to work on the shift system, although there are extra rates paid on the second or third shift, as the case may be, to work on the first shift, and there is always a better turn out to work on the first shift. After all, it is natural; it is the proper time to turn out, and we still have a good deal of natural desire left in the working class. Another reason why we ask for the time and a-half is this: a lot of other people do not turn out so early in the morning as the workmen, and we have always found a tendency among employers to turn out at 10 o'clock in the morning, wait about for orders, and when they can say to the men "Work on—just work on," I have heard them say, "Well, we work to-night," and then they go home. I have heard that lots of times. But they say "Work on" without any extra cost or financial liability. There is a tendency to slack in their organisation, and not to get output at the proper time when they ought to be doing it; and it is not so much that we want the money, it is because we want

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to force organisation to have the discharge of ships at the proper time when they ought to be discharged, and not intensify the night work at the expense of the proper periods. That is the main reason why we ask for what, after all, is not a gain to our men, but really a penalty upon the employers.

I have drawn a table which, of course, must be approximate, showing, or attempting to show, what this increase will mean on the minimum in the various ports. I am now referring to Table B3. (**The Table was handed in.*) If in the first column you would be good enough to cross out "shipowners and contractors," which is an error, and put "some others," it illustrates my datum line point which I made in my opening remarks. I will not go through each port. It is a very difficult matter to get quite accurate figures, and I am sure that Sir Lynden Macassey will agree that if my returns do not quite show the same figure as his—it will be a very small percentage of difference—the two sides, if there is any dispute, to save a lot of argument, might agree about the thing afterwards.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Certainly. I will undertake to agree these figures.

Mr. BEVIN: I must say at the moment some of them are approximate, because I have had to get the information in rather hurriedly.

The CHAIRMAN: I may mention what has been pointed out to me, Mr. Bevin, that there are one or two arithmetical mistakes in the tables that you have put in; quite inadvertent mistakes, but I am told manifest arithmetical mistakes. All that should be the subject of adjustment between you and Sir Lynden Macassey.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes. We have been working at rather high pressure to get it in this form.

The CHAIRMAN: It is very wonderful how far you have gone.

Mr. BEVIN: The increase that would be involved upon the minimum shows an advance over the whole country of 25.44 per cent., and it is as well that we should keep to the minimum. The total advance, having regard to the higher grades, would work out at a little under 25 per cent. on the average.

The CHAIRMAN: Again may I suggest this to you for the purpose of accuracy: Your increased percentage works out, you say, at 25½ per cent. Now is that the average of all those percentages in the last column.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Then the figures are not quite right, because if you take London, to begin with, the very first one is over 37 per cent. increase, and that applies to a huge working population. Again, if you take Liverpool, the increase is over 37 per cent. Then there are some which are low, such as Avonmouth, Bristol, and Southampton, which are down to about 14 per cent. What I am pointing out to you is that your percentage, in order to be correct, if it applies to the trade as a whole, would require to be put in this way: You would require to take the gross sum paid and the gross number of employees to whom that sum applied, and then strike an average percentage. As it is, you are averaging big ports with little ports, and the per-

centage is undoubtedly depressed. I can give you a striking instance of that if you refer to Goole, where the increase is only 10 per cent., whereas in London and Liverpool the increase is 37 per cent. That you will see at once introduces a disturbing and important element by reducing the percentage below what it should be. Have I made my point clear?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, I understand your point, but it will be tested in another form under another heading in the cost, and I think it will work out at the same result.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, it may be that Table B3 is put before us rather to show an unsure figure at 25.44. That applies also, may I say, to the average increase of 3s. 1d., and what I have said very largely supports that. Liverpool and London and Hull show an increase of 4s. 4d., whereas Goole again shows an increase of only 1s. 6d. Do you follow me?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, I quite follow you, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: London and Liverpool represent the mass of the workers.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes. But I want to call attention to another point that I think rather nullifies the one you have made, if I may say so. We have based these calculations on the absolute minimum, but we had in our minds the point that I made just now about the datum line, so if you will test London again, if you do not mind, you will find there are two rates in London, a 12s. 8d. rate and an 11s. 8d. rate. It is our intention—and I say this because I do not want the men or yourselves to be under any misapprehension—to amalgamate both those sections of men and to bring them to 16s. Hence you arrive at the result that those two sets of men in future will be upon the minimum. There are other men in London who would be slightly above the minimum if our theory is adopted, and I will give you the reason for that in a moment. If you take the 26.3 per cent. as against the 37.14 per cent., I think when we reach the end of our case that will lead us probably to the same conclusion as I have arrived at.

The CHAIRMAN: That may be so.

Mr. BEVIN: I should like to point out that in London before the war there was only a difference of 1d. an hour and payment for a meal hour between the Port of London Authority's men and the ship-owners' men, but the great difference which has come about now, a difference between two given men of 11s. 8d. and 13s. 9d. (a figure which I have not put on here because they are above the minimum), has been brought about by the war wages.

The CHAIRMAN: Who introduced the 11s. 8d?

Mr. BEVIN: The Port of London Authority men. The shipowners' men in London at the moment get 13s. 9d. If the same relative position had been kept the Port of London men would, if the 1d. an hour had been maintained, have had 13s. 1d. as against 13s. 9d., because the meal hours and everything were all amalgamated and placed in the day's pay; but owing to the Port of London policy of just deciding what the war wages should be, as I indicated the other day, there has been a growing difference. In the case

* See Appendix No. 8.

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of the London shipowners we negotiated a settlement, and in the case of the Port of London Authority they made themselves the sole arbiters of the workmen's conditions until they were proclaimed. That was the difference, with the result that you have a wide margin between those two sets of men, and there is this difficulty cropping up. If the Port of London undertook to discharge ships (and they do some, I understand), and if they extended it to any extent they would be undercutting the whole of their competitors in London by employing those men in the manner I have indicated, and so cause serious disruption when trade settles down.

I have also drafted a Table setting out the conditions of overtime. That Table is B4. (**Same handed in.*) I have tried to show the exact rates now being paid in the first column, with the percentage over the day rate in the second column. In the third column I have shown whether at night the men are paid what we call running time or not—that is to say, each hour, whether a meal or not; or whether, as in some other ports, it is based upon the actual hours worked. Our proposal in the claim is time and a half and payment for the meal hours.

The CHAIRMAN: You are now upon the overtime part of your argument?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: You propose time and a half, do you not?

Mr. BEVIN: Time and a half to be paid for each hour, and if men are ordered to work on at night we are asking that they should be paid for four hours and they will work three.

Again, our reason is not for the purpose of obtaining money, nor is it with the idea of enhancing our income. The reason why this is suggested is because of the irregular method of giving orders for overtime. In dock life there has been very little regard at all paid to any convenience of the men. A broker rings up a dock authority or a stevedore, and says: "I want that ship to-night," or "I want it to-morrow. I want it to sail; I have another freight." He could have given that order at 11 o'clock in the morning possibly, because he knew, but perhaps he went to his own lunch and did not bother. Then he came back and let it go on into the afternoon. If the workman says, "I have arranged to go somewhere this afternoon. I have a wife and children, and I do not feel like working," he outrages the sense of that broker. Fancy a docker declining! The idea seems to have been that the only ambition a man had was to work whenever he was wanted in order to get money. I am making a special plea for culture and opportunity for our people as well as for money, and I am not asking that this arrangement for overtime should be made purely so that a man should work on until 9 and 10 o'clock at night. I think it is bad for him; I think it is bad for the shipowner the next morning; and I think it is bad for discharge. I would rather face the issue of shift work that I mentioned just now, if satisfactory conditions could be arranged, than put up a tempting enhanced overtime rate in order to induce men to work. There are two methods of dealing with overtime: one is to say to our people, "You shall get nothing for working overtime," and then they would never work; and the other is to penalise the em-

ployer. You have to do one thing or the other. In the past the competition among workpeople for bread was so enormous that the first was impossible and the second was our only method. Therefore, when considering overtime, I would urge your Lordship not to consider it from the point of view of payment at all. I am hoping that this Court of Inquiry will look into, and at least appreciate to the full, that ever-growing desire which, after all, is the work of the schoolmaster for the last fifty years, and must be given expression to. So, in considering this proposal for overtime it was suggested that we ought to have said double time and done with it. The docker, when he gets these orders to work, has to go and buy food. I am sure if your Lordship will visit the ports you will discover that, outside of just one port in this country, the last thing anybody has considered is that the workmen ought to have a decent place in which to sit down and eat. The scramble to get food has been almost as bad as the scramble to get employment. It is true that at Avonmouth there is a canteen, but I am sure the general manager will not mind my saying that, after all, it was got on the initiative of the men; it was brought about by the efforts of the Union in its original inception, and the fact that it was a public authority enabled us to get the thing there financed by the Liquor Control Board. Whatever other sins there may be on the head of the Liquor Control Board, they, at least, have one saving grace, that they have built us a canteen at Avonmouth. That has been a tremendous benefit. Ordinarily the men have to rush to a coffee-house or a public-house, or something of that kind, in order to get food; and I want you to realise in connection with that meal, if the men had to pay for each meal at the rate that they have to pay for that meal, it would not be 16s. a day which we would be asking for, but, rather, 30s. a day in order to cope with what they would be charged. Hence, when we plead for this meal-hour payment and things of that character, we put it on first of all rather as a penalty on the employer, and, secondly, because it is not like working in a factory where the man is told the day before: "We are compelled to work overtime on certain orders," or where they may have to work emergency overtime when there is a breakdown in the works. At ports like Liverpool and Avonmouth this has been made almost a perpetual thing. Day after day the men are expected to work on from 8 o'clock in the morning until 9 or 10 o'clock at night. We want to put an end to that if we can, and we think this is the best possible method.

The CHAIRMAN: May I respectfully suggest to you that you appreciate the importance of this fact, that you should have special evidence in regard to it. You will keep that in view, please, and if I may express a hope, it is that you will get some person to speak, not only as to the need for it, but also some person of authority in these matters, such as officials, we will say, of the Y.M.C.A., which did such noble work during the war, to show how the thing can be done properly and financed without great cost.

Mr. BEVIN: I think the experience of Avonmouth is very different from anything else, and that would be one of the most striking kinds of evidence we could call. I will take steps to get it.

The CHAIRMAN: I appreciate the importance of this topic.

* See Appendix No. 9.

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Mr. BEVIN: There is one other point in connection with the claim that I want to make, and that is the reason for it being in this form of a demand for a minimum wage for all ports. After all, it is based upon experience. For years we had to negotiate port by port, and very often employer by employer in the port, but as we went on around the country you would find the General Manager of each dock had the rates of pay from the General Managers of every other dock, and when you had stated your case, say, at Bristol, the Chairman of the Employers' Association would say: "Well, you know, in Bristol we want to pay the very best possible wages. We agree there should be a higher standard of life; we agree with all those things; but look what Liverpool is paying; look what London is paying; look what Southampton is paying," and when we got to those ports we would be faced with the conditions at some other port. Again they would argue: "Yes, but such-and-such a port is served by three or four Railway Companies." We have rather come to the conclusion to look at it from another point of view. We say that if a man has to live, the living conditions have become so standardised by the operation of the great monopolies and trusts and the distribution of food that it does not much matter if I live in the country now. I have to pay just as high prices for everything as I hitherto had to pay in the large centres, and I have not yet discovered that the children in one port can live upon less food than they can in another port. I have also come to the conclusion, and the whole of my colleagues have as well, that the nature of the work in discharging ships or in handling cargoes is very, very similar wherever you go. It is also true that that has been done during the war by the Maritime Board in the case of seamen. We were told that to give these equalised rates would only lead to the port that had the highest rate going ahead for more, but that has not happened in the case of the merchant seamen. Some ports were getting so much per month, some were getting so many shillings or pounds, as the case might be, more per month, but they took one line, and there was no strike or disturbance; every port of the country was placed upon the same rate per month at a given time by the Maritime Board. It has also been done in many other industries, particularly in the last year. I am conscious that whatever your decision may be, if the principle of the minimum be established some people in some parts are going to get more on the first settlement than others. We have faced that, and we have discussed it with the whole of our men. It was assumed by the Chairman of the employers at the previous meeting, to take a striking illustration, that if Liverpool received 12s. a day and Glasgow 14s., if you decided on 16s. a day Glasgow would say "18s., because I was above Liverpool before." That is not so, my Lord. That is clearly understood by every member of the Federation in every port in the country.

The CHAIRMAN: At this point may I ask you to tell the Court in round figures the number of men whom you represent?

Mr. BEVIN: I admit that at the moment it must be an estimate.

The CHAIRMAN: We want a round-figure estimate.

Mr. BEVIN: 125,000; that is to say, 125,000 within this claim. I represent a lot more men in other departments of the Federation, but in this claim, as I mentioned the other day, that would be about the number.

The CHAIRMAN: That does not represent the whole of your membership, of course, but those 125,000 may be considered, so to speak, as making common cause for a minimum which shall be a standard and universal minimum.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: It is important in the interests of each individual port that you should have made that statement, and I am obliged to you for it.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you, my Lord. That is the reason, then, why we have made it a national claim, and I will now proceed to my next point, which is the justification of the claim.

The CHAIRMAN: In your opening remarks yesterday you divided your observations into these heads—firstly, the amount of the claim, and, secondly, the effects of the claim. You have now, I understand, dealt with those two points, and you are proceeding with your third point, the justification for the claim.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so. In submitting the justification for this claim I want first of all to call attention to, or rather to repeat, a statement that I made early in the proceedings. During the war particularly we were limited, in the consideration of any of the workpeople's conditions before the Courts of Arbitration, in the main to actual cost of living, and in the consideration of that cost of living our attention was always directed to the Board of Trade Labour Gazette. Exactly how the figures of the Board of Trade Gazette are arrived at I do not know. At any rate, we, as representing Labour, have never accepted those figures as a final statement as representing the actual advance in the cost of living. I want under this heading, my Lord, to deal first of all with the cost of living, and I want now to submit a table which I will call C2, which is taken from "The Economist" of January 10, 1920, page 54 (**Table C2 was handed in.*)

If I may refer to the Board of Trade Gazette, it gives 136 per cent. advance over pre-war from July, 1914, but "The Economist," taking the same period, taking the basis at 100, shows an average advance covering cereals and meat, other food, textiles, minerals, and miscellaneous, of 187 per cent. If you take the average of the first three, which so much enter into a workman's life, that is to say, food and clothing, the average is 198 per cent. These are not my figures, but are figures taken from "The Economist," which is a fairly reliable publication.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you any gentleman here from that newspaper?

Mr. BEVIN: I have not anyone here. I am willing to ask them if they will be good enough to attend, but I have simply taken it as a test. I do not know whether there is anyone here from the Board of Trade or the Ministry of Labour.

The CHAIRMAN: Do not misunderstand me. I think you are absolutely within your rights in quoting the figures; the only thing is that this is only a speech, and we want to turn as much as possible of what is said into absolute evidence, either by the admission of the parties or by the proving of documents. I suggest to you, Sir Lynden Macassey and Mr. Bevin, that these statements are manifestly dealing with matters of public interest. There may be a difference in the

* See Appendix No. 10.

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mind of the other as to how to handle these figures, but it is surely not beyond the wit of both parties to furnish us—not now, but before we close our labours—with agreed figures on almost everything that is a subject of Mr. Bevin's tables.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think there is no difficulty whatever in furnishing the Court with agreed figures, and I have already suggested that to my friend Mr. Bevin. Of course, the inferences which different gentlemen will draw from those figures, especially the gentlemen who have prepared these different figures on different bases, is another matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Once we see those figures I undertake personally to overhaul the schedule, and if we require to overhaul the comparisons in the schedule we shall do it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I expect in the latter process you will get the assistance of both myself and Mr. Bevin, according to the compilers. I have made arrangements now with Mr. Bevin that our people will get together and try to agree the figures, and there should be no dispute.

The CHAIRMAN: No doubt you can put your heads together, and we shall get something definite.

Mr. BEVIN: I have tested this thing. I desire to point out that I realise the point of your Lordship's inquiry, because no one quite agrees as to what the increased cost of living is; but I have tested it from another point of view, or at least by some other figures which can be looked at without difficulty. Here is Table C/3. (**The Table was handed in.*) In this Table I have taken the figures from the Report of the Cost of Living Committee which was set up by the Board of Trade in 1912. In Table C/3 I deal with food on the basis of 1905 largely by figures copied direct from their Report, and in the second column I have given the figures according to the prices issued by the Ministry of Food, which figures, if I may say so in passing, do not at this stage represent the prices in the shops. I find that the relaxation of control and inspection is rather converting the old orders of the Minister of Food into an absolute misnomer, and a meaningless thing, and that the shops are charging much higher in actual practice than is indicated.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the actual fact. What we are concerned with, first, is what the workman has to pay.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes; but comparing it with what the Ministry of Food says he ought only to pay, gives us the following results over 1905 on the average, assuming that he buys half of the bad or common and half of the good. It gives us an average increase over 1905 of 239 per cent., and over 1912 of 179 per cent. That is on the assumption that he bought the average priced goods at those two periods. Table C/3a, to which I will now refer you—(**handing in Table*)—is a similar table prepared on exactly the same lines dealing with imported meat, which gives on those figures increases of 251 per cent. and 232 per cent.—that is to say, an increase of 251 per cent. on imported meat over 1905, and an increase of 232 per cent. over 1912. With regard to home killed meat, of which dockers did not get very much, I deal with that in Table C/3b. (**The Table was handed in.*) Over 1905 you have an average in-

crease of 180 per cent., and over 1912 you have an average increase of 155 per cent. But I have tested it rather on the assumption (which I think is a fair assumption), which I will submit in Table C/4—(**the Table was handed in*)—that the working classes now represented in this application purchased the cheapest class of goods in 1905. The figures taken from the same Report give an average increase of 265 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: On the cheapest goods?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, that is on the cheapest goods.

The CHAIRMAN: Where did you say this came from?

Mr. BEVIN: This is from the Report of the Cost of Living Committee of the Board of Trade which sat in 1912. They took 1900 as the datum line, but they classified the prices of 1905 and 1912. It is a very elaborate Report covering practically the whole of the working-class conditions of that period. That deals with food. When we turn to imported meat, which I am sure our friends on the other side will agree was the principal kind of meat that the casual docker had to buy in those days, we find the same result, on the assumption that he bought the cheapest form of imported meat: we get an average advance of 295 per cent. You will find that in this Table, C/4a. (**The Table was handed in.*) I want to call your special attention to this, because in the Labour Gazette they have attempted to average, and one of our difficulties is this, that the best classes of goods during the war, of food-stuffs in particular, have not gone up to the same extent as the commoner classes have, which our people were in the habit of living upon in pre-war days; hence it does not show the real difficulty of the lower-paid casual people whom I represent. In Table C/4b, which I will hand up—(**handing Table in*)—you get this result, that if you take meat and other foodstuffs the average increased percentage over 1905 is 223½ per cent., and over 1912 it is 188 2-3 per cent. That is on average prices. This is a summary of the whole of the Tables that I have handed in.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that the average?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that for meat?

Mr. BEVIN: For meat and food of all kinds, averaging good and bad.

The CHAIRMAN: It is meat and foodstuffs?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: It does not deal with clothing?

Mr. BEVIN: No; but on the assumption that the working classes purchase the cheapest classes of goods the summary shows meat and other goods 280 per cent. over 1905. Now I want the Court to realise that the taking of the 1914 datum line is unfair to our people. The Board of Trade, and later the Ministry of Labour, deliberately jumped twenty years after the war broke out. Ignoring all the advance in the cost of living from 1900 to 1914 they made a new datum line, and I claim, my Lord, that now we are to adjust the minimum wages for the future, though we accepted that datum line during the war owing to war con-

* See Appendix No. 11.

* See Appendix No. 11.

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ditions, just as we postponed our negotiations in 1914, we have a right to restore the comparison with the old datum line of 1900.

The CHAIRMAN: Just let me ask you about that: the last general adjustment of wages was in what year?

Mr. BEVIN: In 1911.

The CHAIRMAN: If it had been available the just course would have been to date the cost of living at that time, and treat that as the datum line.

Mr. BEVIN: I should object to that.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you make that point clear?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, I will. 1911 did not give an advance to the workpeople in satisfaction of the advance from 1889. We had to settle in 1911 in the different ports according to the strength of our organisation, and not on the basis of equity, and what the people ought to get: hence I have called attention to the fact that Liverpool got nothing in 1911, but only the restoration of a rate fixed in 1886. Therefore, it would obviously not be right, as I think you will agree, in the interests of my people, for me to take 1911, and assume that everything was quite right in 1911, and that their status was properly fixed then. I therefore say, if you are going to consider, as I hope you will, the progress that ought inevitably to follow the progress of education and culture, as I have indicated, I think there should be a tracing of that development back to a rather further period, and the two should be regarded as if they ought to have merged step by step through the years. That is the reason why I have asked you to consider the old datum line instead of the new.

The CHAIRMAN: Let me put this to you: I thoroughly understand what you have just said—namely, that there were specialities typical to the fixing of wages in 1911, which specialities ought not to prejudice the claim of the men with regard to an increase; but still we are in the unfortunate position, owing to the way in which the facts have emerged, that with regard to increases of wages we date them from 1911, whereas with regard to the increase in the cost of living you are asking us to date it from another period. You see our difficulty. If you could have helped us even by a general figure to say, "Assume the wages were in 1911 what we know them to be——"

Mr. BEVIN: May I come to that on my next point?

The CHAIRMAN: I want to make this point clear. If you could say, "Assume that 1905 is the datum line for the increase in the cost of food, and the wages were the same or very much less," then we would be guided or helped. Will you come to that?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, I am coming to it now.

The CHAIRMAN: Might I put this to you, because some of my colleagues want to understand the position? If you are in the position of saying that from 1905, when you take the increase of prices, to 1911, there was a progressive increase of the prices, and therefore relatively a progressive decrease of

the purchasing power of wages, if you make that out that would be a strong fact for our consideration. If, on the other hand, we should come to be of opinion that between 1905 and 1911 prices were, on the whole, of a stationary character, then you see it would not matter, so far as we are concerned, whether we were dealing with the one price or the other. You start your wages as from 1911, you start your increase of prices as from 1905, but you say they were substantially the same, and therefore you bring your comparison together. If, on the other hand, the error I have mentioned is in it you will have to bring it out as from 1905 to the year 1911 the wages in this country paid to a workman on the standard of living were relatively decreased. That is a valuable fact for you if it be so.

Mr. BEVIN: If you will turn to the "Labour Gazette" of January, 1920, page 5, you will find that, taking the datum line at 1900 as 100 (the figures here given are on wholesale prices which would influence retail prices) the point stood in 1905 at 97.6 to the 100.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you got the 1911 figure for that?

Mr. BEVIN: In 1911 it was 109.4.

The CHAIRMAN: Do I understand, then, that the difference between 1905 and 1911 was no less than 12 per cent.?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so; that is wholesale prices.

The CHAIRMAN: As you say, the one thing bears on the other, we may take it that they square on that basis.

Mr. BEVIN: I was going to give you another set of figures, and refer you to that Report of the Board of Trade, and I think you will see (I am speaking from memory now) on retail prices that between 1905 and 1912, to take the year later when there was only about one point difference, the increase was 14 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: It is very near. There is just one other point before you leave that. From 1905 to 1911, was there an increase of wages?

Mr. BEVIN: No, there was no increase, as far as I know, during that period at any of the docks. The increase was given in a few docks in 1900, but the previous advance to 1900 was 1889.

The CHAIRMAN: In the six years, I put it.

Mr. BEVIN: No; there was really no movement for an advance in wages.

The CHAIRMAN: I only asked, to see that we follow you, and just to express my views, and those of my colleagues.

Mr. BEVIN: I have tried to look at what the standard of life ought to be from a further point of view. During the war the Government set up a Committee to consider what shipping and other things should be allocated to provide for the Army; and they worked out the necessary food values as the basis of a soldier's rations, and also for the labour battalions. What I am going to quote is the soldier's ration outside clothing, beverages, tobacco, or pay; it is just food, dry

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food, which it was reported to the Cabinet was necessary to keep them in physical fitness.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the date of this?

Mr. BEVIN: It is a Report by a Committee of the Royal Society (I do not know what it is the Royal Society of) at the request of the President of the Board of Trade, dated 1916, Appendix 5, page 24. I have a table, which I will hand in. (*Table handed in.)

The CHAIRMAN: Is that C 5?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, that is C 5. In this table it shows, in the first column, what is necessary for the soldier per day. It includes meat, bread, bacon, cheese, dried vegetables, jam, sugar, and condensed milk. In the last column of this table I have explained what they would cost by the Food Controller's figures, and I find it is necessary to spend 3s. 6d. per day for a man to purchase in the shop what was regarded as the necessary food to keep a man in physical fitness at the Base. I am going to contend, my Lord, that if a man is running heavy goods like flour, wheat, sugar, or stowing cargoes in the hold of a ship with all those atmospheric conditions, working irregularly, the employers cannot get the output from their ship on less food than it takes to keep a soldier at the Base or in a labour battalion; but, if I purchased those same articles at the period I have named, 1905, and I think this is a very good test of the progress in cost, on the figures submitted in the Report that I have already called your attention to, it would have been bought for 10.78d. That, I think, is a very good test of the progress of the cost of food. Transfer it from the State, who is the housekeeper for the soldier, to the woman who is the housekeeper for the family, and I think the old proverb we used to quote, that the workman's wife is the greatest Chancellor of the Exchequer that ever lived, is borne out by these comparative figures on the soldier's ration. She is expected to keep her man, and her children, on less than half the money in actual value that she got in 1905, with all the horrible conditions associated with 1905 that I described the other day. I want to specially emphasise these tables, because I have had so much criticism as a Union official because my men won't work overtime, that they have reduced output, and I want to ask your Court to realise the impossibility of men doing hard, gruelling work without you give them the necessary energy value in their foodstuff, and the amount and quantity of foodstuff in order to keep that physical energy going. I say the employers have been asking us—because it is they who raise the prices, not us—to keep up output, restore the nation, rebuild Europe, rebuild this country, and replace all the ravages of war, and they refuse to pay the money to buy the food to provide the fuel to keep the physical engine going to do what they want. It is an impossible position.

Another point I want to put very strongly to your Court is this: Is there an employer in the country who himself expects to do his Director business or to look after his business on less than I have indicated? And I am going to make this claim boldly: that the docker who is distributing goods is contributing as much to the national well-being as the capitalist who is manipulating money or handling shares, or anything of that character. He is performing a real service—a real service to the State when he is handling these goods—but they say he is unskilled. I have seen the bricklayer

building the houses and I have seen the docker stowing the ship, and I am an impartial person because I have done neither, but I have watched both, and with all the variety of classes of goods that have to go into a ship, and it has to sail on very uncertain seas, with the men's lives depending on their stowing it correctly—there is as great skill in the hold of a ship as in any other industry that I know; and therefore I feel particularly strongly, even, if I may use the term, on the animal basis. I have been a driver of horses, and I have learned, my Lord, that there are two ways of getting a horse to go: one is to feed him, stable him, clean him, harness him well and comfortably, and you do not need a whip; the other is to starve him and use a whip. I am pleading for the first method as the best method for carrying on the industry of this country.

I come now to my next table—(*handed in)—which is referred to as C/7, and this table is an estimate, a very moderate estimate I think, of what a family of five can just be maintained in decency on at the present cost. I have not allowed so much for food as the soldier's ration in arriving at this table; and I may say that when our Conference was held to decide on our application, we had a tremendous demand to ask for the £1 a day. I then resisted it. I resisted it in conference on the ground of the existing wages and the very big jump; and I advised the men on the 16s. This Inquiry has been forced upon us, and I now regret that decision. I regret it most sincerely. If I had to advise the men now instead of then on this investigation I should have unhesitatingly supported them in the £1 a day demand. I allow just four meals a day at 9d. a meal—that is very low, my Lord—to the man; that is just a guinea a week; 9d. a meal, very very low for a hard manual worker: and I am going to ask every member of your Court whether one of them can live down to that level. The woman, who has all the duties of maternity upon her, and the anxiety, I allow just 6d. a meal. The children, with milk at 1s. a quart, I just allow 6d. per meal, and only three meals a day. Rent, rates, and taxes, I suggest an average at least of 10s. per week. In arriving at that figure, again I have under-estimated, because whatever your Court decides will operate for some time to come. Since that figure was put down, my attention has been called to a statement by Dr. Addison to a deputation of the Birkenhead Housing Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: When was that made, and where?

Mr. BEVIN: I am prepared to call Councillor Eagle, the Chairman of the Housing Committee, to substantiate this.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you give me the date?

Mr. BEVIN: It was just about the period of the Railway strike. I will hand the date in to you later.

The CHAIRMAN: Whom did he speak to?

Mr. BEVIN: Councillor Eagle, and it was on January 8, 1920. They were discussing with Dr. Addison the amount of rent that should be paid for new houses to be built in the Birkenhead district; and the figure quoted to the deputation was 10s. per week for these new houses, exclusive of rates—exclusive of rates. Having in mind the termination or alteration of the Rent Restriction Act, the attention of Dr. Addison was called to the effect that would have upon the other property,

* See Appendix No. 12.

* See Appendix No. 13.

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and also the effect it would have upon the workmen of the district whose wages were such as I have indicated during my speech. Dr. Addison's reply was: Well, we cannot do any better; your only remedy is to go to your Trade Union and increase your wages—a perfectly legitimate answer, probably. I am not complaining.

The CHAIRMAN: No doubt, but what I am anxious to get hold of is this: Did Dr. Addison admit that the figure of 10s. was not unreasonable?

Mr. BEVIN: Dr. Addison's reply was that that was the decision of the Ministry of Health. As to whether he would argue that their decision was reasonable, I suppose he would. It would be the duty of a Minister to argue that any decision was reasonable that he has come to, would it not, my Lord?

The CHAIRMAN: What the Court wants to get at is, what is the real fact of this according to the estimate of the men who ought to know. What is the real fact about it? Can the working classes expect to have rents, rates, and taxes for £26 a year?

Mr. BEVIN: The point I was trying to make was this, that while it may be urged at the moment that a good many rents would be below 10s. a week, I am contending that, owing to this decision of the Ministry of Health to base all new property upon this basis of 10s., and then removing the protective part of the Rent Restriction Act, or a good portion of it, which I understand is to be removed, then my quotation of 10s. a week in this estimate is too low.

The CHAIRMAN: At all events you contend that that cannot be called anything but a moderate figure?

Mr. BEVIN: Quite.

The CHAIRMAN: The efforts made by the Government on the matter of housing must have these two elementary considerations; namely, first, what is a fair standard house for a decent working man and his family; second, what he has got to pay for it? Now, can we have no official from either side, or are we left to our own resources with regard to that important question. It must be, otherwise everybody is groping in the dark. A Government with a housing scheme must have two elementary considerations before it: first, what is a decent house for a decent man; second, what is a decent reasonable rate that he can be expected to pay; and if you, gentlemen, on either side of the Bar cannot help us on that, we shall not be satisfied till we get it.

Mr. BEVIN: I am going to make this suggestion to you as Chairman of this Court. I think it would have more weight if the Court requested a representative of the Ministry of Health to attend to give evidence on this very important point, rather than either of us, as partisans, asked him to attend. It is a very important point, and I would respectfully suggest that possibly the better way to elucidate that point is for the Court itself to ask the Ministry of Health to send a representative.

The CHAIRMAN: I think that is a reasonable request. My words, no doubt, have been taken down by the reporters. They may reach the public Press, but if we have no response from any

responsible Department we should take ways and means of communicating the desire of the Court in the two directions that I have just named.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you, my Lord. I have allowed £1 5s. per week for clothing five people, and it has been suggested that that is a high figure, but here again the difficulty associated with the workman's life is that the cheapest kind of clothing has gone up the most, and another difficulty is that the life of the article has gone down proportionately. This question of clothing is a very difficult matter now. We appear to be in a state of high prices and bad quality. I estimate that the life of boots, the heavy class of workman's boots, has gone down 33 per cent., where a man would get a strong boot to last several months they will now hardly stand repair, and the same thing applies to children's boots. I have had hundreds of letters in asking me to specially call attention to the difficulty of keeping the children decently clothed and warmly clothed. Wool for knitting has gone up enormously, and cotton, as you will know from the Press, has gone up hundreds per cent., and allowing for the most economical housewife, who uses her needle and is careful, I could not work out the sum capable of keeping them in decency under the figure I have named. Then there is Insurance, Trade Union contributions, Friendly Societies, Health Insurances, and Medical fees, etc. The Board of Trade does not take this into account at all. It has all gone up. Doctors are asking for more money like everybody else, and the result is that, if the new Insurance Act goes through, it is proposed to increase contributions. Unions, like our own, all had to increase contributions; and the moderate sum of 4s. a week I have allowed is indeed moderate. Then there is gas, coal, and light; taking the summer with the winter, I do not think it is possible to keep themselves warm and the house lit under 5s. per week. It is very, very low. Then I have allowed for what I think we are entitled to—some limited luxuries. It has been most painful to me to be at the Arbitration Board and hear employers, to whom a guinea seat at the opera is nothing, talking about our people going to the pictures. It has been appalling to me that that is their conception of our life, and their outlook upon it is that it is a sin almost for our people to have pleasure of any kind; that we ought to be content with just living and dying. I have just allowed 10s. per week for limited luxuries such as tobacco, literature, recreation of different kinds, and a picture show if you like. It is very, very limited, and that works out at £6 per week.

The CHAIRMAN: For a family of five persons?

Mr. BEVIN: For a family of five, and I am going to challenge Counsel, when he speaks presently, to prove that the workman can live on less, and live as a decent citizen; and if he cannot, then I say his case has gone to the ground, and his opposition goes by the board, and there is only one test. It is wrong to ask others to do what we are not prepared to do ourselves; and if this country is in a state of bankruptcy, if the Foreign Exchange is against us, if it is wrong for the workmen to have these wages, then it is wrong for the employers who have control to live at a higher standard during these strenuous times than they are asking the workmen to live upon; because they have had all the advantages of education, and know what all these exchanges mean, and know what all the finances mean, which has

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been denied to our side; and if they are not living at this standard, then I say they have no right to deny it to others who, after all, are flesh and blood like themselves, with the same human aspirations, and the same human desires. During the recent fight of the Insurance people we had a very powerful Press in London supporting a £3 minimum for the Pearl Insurance agents, and in this table C. 8—(*handed in)—I have submitted two or three family budgets. One is taken from the London "Evening News." I mention this particularly because one of the largest shareholders in this particular concern is one of the greatest employers of labour in the shipping industry: I refer to Sir John Ellerman, and in view of his association with what is known as the Northcliffe Press, I was rather surprised that our 16s. a day was opposed. But in the first Budget it shows a family trying to live on £2 9s. 9d.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that a family of three?

Mr. BEVIN: I suggest a family of three trying to live; and I asked myself the question as I saw that in the paper whether our boasted civilisation, after all, was worth preserving when a man and woman and child were trying to struggle year in, year out, no pleasures, no hope in life, no break from it. Then I turned to a family of five—and I took this from the "Daily Herald" on January 23rd, 1920, a shop assistant's budget, trying again to live on £2 10s.—now, during the past week, the Port of London Authority in compensation cases have stated that the wages of some of the London dockers (or at least the men injured) are less than the figures I have quoted here, owing to the casual nature of their employment, and a solicitor to our Union will be prepared to come into the box to prove my statement before the case is over—

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps that is not quite *prima facie* evidence.

Mr. BEVIN: I have it in writing from him.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not on a level with the rest of your argument because you know in those cases it has to be proved how much the man has earned in the past. That does not prove anything at all illustrative of what the daily wage should be. A man may have been a shirker of work, he may have been sick, and there may have been many circumstances which would affect the amount he had earned.

Mr. BEVIN: It was rather because there was an expression of opinion in this letter as to what this class earns that I called attention to it. I do not press it, my Lord. Taking a rather higher standard, in the Third Table attached to C8, that shows a comparison between the cost to the man in 1914 and the cost now.

The CHAIRMAN: What part of the country does that man come from?

Mr. BEVIN: This is Warrington, on the Manchester Ship Canal.

The CHAIRMAN: This is very good, because this is the case of a husband, wife and seven children.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes; he is an asset to the State, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: It is shown that it rose from an expenditure of £2 11s. in 1914 to £7 19s. 9d. in 1919 for the identical articles.

Mr. BEVIN: His income had increased 144.44 per cent., but his expenditure had increased 212 per cent. There is another point brought out in those budgets (and I have not worried the Court with a long list of family budgets), that is the amount of food now eaten by the family, which rather illustrates the point I made on the soldier's ration table. When you examine these tables at your leisure, you will know that in many of the foods which the people ate before the war and now, owing probably to shortage, probably to rationing, and various causes, and their cost, the amount consumed, for the money, is considerably less. The Ministry of Labour made a great point of that during the war, and probably they were right, at a period when the submarine menace was at such a height, and they were appealing to us all to reduce consumption in order to have sufficient to go round—they were probably right in saying that the cost of the home was slightly down, due to this arrangement; but now, at the end of the war—at least we hope it is—you are now appealing to the men to give the biggest output; therefore, if you are still, by sheer force of cost, keeping down the consumption, again I repeat you cannot get the output; it is impossible—the physical energy must be kept up. But there is another depressing influence that has developed recently. When the war ended, the Government decided upon an unemployment donation. That was applied to dockers as well as to other people. There were special arrangements made for dockers, and I did not hear of any abuse anywhere. The numbers went up and down, according to the provision of employment; but it was some income, while it was on, to meet the casual periods. The sudden cessation of that has thrown them right back on purely the wage, and that is a very important point, during the last three months. The stoppage of that has been, in fact, if you compare 1918, when the armistice was signed, and now, really a reduction, because in the case of many of the men during the period when the trade was slack they were able to get some income, but the stoppage of that income has also depressed their standard through those days they were idle, and they are dependent entirely on the wages. I am not arguing the wisdom or policy of stopping it, I am only pointing out its effect.

In arguing these wage questions, it is always assumed that the automatic placing of these wages on to cost increases prices. I held at the beginning that I think we could show the ability to pay without adding to the cost to the community other than the employers; but in considering your decision I want you to remember, my Lord, that the Labour movement has been driven back on to wages as the only means, all through the war. In the early days of the war, when Mr. Asquith was Prime Minister, I have not the exact date, but I know it was early in 1915 (it can be got from the Trade Union Congress) an appeal was made for the control of prices then, and I think it was Mr. Robert Smillie who urged that on our side we would try to keep down the demand for wages if the State would undertake the responsibility of keeping down prices by some means or other, on principle; but all statesmen have told us the only means of adjusting this difficulty is by wages—*increase your wages.* You will remember the famous "wait till June" statement. We have waited till June, and several Junes since, and we are still in the same position. It is true, and I

* See Appendix No. 14.

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put it for what it is worth, that had the State retained in its hands all the national services created during the war, there would have been some argument as to why we should use those resources to keep down the cost of living; but I desire to remind you that immediately the guns ceased to roar, the high policy of State was to immediately, as quickly and as rapidly as possible, give back to the genus which is now causing this advance *ad lib.* power to manipulate prices, to handle their own shipping, to close national factories, to take away every source of food control and competition in order that they may have free play. The only persons who are still controlled by economic power are us, the workpeople, who have to go through all the paraphernalia of arbitration, of Courts of Inquiry, or strikes, or protracted negotiations, to meet any change that takes place; while the gentlemen on the other side can have a meeting in London, pass a resolution, and automatically pass it on to the community. It is an unequal position, an absolutely unequal position, that while the workpeople have to negotiate, workpeople have to argue, and workpeople are expected to save, there is no element of control (and I speak with knowledge as a member of the Profiteering Committee from all the investigations we have gone through) in any shape or form upon the gentlemen who are opposing the 16s. grant at the present moment.

Again, the Labour Gazette has not allowed in a single instance for that cultural development I referred to. They have not allowed for the replacing of domestic articles; the 500, 600, and 700 per cent. advance in many cases, and even 900 per cent., is an awful blow. All kinds of prices have gone on to the ordinary little commodities of the house. If a child breaks a cup now in a house it is a tragedy—in the ordinary little domestic things of the house breakages, as I say, are tragedies. But there is another worse feature from the moral point of view that affects the workman's life; we have the ever-rising, ever-growing generations, and the sexes of the young have to be separated. You go to buy the furniture, and it is a physical impossibility, my Lord, on the wages the men are receiving, to even part the sexes in their growing stages at the present moment, owing to the tremendous cost of the commodities that are required. It is becoming quite a serious matter in the ordinary growing families of the working classes.

The only opposition I have ever heard indicated was on the question of output, which we will deal with later. It cannot be profits, because I shall be able to show quite easily that they can afford to pay without passing a penny on to the great people of this country. It is no longer foreign competition. The Port of London cannot quote Hamburg now; the Peace Treaty has seen to that; Rotterdam is not a serious factor, as it possibly was before the war, because the consumption through the Continent is considerably reduced; and, besides, I am quite sure that the feeling developed during the war ought to be a safeguard against sending British ships to Rotterdam to let down this country who made the sacrifices—at least, we were told so. The great dominant factor in competition with regard to shipping at the moment is the United States of America. Many of the people who are opposing us run their ships to New York, and there they have agreed to 80 cents per hour, payable on the half-day exactly the same as we have it in this country, and the 44-hour week in the same manner almost. It is 2s. 4d. an hour for the docker in New York.

The CHAIRMAN: I thought you said 1s. 6d.?

Mr. BEVIN: I said 80 cents, and one dollar 20 cents overtime. The same companies are parties to that agreement. Having regard to the circumstances that have arisen in the cost of living or the standard of living that we are entitled to, I do not think we ought to be behind America as working people. We are asking 2s. an hour as against the 3s. 4d. already agreed to in New York, so we are still at a greater disadvantage. Then if you have regard to the value of the dollar just now it at least gives the New York docker 100 per cent. higher than we are asking for the Liverpool docker. We will hand in the agreement which is marked C9. This is reprinted from "The Longshoreman," the journal of the American docker. (**Document handed in marked C9.*) There has been only one other suggestion as a ground of opposition, and that is the effect that these wages will have on some other class of workman. I am meeting this, my Lord, in every association I deal with, and I want to say through you to the British public that if this is the policy of the employers conciliation is impossible. I go to an association to-day, and I put up a case on its merits, as I hope I am trying to do here. It does not matter how much I prove the case, or how reasonable my claim is, they say: "We must consult our Napoleon or someone else," and they go back to the Engineering Employers' Federation, or the Federation of British Industries, and then they come back and say, "We agree that your claim is made out, but we cannot give it because some other Federation will be upset which wants to continue to pay low wages." I have met it in trade after trade, and it was hinted at if not declared in our negotiations with the employers here. If that is to be the policy of the employers, that there is consolidated capital which prevents consideration of this on its merits, I can only say that, much as everybody would regret it, it must bring its inevitable consequences to this country, of the working classes lining up in exactly the same way to deal with all their questions in mass form by exactly the same method. I do not think it wise, in the interests of the country, to adopt it, and therefore I hope that that is not the reason, because, as I say, on the ability to pay on the cost, on the earnings of the ship, on the standard of life, and on no other grounds have I been able to discern any valid reason at all in the preliminary negotiations as to why this demand has been refused. Therefore, I contend, under this heading of the justification to pay I have shown the progress in the cost of living, the depression in the value of money; I have shown the energy value necessary as tested by a soldier's rations and the cost thereof, if you want output; I have indicated that we are making a definite claim for status, and an ability to develop our knowledge and leisure, and the wherewithal to do it; I have tried to show by the minimum table I have submitted that our claim will still leave us with a family of five below the poverty line at the moment: and if you take the average wages from your Liverpool return before the war, and test it by the Trades Boards then in operation, which were set up by Parliament in your own day, I believe, my Lord, as a Member of the House, which had powers delegated to them to prevent sweating, the figures on the average will show that the dockers as a class with few exceptions throughout the country came within the term "sweated labour" far below the poverty line even at 1914. That being so, we are making a definite claim to lift our people up, whatever the figures are. I have no axe to grind nor

* See Appendix No. 15.

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have my colleagues; I have nothing to gain; there will be no money going into our pockets, but there will be joy if we can see the shoeless children obliterated from our streets, and see the anxieties and cares of the women reduced, and see joy brought into their homes. I challenge the other side to show on the standard of life that there was no justification for our claim, to show that our claim is not justified on our rights as citizens; and I shall proceed to show that it is not their inability to pay what we have demanded without passing it on to the public that is the real reason.

The next point I propose to deal with is the ability to pay.

The CHAIRMAN: This is a distinctly separate part of your argument, is it not, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Some of us are hoping that that part of it will not be protracted, because we have grave doubts as to whether you are strengthening your case by entering upon it, but that may be for you to consider, and we may have some pointed questions to put to your opponent on that subject. Therefore it may be convenient to you and to the others if we rise now.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord and Gentlemen,—It is now my duty to try and show that the employers who use the ports, who are, in fact, the real employers of the men we represent, have the ability to pay without further taxing the cost to the people. I want first of all in a table which I will call D1 to submit what is only, I am afraid, an estimate of the possible cost. (**Table D1 was handed in.*) I have taken two periods, and, as I say, it is rather difficult to get accurate figures. I have not had any opportunity of getting any returns from the employers, and I am very doubtful as to whether they could be got in actual detail, of the number of days worked per week on the average, and the amount of money paid. But from the figures I was able to get I found the approximate imports for the year ending July, 1919, were 32,000,000 tons. The Board of Trade give their returns valued in money, so that it has been very difficult for me to get at the tonnage. Whether the Board of Trade might help us with more accurate figures will be a matter for your Court. I have eliminated from the exports coal, because I have indicated that is a matter of separate negotiation. I have estimated the time of this type of man within this claim as 75 per cent. of his time on imports and 25 per cent. of his time on exports, taking the men in bulk. During the period I have named I estimate that there were 110,000 men engaged on an average of five days per week. That does not mean that every docker gets five days a week; it is taking the men who are employed very regularly, partially regularly, and irregularly, and having regard to the period I have estimated five days per week. If you challenge me to prove that figure to a fine point I am doubtful whether I could, and I have only been able to arrive at it with very limited information. So if you take 40,000,000 tons for that year, and assume the advance to be paid over and above that 40,000,000 tons, and assume that the shipowners had to bear the total cost, which I estimate again on the average between the highest men and the lowest, it is estimated it would cost 2s. 1½d. per ton, or £4,290,000 per annum. I desire to impress on you that in the figures I have given you, taking

the Port of London 4s. 4d. per day, it does not mean that every man in London gets 4s. 4d. per day advance—I made that clear, I think, this morning—but spreading the average over the exports and imports of the whole country and assuming the shipowner had to pay it, it is estimated that it would cost 2s. 1½d. per ton, or £4,290,000 per annum. That is assuming the imports and exports were limited to the period I have named. But it may be argued that these goods are handled two or three or four times; but they are only handled by the same number of men. Therefore it is merely a matter of dividing the cost between two or three people. Assuming the goods were handled by two people, and the charge was divided between the two, it would mean that each, the merchant and the shipowner, would pay just over 1s. 1d. per ton, but if it had to be divided between three, each would pay 8½d. per ton. If you reduce that down to a smaller quantity, and divide it into hundred-weights, you will notice that on a hundred-weight of goods, if the shipowner paid, it would be 1½d. per hundred-weight; if it is divided between two it is ¾d. per hundred-weight. Now, Sir, a hundred-weight being 112 lbs., it is rather difficult to say how that ¾d. that each person has to pay to is to be added on in a fractional point to the actual consumer unless, as has so often happened in the past, regardless of the profits that have been made, they take advantage of every increase to use the monopoly, as I shall endeavour to show presently, to add on ½d. per lb. for what actually costs ¼d. per hundred-weight. But if you turn to the second leaf of this table I have given an estimate of imports and exports for the current year. Again, it can only be an estimate. I estimate that during this year the number of men that will be employed on an average five days per week will be 125,000 men. If the shipowners had to pay the total cost, which I estimate on an average to be 3s. a day, to give this advance for the 260 working days, it would cost £4,875,000. I have seen in the Press that this is a £10,000,000 claim. I did not know it until I saw it there. But if the shipowners paid the total cost it would be approximately 1s. 9d. per ton, or 1½d. per hundred-weight. If it is divided between the two, each would pay just under 10½d. per ton, or just over ½d. per hundred-weight. If the goods were handled three times, and the cost was divided between three, each would pay less than ½d. per hundred-weight. But, Sir, we are told that the foreigner pays all the costs on the export, so that actually the total amount to be paid by the British consumer is still less. If the theory now held in relation to coal is correct—taking that as an illustration—and the export cost is paid by the foreigner, then the period of time that the men are engaged upon exports must be deducted out of the total wage bill, and the actual amount levied upon the British employer must be still less than I have indicated. So that reduced down into the terms of pounds or purchases which the consumer has to make, then in that case it is a very small amount. As a matter of fact you have probably noticed recently that when the Government increased the railway rates there was an inspired Press campaign to call the attention of the public to how small these increases in terms of purchase really were, because the Government Departments, I understand, realised that such an advance might make the excuse for further increasing the cost to the public. But my purpose in quoting the estimated cost—and if I am out by a million in the total wage bill it makes little difference to my argument, when it is examined in the light of the figures

* See Appendix No. 16.

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I have to produce—is to show their ability to pay. I quoted the other day the advances that had been levied since the war by the Port of London Authority, and I have had an opportunity of examining the results in working cost to revenue by that body. I will now hand up Table D 2.

(*Table D 2 was handed in.)

In Table D 2 it will be noticed that in nearly every dock in the Port of London, from the Port of London accounts, the proportion of cost to revenue has gone down. That is to say that the cost of labour and other charges to income, as based on the new charges, has gone down in 1919 as compared with 1914, with about one exception. In the London Dock the decrease of the cost to revenue is 10.74. In the St. Katharine's Dock on page 2 you will note that there has been an increase of cost to revenue over that period of 4.57. Then on page 3 you will see the figures of the Victoria Dock.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you explain that a little more fully, please? Take the Victoria Dock, as you are on it.

Mr. BEVIN: If you take the total right through in 1914 the revenue was £357,052, the wages amounted to £99,767, or 27.94 per cent. to revenue, and the amount of other expenditure was £128,703, or 36.05 per cent. to revenue.

The CHAIRMAN: What wages were those?

Mr. BEVIN: These were the 1914 wages.

The CHAIRMAN: But whose wages?

Mr. BEVIN: The whole wages involved as far as I can see. This is a summary taken as the result of four pages of figures. It shows the income, it shows the number of men employed, it shows the details of miscellaneous wages, including superintendence, general office, dock-master, lock gate-men, engineers, flooding plant, tugs, derricks, Customs attendance, overtime, clothing, etc. There is a huge list of them. Then there are details of the payment in lieu of compensation levy, and all the various items, and then at the end they show a summary, of which I have taken a copy to hand in. I will hand in the whole of the book so that you may examine it. It is called "Port of London Comparative Departmental Working Results, 1914-1919."

(†The book was handed in.)

The CHAIRMAN: This applies to the war period.

Mr. BEVIN: That is the period of 1914, the pre-war period, and 1919 the post-war period. It is a comparison of the two periods.

The CHAIRMAN: I was wondering whether the 1919 period contains all the materials that there were in 1914; for instance, there is the deferred maintenance charge.

Mr. BEVIN: I am coming to that. I think I shall show that the Port of London in addition to this provided for that.

The CHAIRMAN: So far, this is exclusive of consideration of the deferred maintenance.

Mr. BEVIN: If you would graciously permit I would rather quote the figures in the other way, giving you a summary.

The CHAIRMAN: Take the way which is most convenient to you.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you, my Lord. In the Victoria Dock it shows a decrease of cost to revenue of 4.91 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: Pray forgive me, but we are on the wages topic, and I read in this table that in 1919 there was an increase in wages equal to 31 per cent.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite, my Lord, but the cause of this Court of Inquiry is to show that we are going to add by this advance a huge burden upon the population of London. That is Lord Devonport's theory. I have got to show, first, that the 44-hour week has not caused any increase, and I hope to show before I have finished that with the growing volume of trade in the Port of London the theory held by Lord Devonport is not correct. I do not deny that there have been advances of wages.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not merely that there have been advances of wages, but it is a question of comparing the advance in percentage. Have not the wages increased from 27.94 per cent. in 1914 to 31.89 per cent. in 1919?

Mr. BEVIN: Quite.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a total increase in these five years of 3.95 per cent., that is almost 4 per cent. of wages to revenue. Is not that so?

Mr. BEVIN: My point is this. If you take the first two columns the revenue has gone up 100 per cent. The revenue in 1914 was £357,052 at the Victoria Dock, and in 1919 the revenue was £672,003. That is nearly 100 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: It does not matter as to the amount of revenue; the point is that to earn that revenue they had, of course, to pay greater wages. The point that I thought you wanted to make was that the percentage of wages to the revenue derived from goods handled has fallen, but that is not true.

Mr. BEVIN: No, I beg your pardon, I did not say that. What I said was that the total cost in that summary is less to revenue than it was in 1914.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite true, the total cost, but if you confine yourself to wages—it may be improper to do so, but I want to get it quite clear—where the other expenditure has gone down very much relatively to the goods handled the wages have gone up considerably.

Mr. BEVIN: I quite agree, but in spite of the wages going up the cost to the revenue has gone down. That is the whole burden of my theory, that it is possible to decrease cost and increase wages.

The CHAIRMAN: Your point I understand is this, that you may have a certain tonnage. We should assume the tonnage to remain the same in order to make the point clear and follow your argument. What you say is, assume the tonnage to be, say, half a million tons in both years, although you have, relatively to the tonnage handled, increased the wages by 4 per cent., you have by other appliances and better facilities at the port, etc., a saving which surpasses that, and, therefore, although you have an apparent increase in the wage bill to foot, you have upon the whole handling of goods at the port a decrease in the total expenditure. Is that your point?

* See Appendix No. 17.

† Not printed.

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Mr. BEVIN: Quite. The same thing applies to the whole of these totals with the exception, I believe, of the St. Katharine's Dock. But I want to call your attention at this juncture to another point. The period of 1919 was a period of acute congestion, a period when goods had to be handled more frequently to make room than in 1914, so that assuming you return to the normal transit conditions of 1914, with the less necessary handling in a dock owing to less congestion, then the proportion of cost to revenue goes down proportionately still. I hope I have made that point clear.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. If you are right that the labour bill in a congested port such as we have had experience of is necessarily higher than in a port which has not that congestion, and which has the proper facilities for immediate handling of the goods, the conclusion seems inevitable. That is your argument.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite. I have quoted the Port of London, but I want to remind you that it may be possible for a good many dock authorities to argue that they could not afford to pay this increase of wages where they engage labour direct without adding to their dock dues or charges. That is perfectly true. Nearly all dock authorities are under statutory limitations, and the basis of income or expenditure by a dock authority as such is not the final point of judgment as to whether the industry which uses that dock can afford to pay without passing it on ultimately to the public. In the Press and in a good many discussions with employers the theory has been held that a good deal of congestion has existed that might have been avoided, and it is generally thought that the easiest way is to blame labour. I want now to call the Court's attention to the fact that labour has never been given any real authority or responsibility in the governance of any of these undertakings.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, you will forgive me for saying that that point had occurred to me under one of the later heads of the reference with regard to conditions. I think it is quite relevant as you are putting it, and I am not blaming you; I think you are entitled to deal with it; but that question of some kind of joint representation of labour on the dock authority—is that what you are after?

Mr. BEVIN: Quite.

The CHAIRMAN: That may bear most seriously upon the very grave problems we shall afterwards consider of casual labour, but it may also bear, as you say, on this question of the proper incidence of a wage staff, which is what you are upon now. We shall all be glad to hear you about it. Your argument is in favour of some, and, if possible, more effective co-operation of labour representation with regard to the position they hold.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so. I think it would be interesting at this stage if I handed in statements showing the representation that exists upon the Port of London Authority, the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board, the Clyde, and the Manchester Ship Canal. (**Tables D3, D4, D5, and D6 were handed in.*) I have selected those because there is a variety of representation, but the point I want to make here is that all the responsibility for the government of the dock has been in the hands of those who complain very often about the conduct of our people. When our people leave the stand in

the morning to go to work it is no longer under Union control; the Union has nothing further to say; the whole question of supervision and discipline passes to a large extent out of its hands. I am not an advocate of a state of society where no discipline exists, but if there is indiscipline at a dock I want you to bear in mind the description of the struggle of the dock labourer that I gave on Tuesday, and the fact that he has organised and obtained power and greater control over his own existence in the last few years, and yet you have still got the same old management with the same old outlook that you had in the bad old days. You have not fitted in your management with the new conditions as a result of the men growing in power, and with the changed conditions. The Port of London, if I may mention it, was brought into existence, as I understand, largely as a result of a resolution by a member of your Court at the present moment, Mr. Tillett, who first took initiative at the London County Council to get a Committee set up to inquire into this thing, and it largely resulted in saving the nearly bankrupt concerns from abject bankruptcy. To bring about a unified control of the whole Port of London labour was given just two representatives.

The CHAIRMAN: Where are they mentioned?

Mr. BEVIN: They are Alderman Devenay and Mr. Gosling, who is sitting on your right.

The CHAIRMAN: The Board of Trade appointed Mr. Gosling as a representative of labour. Is not that so?

Mr. BEVIN: You will find under the heading of Board of Trade "H. Gosling," and under the heading London County Council, "Alderman William Devenay." In both of these cases they were not appointed from the organisation of labour, which they directly represented, but as you see they are appointed through a third channel. I want to lay stress on this point rather, because I feel that if we are to take a real step forward under this heading the proper people to appoint these representatives are the Unions to which they belong, so that labour will be directly represented as labour, and you will have the great human factor in an undertaking. If you go through every other interest on all those dock undertakings you will find the mercenary, the material, the sordid interest, and every form of material interest strongly entrenched upon those bodies, but labour, the great predominating factor, with only two representatives. In Liverpool there are none at all, and on the Clyde none at all. Manchester, I believe, has one appointed through the Corporation; it may be more, but it depends on the luck of the vote of the Corporation on the Manchester Ship Canal Board. I raise this because it is very vital on this question. On the point as to the cost that labour involves, this question of management comes in. Before the Coal Commission Lord Devonport was questioned upon this point. I am sorry I have not the page; that also, if I had thought you required pages and references in the whole of this thing, I would have brought. I came across it at the time and re-quoted it; but I can get a copy of the whole of the Commission's Report of the evidence in all probability, giving Lord Devonport's evidence before the Coal Commission. He was asked with regard to this representation, and he said: "I should not be there on a Board with half the members appointed by the Transport Workers, and I should not be a participator in

* See Appendices Nos. 18, 19, 20, and 21.

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that sort of management." In reply to a further question he said this, which indicates the spirit behind all this opposition: "While labour representation has not been detrimental to us, yet on the whole they appear to be looking out for themselves and the interests they represent." This, to me, is a serious matter. I am glad to have found a super-man who can abstract himself from his 280,000 shares in Kearley and Tonge and the International Tea Stores, and all that that means in money and in goods going to those firms passing through these ports—who can abstract himself from any of those influences and look after the interests of the great public, while we who have not a penny investment in the world, nothing but an investment in the well-being of the great human element which we represent, are described as looking out in the main for ourselves and for our interests. I leave it at that. Again, if there has been cost added to the public in the past through congestion, if labour were on such bodies it would not make such a confession of failure; we would use every resource at our disposal to bring the whole dock equipment up to date. It has been argued that these public services should make industry pay. In my judgment industry must pay for their public services: it must operate the other way; and if they want efficient services they must be prepared to pay for them. But they use statutory powers and limitations, and all the great interests upon one of these Bills going through the house, use the whole weight of their organisation to limit their charges and their opportunities, and hedge them round with all the protection of all the vested interests in their areas—some of us know what these private Bills running the gauntlet of the House of Commons mean, and your Lordship undoubtedly does, and the lobbying and the interests which are involved—so that industry itself very often shall escape its due obligation on the one hand, or on the other hand to protect vested interests in such a manner as prevents the proper development of the concern itself. Therefore, we contend that industry must pay for these public services and not expect the public services to pay and make up for the delinquencies of industry.

The CHAIRMAN: Excuse me, Mr. Bevin, but on this point of representation I understand your point to be twofold: in the first place, that the indirect, and, if I may say so, admirable representation of Mr. Gosling and Alderman Devenay should be obliterated in favour of a system of direct representation of labour instead of indirect.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Secondly, your proposition is that labour should have a larger representation than a mere two in a body of I do not know how many.

Sir JOSEPH BROODBANK: Thirty.

Mr. BEVIN: I think, at least, it should be equal.

The CHAIRMAN: Do not say that, because it takes away from the cogency of your argument.

Mr. BEVIN: Shall we make it predominant?

The CHAIRMAN: These are your propositions: that there should be direct representation, at least, equal to all the other interests combined.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so. Another difficulty associated with it, if I may pass to another point, is one which adds a considerable cost—

The CHAIRMAN: I am asked by one of my colleagues to put this question to you; it is quite on the spot which we are on: One cannot look over the list of the Port of London Authority without seeing that there is a very considerable representation of public bodies, as, for instance, the Board of Trade itself, the Board of Admiralty, the Corporation of London, and the London County Council. When you say "at least equal to all the other elements," do you say that Labour should have representation which should, as it were, be equal to all the trading elements and all the national elements combined?

Mr. BEVIN: Is it not necessary before I answer that to examine how these appointments are made? If the State, say, through the House of Commons, openly and publicly are going to appoint people to represent the State who would in fact under those conditions represent the aspirations and thought of the day from time to time, then I say that I would be content with one-third, but if it merely means that it is not the Board of Trade in fact, but is merely a convenient method of securing representation of interests which would not otherwise be represented—in other words, if it is camouflage—that is a policy to which I object; and now I can understand why at the time that was safeguarded: the London County Council was given two representatives conditionally upon one of them being Labour, and the Board of Trade were given two conditionally upon one of them being Labour. I want Labour to be there as Labour.

The CHAIRMAN: I know that.

Mr. BEVIN: And if the public is to be represented through the Government of the day, or by some machinery which expresses the public outlook, then, of course, that is a point to be considered. That expresses my view.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, you have made the point quite clear.

Mr. BEVIN: Another thing (if I may pass from the point of representation to the next point) which adds very considerably to the cost of transport, is the very stubborn resistance of the merchant class. I am sure that everyone who knows the docks of this country will agree that even in many instances if you can show a reduced cost, if it interferes with a custom, a tradition, or a practice of a given firm or industry, they will not adopt the new method or the changed place of destination. In London, again, a lot of its difficulties, I understand, were due to the old competition between the docks. The result is, that there is a good deal of overlapping in destination of goods between one dock and another which is a relic of the old competition days, and even the Port of London Authority has found it difficult to induce merchants to change their old practices even when it has been beneficial. It is true also of nearly every other class of dock in the country. Let me give you a striking illustration: Supposing two grain ships came into a Bristol Channel port, and one was loaded with clean Canadian wheat, fairly healthy to work, which would not injure the men, and the other was a Persian cargo and you probably know the methods of storage in Eastern countries; it is filled with dust and

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sand and asphyxiating gases, it develops phthisis in the men and develops asthma—if those two cargoes were in the port, owing to the methods of barter and sale of the merchants, the elevator would be put into the clean cargo and the human into the dirty. That looks like an upside-down world to me. It is because if the elevator went into the dirty it would waste some of the dust and so reduce the value of the wheat. That is in actual practice, and when the Eastern clime is open again you will find it again. I want the order reversed, my Lord. The human is mere to me than the dirt from the Persian desert, or from the Persian areas. I do not want our men poisoned and sent to an early grave because of some stupid old method which the merchants had years and years ago. Modern distribution ought to change all that. Again, take another illustration: Anyone who has seen wool brought into London comes to the conclusion that the nearest place to the wool area is Hull, and under an ordinary distribution or an organised or scientific distribution one would have imagined that Hull would have become to Yorkshire what Liverpool and Manchester have become to Lancashire for cotton. But you have all this congestion in London because of a tradition centuries old, and then we are told that Labour ought to apply itself to every condition which arises. Take a further illustration: I find in one Railway Company that there were 18 million railway rates, most of them, or at least over 11 millions of them, being individual rates to individual traders, causing the running of goods all over the country to satisfy the old methods of competition. We suggest that you can save millions of money in the transport of this country if you work out a system of per ton per mile and compel the traders by such economic influence to use the port most suitable to serve the population of that area in the main. I could go on for hours with the waste which I have seen during the war, and the waste I have seen in transport; but in spite of all this wasting and muddle and no representation I think I can show that the principal users of docks can afford to pay. Let me say, before I submit these tables, that I am not here to discuss profiteering, and I am not here to discuss the morals, and whether it is right or wrong, but I am challenged, and in the Press day after day since this demand was put in we are accused of demanding these wages at the expense of our fellow workmen, and particularly of the lower middle class. I want to tell the lower middle class, the salaried man and the professional man, to look to the right source, and I believe the tables which I am about to submit rapidly will indicate whether this can be afforded or not. In the first place, in D7 I submit particulars of the rise in shipping shares.

(*Table D 7 was handed in.)

The CHAIRMAN: What period does that cover?

Mr. BEVIN: From 1909 to 1920, a fairly lengthy period. It only gives some selected ones, but the same story is told in practically the whole of the shipping world.

The CHAIRMAN: There is a difficulty which one naturally has, and which you will appreciate. Of course, what I want to do, and what we are asked to do as a tribunal, is to settle a minimum wage for the future under what one may assume to be normal conditions of industry. The difficulty about these tables is that from 1914 to 1920, you may say that the whole situation is abnormal

on account of the war. I may just indicate to you in a sentence further what I mean. In that period of (we shall assume from your argument) an abnormal rise in shares and abnormal profits, what you would characterise as profiteering has taken place, that is to say, really taking advantage of the nation in its agony and putting excessive profits, which you call profiteering, to the account of the companies and into the pockets of the shareholders. For that abnormal period, please consider there may be a very serious duty resting upon the State to get at that, and if they fail once to get at it, to try again, and still to get at it in order to recoup the body of the nation for the money which is improperly taken, if your argument be correct. But I am quite sure (and I suggested this to you before) that it is not the desire of the men to be sharers in what, according to your argument, would be plunder which ought to be disgorged to the nation. It is a business for politicians and for a wary and courageous Chancellor of the Exchequer to see that the nation is recouped as against those transactions. But what we are going to do with your assistance is to fix a rate applicable to the normal trade for the future. Therefore, we do not disallow the evidence at all, and we shall consider all of it when you come to present it, but, at present, please consider that what we are wanting is light as to the future when normal conditions will return, and which will, if possible, produce a term of goodwill and proper conditions and proper emoluments. I will not pursue it further; you see what is in my mind; but I am extremely anxious, and I know that you are with me in this—at least, I can assume that you are—that we should not be led into the position of having accepted as bearing upon an award of normal conditions for the future elements which make prejudice in the mind. As I said to you the other day, prejudice is the foe of fair judgment. With that observation will you pray proceed—that it is for the future we want help.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite so, and it is the future that I am looking to. I feel that I should not be doing my duty if I did not submit these tables and again appeal to that greater court and that greater public as to the justification of our claim, which will, I hope, make it impossible by the sheer weight of public opinion for your Court to give less than we have asked on the one hand; because I believe the great public, if it can see that it can be given without taxing these people, are willing to give it, and because I believe that if the facts are known the public will see that there is no justification for any saddling of further cost upon them; and it may produce the courageous Chancellor of the Exchequer.

There is another point which arises in connection with this. There is a great appeal for output, and I want to ask counsel for the other side as to how he would justify an appeal to workmen to give greater output when the results of that output merely enhance the profits and earn interest over inflated capital? I say quite frankly and publicly that I will not appeal for greater output merely to earn interest upon inflated capital.

The CHAIRMAN: Excuse my asking you this, but there must be a silver lining to this cloud?

Mr. BEVIN: Well, it is very dark now.

The CHAIRMAN: Let me suggest this to you. Assume that you make a strong case on its merits upon all the kinds of thing that I was referring to, and assume that the case is answered with all

* See Appendix No. 22.

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sense of responsibility by this Court, and assume that it is willingly accepted by both sides, I gathered from your observations that that has its reflex in the human nature of all engaged in the business, and that it will produce a sense of more reasonable conditions and a better output under better conditions.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite, if you keep up the value of the —

The CHAIRMAN: If fair conditions take the place of what you call unfair conditions, if reasonable wages take the place of what you call unreasonable wages, will there not be perhaps a sense of mind upon the part of all sharing in the labour in which there will be a spirit of goodwill and co-operation, where at present there is a grudging and scamping disposition, it may be? You have hopes in that direction, I know.

Mr. BEVIN: I have hopes, but it must operate both ways. If the wages are to stabilise industry, then it is no use to give with one hand and take away with the other. That is my point; and I want to call your attention to a table which I have before me purely as an illustration. I have a table which I want to submit as to the sale of ships, which is particularly important. I have taken them at random from the shipowners' own paper, "Syren and Shipping"—no, this is from "Fairplay" a very impartial paper. (*Statement handed in and marked D/8.) I have taken from their own journal a list of ships. A ship sold in July, 1918, for £130,000 was sold in July, 1919, for £160,000; a ship sold in 1909 for £14,000, was re-sold until it reaches £70,000 in July, 1919; and so on you go right down through the list. Now, what am I asked to do? I meet these people in local negotiations; I meet the fixed piece rates, and I see these inflated values run up; and in two or three years' time these figures will be quoted as if they were the actual cost of the construction of the ships, and you will be told that the Companies are not now earning interest, and therefore your wage bill must stop. This is a very important matter, because on the one hand you have an inflated value put on the vessel, which is the avenue of your employment, upon which you are asked to earn interest; and on the other hand you have in the share capital the continual giving of bonus shares, which do not belong to the shareholders morally, and cannot; they never put them in. I can understand money being used to develop the business; but to earn further interest it has got to come out of labour, because you cannot get something out of nothing. The whole fabric of society has got to be maintained on the creative work of the people, and we are expected to render these huge interests over and over again in all these various firms. Take the illustration of the Moor Line, associated for many years with the Runciman family. (†Statement handed in and marked D/8a.) In their prospectus they fix the market value of the ships at £2,400,000. The only real value of those ships to the community as per their age on the basis of their cost of production and depreciation, is £350,000 or £400,000. We are expected to earn interest, and they tell us that the industry is not paying, and then we are producing as they promised 20 per cent. on £2,400,000. I mention this because it is stated in the London Chamber of Commerce, and I saw the report. It is stated by the London Waterside Employers' Association, and I saw the report. I saw the inspired Press opposition to our claim immediately we met the employers. The whole Press immediately went to

work to show that it was the docker who was now going to add to the cost of the rest of the community, as they showed in the case of the miners and the railwaymen in their turn. To ask the community, that great middle class on the one hand to yield up to a few shareholders like these in the Moor Line, and, on the other hand, the workmen to yield up their labour to earn 20 per cent. on £2,400,000, which ought to be a capital, if we had honest business, of not more than £500,000 for all charges at the outside, is my difficulty. I say that if companies can be promoted and money obtained and that value paid for shipping, then my ½d. or 1d. a hundredweight can be paid on goods without passing it on to the rest of the people. I want to call attention to the time when our last rate was fixed; it was fixed in October, 1918; that is when the last war wage was granted. (*Statement handed in and marked D/9.) In December, 1918, the Government cost freight rate on the North Atlantic route was 42s. 6d. per ton, and in January, 1919, it was 93s. 4d. I ask cannot the shipowner pay us 2s. 1½d. per ton out of that difference of 50s. a ton without adding it on to the community?

The CHAIRMAN: Can you explain to me the variation in the figures? In 1917 the rate was 40s. a ton, in January, 1918, it is 82s. 6d. a ton, and in December, 1918, it is 42s. 6d.

Mr. BEVIN: In 1918 the submarine campaign was almost at its height, and in December, 1918, it had fallen off again; it was over. But immediately the ships were released from control—again I am not going to discuss high policy, but only to point out what happened—the people all round were left to the tender mercies of all this uncontrolled power to charge them at will immediately the war was over. During the war quite 96 per cent. under the terms of requisition was carried at Government controlled rates, but at present only actually Government boat cargoes or goods on order are carried in that way, which means that the bulk of stuff is open to be charged the highest rate.

The CHAIRMAN: When was shipping de-controlled?

Mr. BEVIN: It has been a gradual process. As the Government requirements and requisitions to carry their own cargoes have declined, so automatically shipping has been released proportionately, until now it is comparatively little.

The CHAIRMAN: Roughly speaking, it has been going on since the end of 1918, has it?

Mr. BEVIN: From the beginning of 1919 onwards. To turn to the South Wales side, I have taken the freights published by the "Western Mail"—again a paper which had no intention of publishing these things for me to use here to-day. (†A document was handed in and marked D/9a.) I have got the freights worked out between the highest figure and the lowest figure, the lowest figures in 1914 and the highest freight rates; and the months are opposite them in each case. You will note that the freights from those ports named in this Table D/9a average an increase of 846 per cent. over 1914. I suggest quite seriously that the South Wales shipowners or ships running to South Wales can afford to pay, even if it were a £10,000,000 advance as the newspapers say, without a single addition to the cost to the community of this country outside of themselves.

I also took an interesting chart from another

* See Appendix No. 25.

† See Appendix No. 26.

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publication not friendly to us, the "Syren and Shipping," which shows the fluctuation of the price of a steamer, and it indicates what the public must pay in order to pay the enormous dividends upon such an inflated capital outlay. Taking a steamer built in 1899 at £49,000, a similar steamer to-day would be worth £233,000 on the market value. The employers say, "We are having new ships built, and therefore it is costing us more to get out ships"; but when I look into shipbuilding, when I look into shipowning, when I look into iron and steel, I find it is all the same, people charging themselves over and over again, and the public paying interest on high charges everywhere. In this connection will you note in the balance-sheets of companies the enormous amount that is being set to reserve? This happy knack of setting to reserve avoids super-tax being paid, so they not only refuse our wages but they add to reserve, let the little nest-egg develop sufficiently long and then give it to one another as bonus shares. It is a very happy sort of job, but it is a condition of affairs that the workers are opening their eyes to, and if there is going to be peace in this country and a rebuilding of industry, business must return to a moral foundation.

The CHAIRMAN: That was one of the things (and they are not a few) which I had in my mind when I spoke of recouping the public for the money improperly taken. I had it in my mind when I made the reference to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you. This Table D11 may help you. (*Table handed in.) I will not take the trouble to go through it, but this is again taken from the "Western Mail," and shows the fluctuations of a series of companies in share capital. It shows nine years' dividend, which gives you a good period before the war, and it shows five years' profits and distribution. This, as I say, is taken from the "Western Mail" of January 1, 1920. One of the greatest companies by which our people are employed is a company like the White Star. I forget the figures at the moment, but I think over a period of about twenty years they have distributed in profits £17,000,000, and I in Southampton have men working where our union lost money on the contributions by reason of the excess of death rate. I repeat that. The men worked such long hours in Southampton on the different companies' ships that, taking the contribution for the year 1913, we actually paid more money in funeral benefit in that port than we received in contributions; and they distributed in twenty years £17,000,000. With regard to those facts, I have been compelled to look them up in view of the non-existence of real negotiations when we met the employers on a previous occasion. You will remember, too, that while, since 1918, we have had no advance of wages, during that period the employers have had a substantial advance from the State. They have had their ships de-controlled, they have put up freights, and a weak Chancellor of the Exchequer gave them 40 per cent. off the excess profits. That taxation has to be made up by you and me, but we have to pay for that now. It has been made a present of to the shipowners of the country, and added on to these very dockers on every form of little luxury, and much of the food that they have to buy. I am bound to emphasise this point.

I am going to submit now a very interesting chart, which has very kindly been prepared for me. (†Chart handed in and marked D 13.) I want to

* See Appendix No. 27.

† See Appendix No. 28.

show that really we are dealing in all this business with about one, two, or three interests at the most. I really thought we had got to the end of the celebrated Geddes until I studied this chart, but I find still another one here, Irvine Campbell Geddes, in the Orient Steam Navigation Company, which I find is closely associated in relationship to the others. This chart is intended to show the Cunard Steamship Company in the centre, and all the variety of investment and inter-investment with great shipping interests. I found this very curious thing on investigation: I found what an enormous number there were of these public companies that went off into private companies. I do not quite understand it. I am not an expert in the ways of finance or the art of concealment, but as I looked at it I could trace profits to a certain point, and then there was a sudden dive off into the private companies. You will note from this chart that practically the whole ramification of transport is controlled by just a few people—they run into dry docks, and they run into coal. You get the Cunard Company linked up indirectly with the great Peninsular and Oriental Company; you get it linked up with insurance, with investment, with banks, with underwriting, and with all classes and conditions of investment, which indicates to me that the workpeople are, in fact, right up against a great form of consolidated capital; and I understand what Sir Alfred Booth meant in the previous negotiations when he said: "Ah! If we give you this, what effect will it have upon other industries?" I begin to see the other industries; I begin to see this inter-linking and hoccussing, and I want you to appreciate exactly what the workpeople are up against. Here I have another chart—(*Chart handed in and marked D/13a) — and the gentleman who kindly prepared these for me will be prepared to go into the Box and to be examined on these charts, if you desire it. I have another, which I will hand up to you in a few moments, which shows the Sir Owen Phillips Group and the Lord Pirrie Group in the centre. It shows the inter-linking arrangement with the great Furness Withy Group, whose balance-sheets are tremendously interesting, with the Royal Mail, the Nelson Line, the Coast Line, and so on. It shows the Elder Dempster Lines inter-linked with them, and it shows the great Ellerman interest. He is the gentleman who I was told the other day lamented the fact that he made £2,000,000 in one year more than he expected.

The CHAIRMAN: Who was that?

Mr. BEVIN: I have not time to go through it all, but I will pass it in now. They run back from the Ellerman group right into the Associated Newspapers, the "Daily Mail," and papers of that character, and show you how the Press, shipping, and other interests, are all interlocked and interwoven. Try to picture it as it presents itself to us as ordinary workmen. Think of the tremendous contribution that the community is handing over in millions to a comparatively few or a very small section of the community, itself controlling great interests running around the ramifications of the world. I submit that in view of this evidence that I have obtained we are entitled to this 16s., and more. I hope your Court will exercise its discretion and give even more than we ask. As I said this morning, had I for a moment thought that this Inquiry would have

* See Appendix No. 29.

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revealed to myself what it has revealed, I would not have opposed my people asking for the higher amount. So much for shipping.

Now if I may turn to the merchant side of the matter, I want to call attention to some facts and some figures. With regard to wool, which is a great user of the docks, I have had taken out for your guidance the figures from that famous report which shows the enormous profits that have been made in wool. (**A table was handed in and marked D/15.*) This was the report issued by the Committee on Prices, and after investigation of this report can it be said that they cannot contribute their $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per hundredweight, or $1\frac{1}{2}$ d., as the case may be, towards paying the docker a decent living wage? When I turn to cotton, I find these figures revealed in the manufacturing and export trade.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you proceed to cotton, have you any remarks to make on the wool schedule?

Mr. BEVIN: It has been so discussed in the Press that I am putting these things in hurriedly so that you should see the profits which have been made in each industry, and see whether these users of the docks can pay.

The CHAIRMAN: Who made this profit?

Mr. BEVIN: The manufacturers. The Government may have made some, but these figures are the manufacturers' figures as published in the Report of the Prices Committee to the Board of Trade, and now issued by the Board of Trade. You will note that the figures are based upon the profits that were fixed by the War Office as being the maximum profit during the war for the trade for those operations, and you will see now the amount being charged to the public. On one operation, for instance, the agreement with the War Office was 3d. per ton, and the amount of profit being made at the moment is 25.5d., showing 750 per cent. profit over and above what the State regarded as a normal profit. When you get to another item you find that runs up to 3,800 per cent. higher profit than that allowed by the War Office agreement when it was controlled. I mention this to show that you can trace this into cloth and find the cloth manufacturers making big profits, and you can trace it into clothing which our workmen have to buy; and when you add this small amount per ton that I have indicated is necessary in order to give this advance to the dockers, surely the people can pay it without adding any more burden than they are already putting upon the cost of living of this country.

Then I come to the cotton exports, which form a great portion of our trade. (*†A table was handed in and marked D/16.*) I have not got the profits, but I find this result: in 1913 there were exported 7,075,558,400 yards, at a cost of £97,820,623; in 1919 I find that the exports were 3,528,756,500 yards, at a cost of £178,955,943. Now, taking the difference between those two years, surely the cotton exporter and importer can, out of that enormous increase that they are receiving from the export trade, pay the small amount per ton that we are asking for?

The CHAIRMAN: That is a remarkable table, in this respect, that roughly it shows that in 1910 the export of cotton decreased in volume, because it

went down from 7 thousand million yards to $3\frac{1}{2}$ thousand million yards, but the price nearly doubled; it went from £97,000,000 to £178,000,000. The result would be, would it not, that the price of cotton is four times what it was?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Might I ask you if those are Board of Trade figures?

Mr. BEVIN: I think this is from the "Economist," but I will ascertain the reference. My reference number is missing.

The CHAIRMAN: We want to conduct the Inquiry on a sure footing.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite so, and you shall have the correct reference.

Another point I was going to make in connection both with wool and cotton together was this: the merchants say, "Not only can we make this money on export, but the home consumer must pay, irrespective of the cost of production, what we can get abroad." They say, "The reason for the cotton profit is that we can get it on some foreign market," and so they turned down the standard clothing scheme, which would have regulated the cost to the home consumer even though it left the foreigner to their tender mercies, and we have to pay not what the cost of production is, but something that has no relation to it. It does not matter what wages are: we have to pay the same price as they can exact from somebody else at the ends of the world. That is a position which influences the cost of living much more than the $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. a hundredweight which will come to the docker.

If I turn to tea, which is another great user of the docks, I find this, taking the figures from actual balance-sheets. A firm like the Horniman Company and the Alliance Tea Company pay 14.9 per cent.; the British and Bennington 15 per cent.; Lipton's, Limited, 20 per cent.; the Needham Tea Company 27 per cent.; the Acme Tea Chest Company, Limited, 28 per cent.; the United Kingdom Tea Company, Limited, 36 per cent.; the Tower Tea Company 36 per cent.; the Mazawattee Tea Company 37 per cent.; the Star Tea Company 115 per cent. Those are copied from their actual balance-sheets, which if you desire, I can hand in for examination.

The CHAIRMAN: Again, I ask is that during the abnormal war period?

Mr. BEVIN: They are last year's balance-sheets.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you give us any figures to lay alongside those showing what their profits were in normal years?

Mr. BEVIN: I can make investigation.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish you would.

Mr. BEVIN: I have taken the trouble to go through practically every form of industry in the same way.

The CHAIRMAN: You will understand that I was putting that question to you still on the footing of the other remark that I made with reference to profiteering and the duty of the State thereto?

* See Appendix No. 30.

† See Appendix No. 31.

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Mr. BEVIN: Quite so.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not saying that this or that part of your argument raises the point; we are not committing ourselves to that.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite so. I have taken the trouble to go through the following industries. I do not propose to read all the figures, it would take too long. I have taken Oil; I show in the case of the Shell Transport and Trust Company, Limited, and the Anglo-American Oil Company 29 per cent. profit for last year. When I turn to Oil, to Soap, to Chemicals, to Salt, to Coal, to Iron, to Flour, to Provisions, to Tobacco, to Warehousing, to Beer or to Storage, I find these exorbitant profits, and all of them are big users of the docks. Then I have taken from a newspaper the position of boots, which is a very important factor. This is from the Manchester "Evening Chronicle," of January 24th, 1920, and it deals with five firms. (**Statement handed in and marked D/28.*) You will find that you have the information you want there. Freeman, Hardy and Willis in 1913 paid £90,300, in 1918 £130,400, and in 1919 £189,100. In each case, in each firm, you find a tremendous increase in the profits with this significant remark: "Though there have been no increases in dividend rates in respect of the past year's operations, shareholders in most instances actually receive more in cash, owing to capital increases in the form either of bonus shares or shares issued for cash on attractive terms." That is the kind of thing you are getting all through industry.

But there is yet one other that I want to call your Lordship's attention to, and that is the Banks. The banking interest plays an enormous part; I can assure you that the same people that own ships own banks, they contribute to practically the same group. I have taken this from the "Economist" of January 17, 1920—(*†Statement handed in and marked D/29*)—"Bank of Liverpool and Martins, amount of shares £20, paid up 2½; final dividend, 1918, £14; 1919, £16; Lloyds Bank £50 shares, paid up £8, final divi-

* See Appendix No. 32.

† See Appendix No. 33.

dend, 1918, 21 per cent., 1919, 21 per cent.; 20 per cent. for the whole year. The London County Westminster and Parrs £20 shares, amount paid up £5, 20 per cent. dividend." So you get the same in the banking interest. Just imagine what is being taken from the community, but when we ask for a slight advance of this character again you are told it must be added on with interest. I have welcomed this Inquiry, because behind closed doors we have tried to show hundreds of employers that industry can bear these things we are asking, and they have always refused. But there is another form I wish a courageous Chancellor of the Exchequer could tackle, and that is this: it is the subsidiary companies buying abroad upon which the basis of production is charge^d. What happens is this: A company is formed to buy abroad. Take a figure of 6d. a pound, they sell it to themselves at 3s. That becomes the basis of production in this country, and so is another form of exaction on the actual commodity; and, as I have tried to trace this thing through, so I find point after point where this talk about raising the standard of life is a glorious opportunity if only you can alter the point of view of people who have the opportunity.

I turn now to suggestions for the reorganisation of output.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you leaving that point and coming to another one?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: You have had a heavy day; how long do you expect to take?

Mr. BEVIN: I think the suggestions I am going to make are comparatively simple. I could finish by just about half-past four.

The CHAIRMAN: My experience is that when you adjourn to another day a half an hour generally swells up; but we will try and hold you, if you will be so good, to half an hour to-morrow at half-past ten.

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning at 10.30.)

THIRD DAY.

Friday, February 6th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. A. PUGH

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

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Mr. BEVIN: My Lord and Gentlemen, at the close of last night's proceedings I was about to refer to the imperative necessity to adopt methods of re-organisation in dealing with the problem before us. I would like to mention that right throughout the country all those who were interested in transport from the point of view of distribution, and from the point of view of feeding the people, urged very strongly that docks should be developed to a much greater extent than they are as places of transit rather than places of storage, which has led to so much congestion; and as far back as 1916 the Transport Workers' Federation, together with the General Federation of Trade Unions, submitted to Mr. Walter Runciman, who was then President of the Board of Trade, very strong representations for the provision of inland storage, believing that both in war and in peace the proper place for storage is where consumption is likely to be, not congesting it in the dock area and so preventing the proper handling and turn-round of ships.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you that document?

Mr. BEVIN: I have no document, excepting that I can hand in—I have sent for it this morning—a report of the General Federation of Trade Unions, which states the date when the deputation was received—May, 1916. I have asked the Board of Trade for the notes, but they tell me that they have been unable to find them. In addition to that, right through the war the Port and Transit Executive Committee was continually urging for storage to be built in the great industrial areas, so as to keep the ports free for a flow of traffic, so that the docks might serve the purpose which docks ought to serve, namely, a place of transit, and not a place of huge warehouses which congest and make distribution difficult. We have always believed that transport in this country, having regard to the point which I tried to make the other day, is tremendously dear. Here you have, as I said, the easiest country in the world for the purposes of transport, with navigable rivers, canals, and a railway system, all of which, if brought up to date—I admit that you would have to be ruthless with vested interests to bring about the desired result, but I mean from the point of view of geographical difficulty—make it the easiest country in the world for transit. With a well co-ordinated system, which could be developed regardless of private and vested interests, but purely from the point of view of giving ready and quick distribution of commodities and raw material, this country could be made the cheapest transport country in the world, and could at the same time pay the highest wages to the labour engaged therein. But it has always appeared to us that when you attempt to do anything you apparently have always to try to find the line of least resistance, with the result that when you endeavour to carry out any improvement—and I am sure Sir Eric Geddes will bear out what I say—you are hampered and hindered by all this mass of vested interests which they try to placate, and which interfere with the schemes of development. The result has been this, and this has been, I think, the bottom of all your trouble as regards casual labour. That is the easiest method to the employer. The easiest thing to get rid of has been the human. He has not been sufficient trouble. If he had only been more audacious and more aggressive, then possibly they would have found other means, but the reason why casual labour has been perpetuated is because it has been the easiest method possible of dealing with shipping up to this point. Now it is becoming a serious

problem owing to the fact that the workmen are organised, and are attempting to solve this problem themselves. But there was another motive behind it, too. I am convinced that the employers have always had at the back of their heads that economic poverty producing economic fear was their best weapon for controlling labour. The fear of unemployment has been the thing that the capitalist class generally in all forms of industry has relied upon. I do not think civilisation built upon that is worth having. We believe in developing self-discipline as against maintaining control by economic poverty and economic fear. Therefore, if I may refer again to the discussion which took place between yourself and myself yesterday, my Lord, at the root of this problem first of all that question of representation upon the governing authorities of all Port Authorities must be settled. You cannot ask a Trade Union to exercise any control over its members unless it also has its share in Government. I am in favour of a complete registration of all men engaged in the trade, and that registration should be carried out by the Transport Workers' Federation. The reason I ask that is this: If an organised body like ours is asked to take responsibility for carrying out agreements, then we ought to have a say as to who shall be employed. You cannot throw the dock gates open to any and every type of individual, to the whims and favouritism very often on the part of the foremen, to the caprices very often of those who are prejudiced against us, and every now and again throw the carrying out of agreements or contracts into the melting pot, as it were. If this thing is to be any good at all, then registration ought to be carried out by the Unions, and if that is done the Unions will accept responsibility to a greater extent than they have hitherto done. The registration or number of men that should be entitled to go on the register should not be the maximum or the minimum. It should be possible on the basis of tonnage entering a port through certain areas to ascertain the number of men required. While it is true that at no given time can you employ the whole of the registered men, on the other hand it is also true that there are times when you cannot work all the ships because there are only so many berths in the country, there are only so many warehouses, and there are only so many facilities; and in fixing the number of men who should be engaged there should be strict regard for the facilities in existence for employment, so that instead of keeping a great number —

The CHAIRMAN: Just develop that, if you please, so that I may follow it exactly.

Mr. BEVIN: If you have a dock or wharves, say, for instance, if you take the Port of London, the Port of London can only discharge so many ships at one given time; they can only re-deliver from so many warehouses or stores at one given time; the railway facilities or lighterage facilities are a certain amount. It is not difficult to ascertain within a reasonable margin what is the normal number that should be required to run the Port of London. It is not difficult; it only needs the will. When you have arrived at your strict minimum it may be necessary to allow a margin for fluctuation, but that margin ought never to be fixed at the number which would cover the maximum period of the year, because very often while there may be a great outcry as to detaining a ship laid off on the buoys or in the river for a given period, by rushing that ship out at one time you very often delay in dealing with the three or

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four ships following, because you have not cleared your transit from the first ship; and hence with regard to this cry which has arisen recently that every ship must be turned round immediately, that ought to be determined by the absorbing power of the inland transport, and both the discharge and the inland transport should be organised to meet each other's facilities.

The CHAIRMAN: Let me ask you a question as to that. You have used the phrase "maximum" and you have used the phrase "absorbing power." I understand your argument to be that those phrases apply to the traffic as a whole?

Mr. BEVIN: Quite so.

The CHAIRMAN: Not to the formal Port of London Authority, but to the traffic, export and import, treating London as a whole, by whomsoever the labour be employed?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so, quite.

The CHAIRMAN: I appreciate that thoroughly, and we shall be glad of, say, help with regard, as it were, to unifying all the powers that control it. That is a little matter of detail which you might think out.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Roughly speaking, we can say that half the labour, which is just as real and honest labour as if it served direct the Port of London Authority—half of those engaged, and probably more than half—are not Port of London Authority employees?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so. I am prepared to hand in the evidence which I gave on this very point before the Port of London Decasualisation of Labour Committee. I have here the actual transcribed notes, and it answers largely—

The CHAIRMAN: How do you name that document?

Mr. BEVIN: It is Minutes of Proceedings of the Port of London Labour Committee. Mr. Justice Roche was in the chair, and this is the evidence of myself before that Committee.

(*Document handed in and marked E1.)

The CHAIRMAN: I was going to ask you before you concluded your speech whether we were to have the good fortune of entering into the labours, so to speak, of Mr. Justice Roche's Committee; but you are producing that?

Mr. BEVIN: That is my evidence. I have the interim report of that Committee, which I will also hand in.

(†Document handed in and marked E2.)

The CHAIRMAN: The question which I may put to you now is this. You have been arguing about registration, but you say that this subject has been investigated by Mr. Justice Roche's Committee?

Mr. BEVIN: Only so far as it applies to London.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite true; so that so far as that goes we shall be put in possession of that too?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, but I wanted to point out just where the report of that Committee does not solve the problem.

The CHAIRMAN: That is exactly the point which I wish to get from you to-day, because if you make a suggestion in that direction we shall be glad to have it from you.

Mr. BEVIN: That Committee leaves the matter for voluntary registration. It is one of those British compromises to try to get something done, but it is not a solution. If the problem in the whole country is to be tackled now arising out of these proceedings, we must go further, much further, than the recommendations of that Committee. It also provides for dual registration, by the employer and by the workmen's Unions. I want to say quite frankly that I do not believe it will work. If two bodies of people have the right to introduce labour to the dock, then neither of them ever becomes responsible. That is my difficulty with that form of registration.

The CHAIRMAN: You must bear in mind, you know, that this is not long ago.

Mr. BEVIN: I quite agree.

The CHAIRMAN: It is as late as July, 1919. It is a report made to Sir Robert Horne, and it is signed, I think, unanimously, by this Committee, including two of our number.

Mr. BEVIN: And myself.

The CHAIRMAN: By three of our number and Mr. E. Bevin.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite. I do not apologise for it.

The CHAIRMAN: No; on the contrary, you are going to attack it, are you?

Mr. BEVIN: No, I am going to develop it. I am going to try to take that report further than it was possible to take it by agreement at that stage, and I am going to do it from experience.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, you are right in your primary facts, that this is a Port of London affair, and what you are doing now is representing 125,000 men all over the country.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite, and that is the reason I want to say that that was a sort of compromise in London in an attempt to do something, and with a fear in my mind that the other side may produce that report I am dealing with it now.

The CHAIRMAN: I was going to ask for it; I had noted it.

Mr. BEVIN: Hence I have dealt with the method of registration—that I think if you are going to deal with it through the country it ought to be done in the same manner as I believe it is dealt with now at Liverpool and at Bristol, where whatever the regulations may be, the registration is in fact done primarily through the Union office, and the Union is primarily responsible. But if you have registration alone that does not solve the problem. It only ameliorates it just a little. If you make a ring, as it were, round a dock and say (if you take London and take a figure) that the maximum number registered, we will say, shall be 40,000 or 50,000, whichever figure were arrived at, and if you kept them within the dock, you would still have unemployment within the ring, with the result that you are driven back then for any support

* See Appendix No. 44.

† See Appendix No. 45.

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during unemployment upon the proposed Government unemployment scheme, which frankly I hope they will not go on with. To offer a man in unemployment 10s. per week to maintain himself in physical efficiency so that he can go back and do laborious work is simply begging the question altogether. I am in favour of the industry maintaining its own unemployed. I urge that if it is right to levy dock dues or charges upon the handling of goods in one form or another to keep the dock in a proper state of repair and maintenance and efficiency to handle the goods, surely it is just as moral to levy a charge upon all shipping entering a dock, and out of it to form a pool to maintain the worker when there is no employment. The easiest method to deal with this problem is by a levy upon all shipping or goods, whichever way may be decided, goods for preference, because the merchant as well as the shipowner pays his contribution, and to levy that upon the whole of the goods passing through the dock.

The CHAIRMAN: Entering or leaving?

Mr. BEVIN: Entering or leaving; and foreign tonnage which was entering or leaving our ports would pay its quota. Shipping is an international trade; it is not limited in the same manner that inland industry may be; and, again, docking is not like dealing with a factory, where you can say: "Our orders are so far ahead," or "We can estimate so far ahead." It is dependent, as you well know, upon the wind and the tide and a hundred and one conditions upon which a stable or fixed industry is not dependent. I want you, my Lord, to imagine, if you will for a moment, a thousand men going from London to Tilbury. They have seen the papers, and they expect a certain liner to arrive the next morning. As far as they know, it will be in, and they are experts on the time it takes from point to point when they expect a ship to arrive. When they get there, something has happened; the ship does not arrive, and they have to go back. The railway fare is paid; they have incurred cost, and they get nothing. I suggest that if there is a levy upon the goods entering or leaving a port, out of that pool it can be agreed that every man in the dock industry shall have a guaranteed week, or that in no week shall his subsistence level fall below a certain figure; and that figure ought to be based, in my judgment, as I have indicated in my previous argument, upon at least five days' work at the minimum rate of wages which I have asked you to grant. I think it is an economic loss to industry to have men idle and physical deterioration setting in, and then they have to go out without food. Hundreds of times they are expected to go and work their first four hours when they have had no breakfast, and how can you expect output? And how can you expect content? As to the charge upon an industry of this character, the profits which I have already shown show that it can easily be borne. I have not been able to ascertain the facts, because there is no complete registration—there has been no attempt nationally to tackle the problem and to ascertain the facts—upon which to base a judgment as to the amount of levy that would be needed, but conditional upon that economic inducement upon the employer not to have too big a charge upon his dues or his goods and causing the joint exercise of brains to get the number that should be registered to something like normal, there would be an added inducement to reduce unemployment. And there would be another thing done: Very

often when trade is slack it would pay a dock authority or pay an employer to double up their gangs. There would be no difficulty with the old customs of docks in many cases if it were not for the fear of unemployment. As I instanced with the shift worker, a man starts a job now, and he says: "That is my job until it finishes." The fundamental reason of it all is that if he loses hold of that job until that ship is discharged, then his bread and butter has gone until another ship arrives, in all probability; and you cannot even get mobility of labour. I know it has been suggested that there should be one employer in each port. I think that is impossible at this stage. I think that to attempt to set up a huge bureaucracy of employment in that way under one authority would not be wise, especially with our experience in London, that as the Port of London has developed so they have endeavoured to depress wages as the one Authority. That is one of the difficulties.

The CHAIRMAN: May I interpose one question here: Would this registration and this payment of what you call the maintenance allowance be out of the shipping entering and leaving a particular port, or would you contend that it should be a general fund?

Mr. BEVIN: I was going to say both. I was going to develop the second point in a moment. First of all I suggest a levy upon a port. The first charge upon that port should be its own unemployment; but I would out of that contribution have a central fund, because the failure of a harvest in one part of the world might cause a slump in a given kind of trade, and then it might make heavy employment in another port.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what was in my mind.

Mr. BEVIN: Therefore there should be a co-ordinating authority which should have a claim upon a central fund. Then, again, there are small ports with seasonal trades, which are very important. In those small ports the levy would be so small that it could not maintain its unemployed, and there should be a co-ordinating policy of the levy with a central fund. This is, of course, a matter to argue out in detail, but my own view is that while you have a central fund you should also have the local fund so as to secure the most efficient organisation in the locality as well as the centre. I see the difficulty in a complete general fund levied on tonnage of trying to administer it from one centre. I see the advantage of doing both: one for the purpose of dealing with the immediate difficulties of the port, and the other for a central administration so that no port should be stranded.

The CHAIRMAN: May I put it in this way? Assume the argument against you to prevail, that it is impossible to do this kind of thing, then the question which I am going to put to you would not arise; but assume this Committee to be impressed with the importance of, if possible, rooting out the casual labour, and assume further that a certain scheme—we shall not say how far—of maintenance is allowed—you see—your argument discloses that—that we are then opening a fresh chapter altogether in the social relation of the human element to the trading element of each port.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite so.

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The CHAIRMAN: And I think you recognise that it might be sufficient for this Court to discharge its task by indicating the general lines of the principle and leaving the working out of the detail to the future in the hope that, the principles being accepted by those in power at the time, both parties would be assisted in having a working scheme. The reason I interpose is this: We are very much impressed with the magnitude of the Inquiry, and we do not like the promptitude of our answer to the Minister of Labour to be delayed unduly by entering upon a mass of details involving, perhaps, months and months of investigation; and I presume that both sides would be satisfied upon this issue if we indicated the lines of principle and recommended certain means of carrying out details by mutual collaboration.

Mr. BEVIN: I am inclined to agree with you, my Lord, providing the fundamental principle of levy or payment should be established.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you are entitled to a verdict one way or another from this Court upon that point.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you. It has been said that if you adopted this principle the men would not turn up to work. I am always rather amused at those who never do manual work being so concerned about the delinquencies of those who do all of it, and I have often wondered, when I have sat in employers' meetings, who discharged the ships; because they get discharged. But I want to say this: Our view is that there should be reasonable and proper rules and regulations associated with any scheme of this character, because just as I am bitterly opposed to the system of society which contributes to the employing class for very little service in return, so I should be opposed to contributions to anyone else without service; and accepting that as a principle I am prepared in any rules that may be established to see proper provisions and safeguards against abuse on either side. I believe that this factor, in addition to the wages, is one of the most important points that you will be asked to decide, because it has been the subject of consideration by sociologists for years, and while all sorts of suggestions have been made about making labour permanent, I do want to impress you with this fact—that if you took the dockers of the country and said that 50, 60, or 70 per cent. of them should be permanent, that would not solve the problem if you left 30 per cent. with their conditions of casual labour intensified; and so I want to see the problem dealt with as a whole, so that we shall not have the C man starving while the A man may be in a comparatively favourable condition. I think the State ought to play some part in this. While I have suggested a levy upon the shipping—the goods, as the case may be, entering or leaving the ports, I think the administration should be dealt with by the State. They are undertaking unemployed insurance. The actual administrative staffs, or the cost of them, in my judgment, should be borne by the State; but in my anxiety to prevent again bureaucratic government, I think that the supervision of the staffs might be entrusted to the central body, subject to responsibility to the Minister for that portion of it that I have suggested as the controlling authority. May I now describe the controlling authority which is in my mind? This unemployed question should be dealt with by a special joint committee in each port, who should

have charge of the registration, appeals, and administration of the funds.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you mean advertising for labour—is that what you mean?

Mr. BEVIN: They never advertise for it; it comes without it, unfortunately.

The CHAIRMAN: I wanted to know what you meant by appeals.

Mr. BEVIN: It means this: Supposing a man had been treated harshly or struck off the register, or anything of that character, and felt that he had a grievance, he should have a right of appeal before he was dismissed and thrown on the stones. All sorts of things of that character crop up.

The CHAIRMAN: Before he is excluded from the register?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, that is so; and also the committee should deal with the extension and continuous review of the register. That is to say, taking London again as an example, a new dock, I understand, is opened, and it will be developed; that will in its train increase the amount of labour employed in London, and therefore instead of just opening your dock and letting the casual labour think "Here is a chance," there ought to come before that committee what the employers propose to transfer from other departments to work that dock, and how many will be required to complete the manning of that dock before you start probably bringing in a whole new set of people; because the shipping is getting bigger, and as the bigger docks have to be used it may be that instead of increasing the volume of your employment you may be transferring your employment from a smaller or less well-equipped place; and this central committee should from time to time review exactly what is required. Then, as I have indicated, with regard to the provision of clerks, the provision of staff, the payment of staff, and that kind of thing, I believe that as the State is undertaking it for other industries it would be a comparatively light charge upon the State, or a light contribution from the State, to undertake the administration or the cost of administration in this case, outside what I have already indicated. But that, as you say, my Lord, is a question of negotiation and discussion, and I wanted to make the three bodies involved in the thing, because I think the public through the Government have a responsibility for casual labour, and, on the other hand, this industry having its peculiarities ought to carry to a much greater extent than it has hitherto done the responsibilities for its own—not unemployment in the sense intended by the ordinary Unemployed Act, but under-employment. It is not unemployment that is our trouble so much as under-employment, and it is most peculiar to this industry, and therefore I think should be dealt with in that way.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you help me by any general figure? You said the number that you represented was 125,000. It is rather a Hibernian way of putting it, but what is the normal number of casual unemployed?

Mr. BEVIN: My difficulty in answering that question is that there has never been any what I might term scientific method of arriving at it, and it would be very difficult, and I am afraid impossible,

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even to give you a guiding figure at this juncture. However, if I may venture a figure under another hypothetical condition, assuming that this scheme were in operation, my view is that over the whole country, with fluctuations of shipping from the highest to the lowest, with this new form of organisation which I am suggesting, and the levy, a 10 per cent. margin is ample to provide for fluctuations, having regard to the absorbing power of the country, as it were, behind the lines. I do not know whether I have made it clear, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I think so. It is a mere speculation, as we all know, but within the register line there would be 90 per cent. who would be on ordinary working conditions and 10 per cent. unhappily left out.

Mr. BEVIN: It does not work out quite in that way, if I may say so. I know it is very difficult to describe in language, but it works out in this way: If you take London, you agree that the register should be 50,000, to take a figure. Of that 50,000, when you have totalled your men you may find that 40,000 or 45,000 had earned, within their five days that I have mentioned, their five days' pay, leaving 10 per cent. remaining through the year: in other words, there would be a charge as if there were spread over the year a cost covering unemployment of 10 per cent. That is rather a better way to put it, I think. I know it is involved and difficult until you can get down to the actual register.

The CHAIRMAN: I repeat the question, and you understand that I do it on the hypothetical case. Please understand that neither you nor I are committed to any figure, because this will depend on what may happen to be an extremely grave scrutiny of all the figures applicable to a survey of trading conditions, weather conditions, and so on. All those will have to be the basis of a wide scrutiny until you can come approximately to the figure involved. On the other hand, now you have a certain responsibility, because you propose a system: therefore, it rests upon you, does it not, to show what would be the general conditions of the on-cost on the trading?

Mr. BEVIN: The on-cost can easily be arrived at directly the two parties agree that it shall be done.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope you will forgive me; it is only to elucidate it. What I mean is this: Trade as a whole in this country (and we cannot shut our eyes to it) is the rival of trade in other parts of the world. Now the desire of everybody is to rehabilitate and re-establish British trade on a sound basis; that is the interest of all concerned. We must therefore look round to see whether the on-cost which is to be added to our trading conditions in these ports would, as it were, cripple the laying power of the goose.

Mr. BEVIN: May we test it by another method: When your Lordship was a Member of the House of Commons there was passed the Workmen's Compensation Act; I believe no one could tell what would be the on-cost of that when it was going through the House, but you did it because it was right. I want this done because it is right, and then I want both parties to use their best endeavours to make the on-cost as little as possible by wiping out the profit.

The CHAIRMAN: I thought that would be your answer, because you say the true foundation of

your case is the human one. You start on that: human beings under certain conditions are left on the stones. That cannot be right, and economic conditions, you think by experience, will adjust themselves in an abatement of that situation. Of course, the other side may confront you with figures of such an overwhelming character as to show the impossibility of it, but we shall hear that. That is your case. In the meantime, you stand upon the earlier portion of your argument.

Mr. BEVIN: I am sure they could not overwhelm me. They may bring up a lot of figures, but, after all, in the end, just as the employers now have found a way to levy their income-tax on their cost of production instead of paying it themselves. Yes, all the great undertakings are now distributing their dividends free of income-tax, which means that it is charged on to production, and the middle classes and the working classes are often paying the taxes of the other people. The dividends are free of income-tax in so many cases, and also of excess profits tax, because after making provision these great dividends are now being distributed. In addition to that, the cost of workmen's compensation is added on to production. It has all got to go on to production, and it levels itself in time. I can quite imagine in five years after such a scheme came into operation that the employers would say: "Well, the old casual conditions do not exist; maintenance is in existence," and the like; and they will argue for all they are worth to show that a further advance or something should not be granted. It is always done. Whenever you go into any industry now, all the charges which are regarded really as social charges which one talks of an employer paying, are not paid by the employer, because he cannot pay; he has nothing to pay with until Labour has given it to him out of their production. You cannot get something out of nothing. Therefore, I say that the thing should be decided because it is right, and industry can provide for right and doing the right thing.

The CHAIRMAN: There is something to be said on the one side and the other. My hope will be, and your hope will be, that if such a radical re-arrangement of the conditions of industry were brought about there would be such a steadying up in the entire class of those who labour in the ports as to make the output, by which I mean the quick and efficient despatch of business at the ports, more effective, and in that way the moment you have a result of that kind, when the humanising conditions of the worker have increased, you get a greater output out of which trade is able to stand a charge. Have I made that clear?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, that happens every week now, my Lord. You may get a ship where men are going on in their ordinary way, and I have said quite frankly to the employers as I say here, that if I knew that by hurrying up the despatch of a ship to-day I was going to get nothing to do to-morrow, I should not hurry up the despatch. I say that quite honestly. Just as it is to the employer's interest to get a ship away with another freight, so it is to my interest to get as much food for my children as I can. Very often the employers will say, "I will give you an extra day's pay, I will give you as much money as if you worked on that ship to-morrow, but let me have her to-night"; and we let them have it. It is an actual certain fact that happens almost every day in the docks, and I as a Union official have said to employers, "You want your ship to go and earn thousands of pounds

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more or less; very good, so long as you have given me such a sum for my men as they would have got if they had given you ordinary despatch, I will hurry them up," and I have got them to hurry up the despatch. But I have never let them have despatch if I thought that the men merely by hurrying up were going to put themselves out of employment the next day. I would not do it, and I have been quite frank about it at every employers' meeting we have ever had. If they transferred themselves into the workmen's position, with all their business acumen, they would even keep the ship longer than the workmen do.

The CHAIRMAN: Nobody dissents from the view that by a special bargain you can have special exertions, but what I am trying to get at is something much more radical and much more general than that. I am trying to get at this, that if you produce what, to use your own term, you call more humane conditions in the avoiding of casual labour you then produce a more efficient type of labour and a more capable type of labour from the physical point of view, and therefore the output must from that human point of view, apart from any special terms or bargain, be increased, because efficient labour takes the place of slack and inefficient or perhaps unfair labour. I do not press you for an answer.

Mr. BEVIN: I should like to answer it, in our men's own interest. I want to say, as I said during the 44-hours movement, that the conditions of dock labour and output have been such that I would never tolerate or sign an agreement that men should give the same output as they had hitherto per man per hour; you see, you have not had the men in the industry from youth to old age; you have the principle that at these dock gates they pick out the strongest men in the biggest ports and discourage all the old ones, and the cripples, and as long as those men can work hard they will keep them on, but they ruin them very quickly. I want to give this striking illustration. In negotiations with the grain trade of the Bristol Channel some three years ago the Chairman said, "Here are some men who earn 25s. in a day piece work." One of the men who had earned it was on the deputation. That man was running grain from the scale on the side of the coamings of the ship to what we call the hopper, which was attached to the rail of the ship. It was not far to run comparatively, but he worked out what he had carried; and, over his shoulders, that day there had been 110 tons of grain—over one man's shoulders. That is inhuman, and we would never go back to it. The men in that calling have been ruptured and ruined, or laid out with asthma and things of that kind. No, my Lord, that is not the remedy. The remedy, as I said the other day, is to get labour assisting machinery and not limit yourself to labour displacing machinery. That is where your remedy is for output. Take that same dock again. I have had complaints that the men do not get to their work quite to time in the morning. Here is a dock gate, and the distance to the port sheds would take at least a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes to cover, and no expert, no genius, has ever thought that if they put in little electric bogey rails with fast-travelling trolleys the men could sit on them and get there in 2½ or 3 minutes, and so save half an hour a day. It had never been thought of. They would let thousands of men walk from one end of that dock to another and waste all that time, rather than dream of putting in facilities for a man to travel across these places. There are a hundred and one things of that character in which

I believe, in spite of Mr. Churchill's declaration of our inability, if we were on the Authorities we could help, and where we could improve the organisation. However, I am not going to promise. The reason I want to answer this is because I have seen it in the Press that we are going to promise to give output providing the employers give us our 16s. I am not going to do it, my Lord. What I will pledge is that if labour is given its proper place in the governance of industry we will assist in getting such re-organisation, we will assist with what organising capacity we have; and we are egotistical enough to believe that we have some. We can show a way very often that experts cannot see in which to improve the output and facilities, because it is to our interest. I believe you can never ultimately ring trade or trustify it if you can get proper transport. I believe one method which will tend to break rings is the rapid moving of goods: I believe that will do it more quickly than any other form of distribution that I know. It is one of the greatest counteracting elements to the trustification or ringing of commodities if you can get them moving the whole time. I am very keen upon that. Ever since I have taken any interest in transport, that has been one of the theories that I have held. Therefore, my Lord I do suggest that in addition to dealing with casual labour there should be a consideration of this problem of inland storage, especially in its relation to cost. Your present method is mad: they have built huge stores to compete with somebody else for the merchants' traffic, and it is all wrong in principle in my opinion. During the war you left Birmingham, Derby, Nottingham, great mid-England places, almost stranded for food while it was rotting on your quaysides, because all your storage, practically all your facilities for storage, were in the dock, which ought to be a rapid place of transit without all this blockage. There must be some storage there, but the making of a dock pay on storage instead of transport and maintaining the congestion by holding all goods at the dock instead of inland, and so distributing your population, or distributing industry, and so helping the solution of many other problems, I submit is a method to adopt which is a mistake. Therefore, I think there should be a central body to examine these recommendations, that there should be a body set up to consider this question of inland distribution, which is very vital. The Port and Transit Committee during the war submitted to the War Cabinet, I believe, on no less than half a dozen occasions urgent requests that even as a war measure to safeguard the civil population, about seventeen areas of storage should be developed. If your Lordship would make a request to that body, I am sure they would supply you with a copy showing the development that the Committee asked the Cabinet then to adopt. It is very vital in the question of clearances, because you do prevent the handling of goods so many times. You can do so much more ex-ship work, you can get goods away and save an enormous cost.

The CHAIRMAN: Which Department is that, do you say?

Mr. BEVIN: The Port and Transit Executive Committee. It is a Prime Minister's Committee.

I have one other request to make before I conclude, and it is this: When we commenced this demand for wages we commenced it in the ordinary trade union way: we arrived at what we thought would be a reasonable figure to ask for, and we

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submitted it, and we have been forced to this Inquiry, which was not our request. This Inquiry has revealed to the Transport Workers' Federation a condition of affairs in this country which is menacing the whole country, in our judgment. This consolidated capital as exhibited on the Charts which I handed in yesterday is a very serious matter, one which, probably rightly, you have said is a matter that your Court cannot pronounce a judgment upon as to whether it is moral or wise, or anything else, but I do urge the Court in the public interest to request that a Royal Commission be set up to investigate the whole of these exactions on capital in all these different forms, so that we may out of this Inquiry, get back those exactions if the State will not pay labour its proper wages. You indicated yesterday that it was a matter for the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I doubt whether the ordinary Chancellor of the Exchequer, passing through those offices, has given serious consideration to the problem that has been revealed by these investigations. I have here before me now over 150 balance-sheets which I did not submit to the Court because I thought it would take up too much time, but all of them reveal that we are being asked as a community to contribute too much; and if the Exchange of the world is against us it is not by keeping down the standard of living that it will be balanced, but by an investigation to show what part is being played by those who, I suggest, have a heavy responsibility upon them by their exactions out of the people who are suffering as the result of the late war. I therefore would urge that a Royal Commission, public, I hope, as this Inquiry is, will be set up, because if there is a disease in the State (and that consolidated capital is a disease in the community) it should be rooted out. There are only two ways of doing it, one by turning the light of day upon it and public opinion altering it through its constitutional methods, and the other the people coming up against its force and a clash which leads to revolution. Those are the only two ways, and I see the tremendous power of control over the people's lives that these consolidated shipowners and general capitalists have as revealed by these investigations. I make an urgent appeal to your Lordship to make a recommendation that there shall be still further investigation, not in the interests of the dockers, but in the interests of the public as a whole.

I want now to make my concluding remarks. The claim which has been submitted covers practically all phases of dock work with the one exception that I have named. It will apply directly to the general cargo workers, to the piece workers whose wages have been regulated and influenced by them, to lightermen, to barge workers, and in many cases it will influence the wages of maintenance staffs and others whose wages have previously followed or been influenced by the national awards and war wages. We have submitted that claim to a public inquiry, and I think to a greater public as well, and I think you will realise, my Lord, that this Federation undertook a grave responsibility when, on its own, without consulting the whole of the movement, it made this departure in dealing with wage questions. That, on the other hand, I think increases the responsibilities of the Court itself. It is a novel method, as I said in opening. I would that the employers were willing before they added a charge upon the public to come to a public tribunal and justify the putting on of that charge, as we have tried to justify our increase of wages at this moment. If it is right for labour to have a Court of Inquiry, I claim that they cannot charge the community in return until they prove before a similar Court that they have a right to charge that

on in a like manner. That is a challenge which I throw out to them, and if they refuse it they have no right to say: "We claim by resolution or by the power that the control of our capital gives us to increase the profit to ourselves, to benefit as members of the community ourselves while we use that same power to compel you to go to a Court of Inquiry." I suggest that your Court cannot refuse our claim either on grounds of equity or of reason. I challenge counsel when he speaks presently to show that a family can maintain themselves on less than I have indicated so as to keep them in physical efficiency. If he cannot do that I say he has no case for refusing. On the other hand, if the captains of industry who have claimed monopoly control for themselves, who have argued in effect that we are not capable of taking part in control, say through him that they are unable so to organise their concern as to give us work for a decent standard of life, then I say that they ought to lose their place as captains of industry in this civilisation. They stand condemned if their control of the means which have been placed into their hands either by fortune or by luck or whatever it is is inefficient. Whatever the reason may be for those means getting into their hands, it cannot be by thirt, because no one could save their millions in any one man's lifetime. But by whatever means they have got control that carries with it responsibility, and if they cannot improve the organisation of industry then I say they ought to make way.

If your Court refuse our claim, I suggest you must adopt an alternative. I have shown, or tried to show, that labour has growing aspirations. I have tried to show that cultural development is as much to us as it is to the middle or to the upper classes. They are building us houses containing one living room, which I consider is an insult to us, an insult to our people. The old parlour may have been disused, but it will be the workman's library of the future. The houses that will be built now must stand for years; and imagine the conception of the architect, the conception of the sociologist, who thinks that a workman can develop his brain, his education, his knowledge, his social life, in a room with all the children around him and the domestic difficulties and all the rest of it. They will not even build a house to give him a decent place for study and culture. What would our captains of industry think if with their families they had to sit in one room and do all their business, read all their books, and study all their music or their other arts? They want culture, they want leisure, they want their home, and we want the same; and we claim it, and if our people have not been educated up to the appreciation of these arts, yet the day is coming when they will be; and I want them to have a chance for their proper development. But if you, my Lord, say in spite of all this that we have not established our claim, you have one alternative: you must go to the Prime Minister, you must go to the Minister of Education, and tell him to close our schools, tell him that industry can only be run by artisan labour on the pure fodder or animal basis, teach us nothing, let us learn nothing, because to create aspirations in our minds, to create the love of the beautiful, and then at the same time to deny us the wherewithal to obtain it, is a false policy and a wrong method to adopt. Better keep us in dark ignorance, never to know anything, if you are going to refuse us the wherewithal to give expression to those aspirations which have thus been created.

I do not believe that it can be shown that this industry in which we are engaged cannot pay: I have proved that they have the ability to pay, and

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on grounds of citizenship I submit that the men have established their claim, and I do not believe, with all that civilisation offers, that your Court can possibly refuse the demand we have submitted.

The CHAIRMAN: I desire on behalf of the Court, Mr. Bevin, to thank you for the care and cogency with which you have presented the case of the workmen. The Court appreciate very much the illuminating statement that you have made.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you, my Lord.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lords and Gentlemen, it is now my duty to present the case for the employers who represent the other side to this Court of Inquiry. Before, however, I proceed to do that, I should like to do two things: one is to express to Mr. Bevin my professional admiration for the clearness and the cogency and the moderation with which he has put forward his case to this Tribunal; and the second, my Lord, is to express, if I may, to Mr. Bevin a somewhat more personal tribute. There are many of us who have watched Mr. Bevin's career recently, and his conduct of this case has not disappointed the expectations of many of his friends, of whom I am glad to think I may call myself one. I think we may predict for Mr. Bevin in the cause which he has so much at heart a very great future.

To come more particularly to this particular case, your Lordship will have in mind that Mr. Bevin speaks of delay, and no doubt the larger public to which Mr. Bevin refers will also have in mind with regard to the question of delay that the whole course of this Inquiry has been, not merely a novel proceeding for Trade Unions, but an equally novel proceeding for the employers who represent the great port, dock, and harbour industry, novel, my Lord, for this reason: In the past all negotiations upon wages have assumed, and have been in the nature of individual negotiations between the National Federation of Transport Workers or their affiliated Unions and the different port, harbour, and dock labour employers. There is no doubt that large collective bargaining is much preferable if you can achieve it; and, therefore, when this great comprehensive national claim came along some of the leading persons interested in dock labour endeavoured to see whether they could not, for the purpose of dealing comprehensively and expeditiously with the case, organise an Association *ad hoc* of the different dock employers. That, my Lord, to a certain extent has been done, and I think I may largely claim that it has been done through the strenuous work and efforts of Sir Alfred Booth, whom you will see shortly, and his colleagues, in arranging for a comprehensive *ad hoc* organisation of that kind. When you consider that in this Inquiry you are going to deal with the case of all the ports, or practically all the ports, throughout the country, and all the employers throughout the country, and you are going to deal with them through the medium of one organisation instead of, as in the past, innumerable local individual organisations, you will realise that there has been a great step forward.

The CHAIRMAN: Has that organisation which you have mentioned given itself a name yet?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It has been christened—I do not know who is its godfather—but it has been christened The National Council of Port Employers. But whatever its name is, my Lord, it is in fact for the purposes of this case a comprehensive organisation representing all the dock employers.

The CHAIRMAN: We are very glad to have a *de facto* combination on the one side and on the other.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am sure if Mr. Bevin considers, and his friends consider, the years it has taken, shall I say, to organise their magnificent organisation, the Transport Workers' Federation, they will see that it has been an achievement of no small merit that this Employers' Organisation should in a few months have been specially organised for the purposes of this Inquiry.

If I may give your Lordship the dates, because it is very desirable that these facts should be clearly understood, I do not think, having regard to the difficulty of the case and the magnitude of the questions involved, it can be said that there has been any unreasonable delay. The dates are these: As recently as October 14, 1919, the National Transport Workers' Federation sent their claim to the various employers of port labour in, I may say, all the ports and docks of the country. Between October 14, 1919, and November 27, 1919, in that short interval, the gentlemen who took the foremost part in the organisation of the employers had got into touch with practically all the employers, and had appointed a Committee which on that date, November 27, met for the first time the representatives of the National Transport Workers' Federation for the purpose of discussing the claim. A second meeting took place on December 18, 1919, when it was agreed on the employers' suggestion to refer the whole claim to a Court of Inquiry. On January 7 of this year both parties, the National Federation of Transport Workers and the Representatives of the Employers, met the Minister of Labour, when he agreed to set up this Court. No sooner was that done than for the purpose of obtaining accurate and comprehensive figures and statistics from the different ports, irrespective of whether they told for the employers' case or told against them (and those your Lordship will have), questionnaires were sent round to all the Authorities, and since that date, the beginning of January, the Employers' National Council has been hard at work collecting the most voluminous information that it is possible to obtain for the purpose of this Inquiry. If your Lordship considers the magnitude of the case and the novel nature of the claim. I do not think it can be said in the circumstances that there has been any undue delay in arriving before your Lordship's Court.

Now, my Lord, the employers are before the Court. Let me say just one word as to their attitude.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you do that, you used the general word "employers." Will you just define that, if you please?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I was going to do that later, but I can do it now, at once.

The CHAIRMAN: That, of course, is the first point we must stand on logically.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is so, my Lord. I shall have to develop more particularly later the distinctions between the different classes of employers at the various ports. I will give your Lordship, first of all, a generic description of the employers, but I do not say, my Lord, you will find every one of the species of employers I shall later name in existence at each port, but you will find one or other of their classes at some ports. The employers, for the purposes of this application, represent the following classes of persons. First of all, I may call them the Port Authority, that is to

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say the Authority charged with the maintenance of the port, or it may be of the docks, or it may be of the navigation, or it may be of the river, as a Conservancy Board; in either one of those four capacities. Then, my Lord, you come to the second class of employer, and that is the ship-owners who are trading to and from those ports, or docks, or harbours, or Conservancy jurisdictions. Then after the ship-owners you have what may be called the master stevedores. They are the persons who undertake on contract to load vessels. Then you have, in certain ports, what are called master porters. The master porter is the person who undertakes, under licence from, as a rule, the Harbour or Dock Authority, to deal with all goods on the quays after they have been unloaded from the vessels, or before they are loaded. Then, my Lord, you have wharfingers. The wharfinger is a type of dock labour employer (using that term as a compendious description) which you find in certain ports like London, Hull, and other places, and he is a person of one of two descriptions; he may be the owner of a public warehouse into which he receives, as a public warehouseman, goods for storage by merchants, or other persons, who may send them there; he may, on the other hand, be a private warehouseman, in which event he uses his warehouse and performs all the usual warehouse operations for his own private purposes.

The CHAIRMAN: Or both?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Or both, my Lord. It is quite true you may have a combination.

The CHAIRMAN: I am told so.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Then, my Lord, I must go further. You have in certain ports a person whom I may describe—he has got the name in London although he has not got the name in other ports, though he performs precisely the same functions—as a waterside manufacturer. He is a person who has his works situated on the water-side. He gets his raw materials in by water, and by water he sends out his manufactured goods. Then, my Lord, to go on, you have the merchants, they are sometimes called receivers, and sometimes called consignees; I call them, for the purpose of ready reference, the merchants; and they are the vast number of persons to whom goods are consigned at the docks, or who consign goods from the docks, and perform themselves, or by means of persons employed by them, a large amount of the work of handling the goods at the docks. Then, my Lord, to complete the classification, you have the master lightermen, and I understand they are not in the Claim in London.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, they are.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am much obliged. You have master lightermen, and they are the persons who undertake, by means of barges and crews who are employed by them, the conveyance of goods to and from ports or within the limits of ports. Then, to complete the category, you have tug-owners. In some cases the operations within the ports are performed by the Port or the Dock Authority, who are, in their capacity of Port or Dock Authority, the tug owners; but in other cases you have individual persons or companies acting as a tug-owner and performing the duty of towage and tuggage inside the ports.

Those, therefore, are the various classes of the employers whom I will refer to in the course of the

case under the generic term of "port labour employers"; and if, my Lord, when I use that phrase, "port labour employers," it will be understood that I am referring to all these different classes of persons, that, I think, will probably make for brevity in the course of my observations.

While I am on this particular question of who the employers are, I will mention one point at this stage which I will prove later. It has been assumed rather that the real employers in this case are the ship-owners. When the figures are examined, as they will be put before the Court later, it will be found that the actual work which is done by the ship-owners, one of those many employers, in his capacity as ship-owner, where the cost of so doing goes in his freights, in reference to which so much has been said, it will be found that that only amounts to something like 25 per cent. of the total amount of work which is in issue in the course of this Inquiry. It is a material figure, if you take the total number of men who are covered by this application and you take all the employers who are covered by this application, the proportion of the work which is done by the men employed by the ship-owners in their capacity as ship-owners does not amount to more than about 25 per cent. of the total amount of work in question. Those figures will be proved later. Those are the employers whom I have the honour to represent before your Lordship's Court.

May I now say a word as to the attitude of those employers. My friend, Mr. Bevin, has from time to time, and I do not complain, used hard words about the employers, no doubt having certain cases in mind. I am not for a moment professing to stand here and say that every employer connected with port labour is perfect; nor would I like to ask Mr. Bevin to assume a similar burden of proof on his side; but what I will say is this: in respect of this National Council of Port Employers the attitude with which they have approached this subject is perfectly clear and definite, and I think your Lordship's Court will be satisfied that what I will shortly put to you as their attitude is, when you hear their case, their real attitude. They come here in as conciliatory a spirit as possible. They do not approach your Lordship's Court in any sense of the word as litigants. They are anxious to act as collaborators with Mr. Bevin, and put before the Court for their consideration all the facts and all the circumstances which the Court may think relevant for the purpose of deciding this important issue between the two sides. And, my Lord, it is their most sincere hope that the result of this Inquiry may lead to a lasting and a stable settlement of the controversial questions connected with dock labour; a settlement that will be honourable and satisfying to the members of the National Transport Workers' Federation and will be just to the employers and also to the public, and at the same time will be practicable, within the limits of economic possibilities. They are sympathetic, and your Lordship will see them in the box, and my learned friend may put any question to them he likes, to the aspirations of the workers. There is always this unfortunate circumstance connected with these industrial matters: that if you rely upon what you consider to be the iron economic conditions of the case there is always the danger that you are charged, on that ground, with being unsympathetic. One of the most disquieting features, if I may submit it, of the present time is this: the extent to which matters which are real economic restrictions upon the free action of every person are neglected

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and are overlooked by vast sections of the community; and an economic fact may be a friend or it may be a foe; if you have regard to it and its undoubted power it may assist you; if you slight it and ignore it, it may become a very serious enemy. In the view of the employers there is no royal road to satisfy these quite legitimate and worthy aspirations on the part of the workers outside of and apart from the industry; and it must be out of the industry itself (and I think Mr. Bevin quite realises that in the very forceful way he put his argument forward) that there must come the means of satisfying the aspirations—the legitimate and honourable aspirations—of all the workers in that industry; and impressed, as many of the employers are, with the serious restrictions on satisfying those aspirations arising from economic conditions, and the serious effect those economic conditions may have not merely upon the industry of the ports and harbours and docks, but upon the vast sections of the community who draw their supplies, whether it be of the necessities of life or raw materials, or send out through the ports their manufactured articles in the shape of export, they desire to put the whole case before the Court. They feel that if the whole case is put before the Court it has this advantage: in the past, as Mr. Bevin quite properly says, negotiations have been carried on behind closed doors, when there is no means of checking or testing or examining the grounds either for claims which are made on the one side or refusals which are made on the other. All sorts of misapprehensions are likely to arise, unworthy motives are likely to be attributed by one side to the other, and a completely erroneous conception of the case disseminated to the public. Therefore, our desire will be in the course of this Inquiry, and I hope I may succeed, without any rhetorical embellishment whatever, without any partisan feeling, or anything savouring of unfairness, in stating what we honestly believe to be the serious economic factors which lie at the base, at the present moment, of the whole of the, shall I say, unsettled conditions in port labour to the Court for their consideration. If we are right in our attitude your Lordship will be the judge; if we are wrong your Lordship will be equally the judge, and has the power to make the appropriate recommendations. Now, my Lord, to proceed to the case, if I may state my proposition very shortly for the purpose of developing it later. The claim covers two distinct things; it covers a claim for standardisation of wages and conditions, and, secondly, it covers a claim for advance in wages. Those two things are absolutely distinct, in our view, one from the other. My proposition in respect of the part of the claim which deals with standardisation of wages and conditions is this: that having regard to the conditions of the ports and docks it is impracticable; secondly, it is detrimental to the health and progress of the port and dock industries, and, thirdly, it is opposed to quite clear economic reasons to the contrary. I have to go further, and I shall have to submit to the Court that the first part of the claim in respect of standardisation is inopportune at the present moment, having regard to the totally abnormal conditions which exist at this time in the ports and docks, and further that it would be a seriously disturbing factor, not merely so far as labour in the different docks is concerned, but so far as the labour in the districts where the docks are situated is concerned; and I shall have to suggest afterwards to the Court, so far as great national bodies of labour are also concerned—that the claim is unsettling on those

men. That is so far as the first part of the claim is concerned: standardisation.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you mind repeating your last observation: it is disturbing to other industries, do you say?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is disturbing to other sections of labour in the districts where the ports are situated, and, further, to national bodies of labour, whose conditions are regulated by important national settlements, to which I shall have afterwards to direct the attention of the Court. So far as the second part of the claim is concerned, that part which deals with advance in wages, I shall have to submit to the Court, firstly, that it would involve a hardship on the general public, because I am afraid we take a rather different view, as naturally would be expected, to that which Mr. Bevin has developed, but we shall give our reasons and produce our facts just as he has; and, secondly, that the advance in wages would be, under present conditions, as I shall hope to develop, nationally inexpedient. To cover this case, which I shall endeavour to do, as shortly as circumstances admit, is a matter of some difficulty; but I propose to divide the observations which I address to the Court—

The CHAIRMAN: Will you let me interpose this observation? Please do not consider yourself unduly restricted in your opening in this case. Mr. Bevin has taken the same line. My object in saying this is one which I hope you will both appreciate: that after you have fully developed your cases in the speech, you may be able to consider whether there are not certain elements of substantial agreement, and by that means, even although your exposition takes a little longer now, it may have the result of enabling the proceedings to be materially shortened.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am much obliged for your Lordship's observation. I will bear that in mind, subject, of course, to this: that there are certain matters which have been raised by Mr. Bevin, as for example the right to representation on statutorily constituted port and dock and labour authorities, and I am afraid on those points, at this stage, I shall not be able to give your Lordship much assistance, because it is not a matter which we assumed was going to be raised at this Inquiry, and it is a matter upon which, up to the moment (it was only raised yesterday) I have not had an opportunity of consulting any of those public bodies whose reorganisation has been suggested as Mr. Bevin has suggested it.

My Lord, the way I proposed to cover the case was this: I first intended to try and group all this mass of ports, and the still greater mass of port employers, under certain lines of classification, in order to develop this point; the extraordinary diversity of conditions which exist in these ports, diversities of every kind, of local conditions of trade, of methods of handling ships and handling cargoes, of many circumstances which utterly differentiate one port from another, and naturally have the strongest possible bearing upon any suggestion of introducing a nationally standardised scheme of wage or of conditions of employment. The next point I proposed to develop was the claim; and I propose to deal with the claim first of all by bringing out the many, in some respects I shall submit novel, features which characterise the claim, and then later discuss in detail each item which goes to make up the claim. Then,

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thirdly, I propose to deal with the case which has been made by my friend, Mr. Bevin, in support of the claim, and then, after that, I propose to advance the case to which I think your Lordship must have regard as containing elements of very considerable weight against the claim.

To come to the first part of my observations, that is to say the facts as regards the ports, there are some fifty-three ports affected altogether, and there are some 125 bodies or associations of employers, or individual employers, affected. Of course, each association of employers may represent a very large number of individual employers. The first point I want to make is this, that when one examines all the information which we have obtained from all these ports, and endeavours to reduce it to a concise and logical basis for presentation to your Lordship's Court, the immense diversity of conditions at once appears. In respect of that it is essential (if I may emphasise the point) to distinguish what are the functions of a port as compared with what are the functions of an ordinary industrial establishment, on which from time to time considerable stress has been laid for purposes of analogy. A port really in fact sells two things, and two things only. First of all, it sells facilities; quick and cheap facilities for the distribution of goods which come in from the sea, and for the conveyance of goods which are going out to sea. It sells those quick and cheap facilities. At the same time it sells facilities which ought to be quick and cheap for the reception, turning round and despatch of vessels; and there is just this analogy, and no more. Just as a manufacturing workshop is engaged in making commodities, so a port is engaged in supplying commodities in the shape of facilities, quick and cheap facilities, for goods and for vessels; but there is this extraordinary difference between a port and a factory, and it is the fundamental difference which runs through the whole course of the port and harbour industry, and that is the intermittent nature of the work. There is a constant contrariety which always exists between the necessity for the quick and expeditious facilities for goods and vessels, and the fact that the necessity for providing those facilities is more or less intermittent in many cases. Ships come in unexpectedly. Tides regulate the times at which they come, especially in regard to certain trade, like the coastwise and short sea trade, and you cannot, try as you may—and it is, of course, essential every effort should be made—reduce the work of a port or harbour to the mechanical regularity and routine which characterises the work of any great engineering workshop. That is a great fundamental distinction which runs through the whole nature of the port and harbour industry. The efficiency of a port is entirely the measure of the extent to which it can afford, firstly, expedition, and, secondly, cheapness of facilities for vessels or for goods, and that, you will hear later, is becoming more and more a critical test of the efficiency of our British ports, having regard to the competition which existed before the war, and which increasingly is coming into effect between some of our British ports and some of our Continental ports. A ship-owner is not anything more nor less than the customer of ports. It has been rather suggested that they are really the controlling and the dominant factor in regard to the employment and payment of port employees. Ship-owners are nothing more nor less than the customers of ports, and if the history of some of our ports and some of our great steamship lines is examined it will be seen how frequently ship-owners do change their ports; Liverpool and Southampton is an illustration. Your Lordship

will have even more striking illustrations of change from London to Antwerp and places of that sort, and it is on the efficiency of a port in affording facilities, firstly of expedition, and secondly of cheapness, that the custom of the ship-owner really depends. Your Lordship will be struck at a later stage with the difference which exists between the trade done at different ports, and the effect which that difference has upon the whole course of labour operations at those ports. To develop my point: there are three classes of ships, or there are really more, probably five or six classes of ships, which are trading to and from the various ports. First of all, you have fast mail and passenger steamers, and they are of two kinds, either deep sea or short sea or short trade. Secondly, you have what are called cargo liners. They are vessels which are more or less regularly employed between certain ports in the more or less definite business of carrying goods out and raw materials in. They may be either deep or short sea, or short trade, as the words are synonymously used. Thirdly, we may have coming to different ports in different numbers, and involving consequential differences in working conditions, tramps. The tramp steamer may be either a deep sea tramp, or it may be a short sea tramp. Your Lordship will hear the difference that these circumstances make. Then you have the fourth class, colliers, a distinct and different type of trading vessel, involving again a difference in the working conditions in the ports. You then have, my Lord, sailing ships, and in some ports, I see from the information we have got, you have a number of motor and oil vessels, which appear again to involve differences in working conditions. I think your Lordship will be struck later to see how the working conditions at the ports are very materially influenced and affected by the type of vessel that is trading to the port. Then you have in the same way the cargo; that is to say, the goods which come in or go out. You may classify it under two categories: first you have the import cargo, and the import cargo in all these big ports, especially London, is of three kinds. First of all what we may call the destination goods, that is to say goods which are intended for consumption in the port itself, or in the immediate vicinity of the port; secondly, you have the inland and coastwise goods, those are the goods which are intended not for consumption in the port, but for distribution through the port either inland or coastwise to some other place; and, thirdly, you have the class of goods which are called foreign trans-shipment goods, and they are goods which are imported from abroad into a port for the purpose of trans-shipment in the port into some other, it may be a smaller, vessel, and re-exported out to other places; and you will find, when I come to develop the case more fully, how the working conditions in the ports again vary according to the predominant nature of those three kinds of goods. Export goods may be divided in the same way, and the question of whether export goods, which are foreign goods, fall within one of the two heads, either overseas goods, or short sea or short trade goods, or coastwise goods, will be found to affect again materially the working conditions.

The CHAIRMAN: In the foreign trans-shipment case is there double berthing? If a ship comes in with her goods to be trans-shipped she must be berthed and the ship to take away those goods is berthed in the same place.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It may or may not be so. It takes place under different conditions. For example, a large ship may come into the

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London Docks and may unload its goods on the quay. Those goods may be, in that dock or in some other dock, loaded into another vessel to go out of London. It may be that the vessel does not come into the dock, but lies out at what they call a tier in the river, and the goods are unloaded out of it into a lighter brought alongside another vessel and loaded into that vessel; or you may have a combination.

The CHAIRMAN: In the last case, are the port dues paid? Of course, there is no berthing charge; it depends on the area of the jurisdiction of the authority?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is so in the case of the Port of London. I use that for an illustration, and I think I am right in saying that all vessels and all goods which come within the jurisdiction of the port are subject to certain charges, although for other special services in the docks additional charges are levied.

The CHAIRMAN: I have mentioned double berths, and you have very properly referred to trans-shipment as in pre-war times. In the course of your case there may be some light thrown on the question whether the congestion at ports could be eased and the labour problem modified by some change which is impending with regard to that process of trans-shipment. Those instructing you might consider that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: It applies particularly to a port like London, which is largely not only a receiving, but a manufacturing port. The disturbance to the reception of manufactured goods may be very considerable by a double berthing system. There may be a position arise between the Port of London Authority, as such, with other interests, to arrange for immediate despatch. I am not referring to the ship-owners. The general welfare of the port may depend upon certain modifications under which trans-shipment will be accomplished with greater ease, more promptitude, with greater facilities, by such a reorganisation. Please do not answer me now, but let those instructing you consider whether there are any possibilities of saving, not only time, but place and labour in that respect. I have made those remarks after consultation with some of my colleagues.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We shall take note of your Lordship's observation and certainly inquire into it. I am not sure whether a somewhat invidious duty has not been put upon me by my clients on your Lordship's suggestion, because there is the Port and Transit Committee still in operation, which has control over the working of the ports.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite right.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am not sure how far your Lordship's observation should not rather be directed to them than to us, because we have no desire to criticise them.

The CHAIRMAN: I know; but I only point out to you that in the course of your case it may be indicated to you, as a matter of fact, whether or not you—or those you represent—have any opinion on this subject; we could transmit that opinion by communicating it to the Port and Transit Committee, but the essential of it, if I

do not unduly trouble you, is this: that when we are engaged in what I might call a fundamental Inquiry as to the vital conditions of labour, you put forward, quite properly, an economic barrier. Very well, when you are considering that economic barrier, that may be a high and impenetrable barrier, or it may, by certain adaptations, be reduced to a low and penetrable barrier, and therefore, in that sense, it is relevant to our Inquiry if your employers or any of them, were to indicate that by some more general system of organisation in the country this very large quantum of trans-shipment might be eased.

You are in possession of our views, or rather they are not views, but they are indications that we are groping to root causes here, in order if possible to eradicate any of those economic barriers to which you very properly made reference. We will not pursue that topic further, but I indicate that points like that, when you raise the economic question, may, of course, broaden out any such situations as I have put to you.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Of course I appreciate the bearing of your Lordship's suggestion, and I fully appreciate its extreme relevance. The only observation I desired to make was that, that there is this Port and Labour Transport Committee, and they have, of course, completely mandatory powers to make any regulations they think fit with regard to the working of traffic in the ports, and they are in receipt, I think, of the suggestions from all the ports, and I did not know whether it would be correct on our part to discuss here publicly, before your Lordship, suggestions which have been made from time to time and considered by the Port and Labour Transport Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Probably not. On the other hand, if any important man of weight were to come in the interests of either side and to indicate to us that the economic situation would be eased, and, in his experienced opinion, could be eased, the measure we would take would be to take note of that, and further to communicate that to the Port Authorities.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think there will be no difficulty. Your Lordship may rest assured that all information on any point such as that will be willingly and fully tendered by the employers. To proceed to give your Lordship a general indication of the kind of diversity of conditions which exists between different ports, which goes to the root of the question of standardisation, or a national uniform basis of wages and conditions of employment, your Lordship will find a great variety in the mode and the method of handling the traffic at the different ports, and in the times at which the traffic is handled at the different ports. Those two things depend upon a number of things: firstly, the local conditions. You find at a port the docks are closed; that is to say, they have locks and gates, and wharves and warehouses lying round the docks and within the jurisdiction of the port. You find that very largely in London. You have on the other hand Liverpool, with closed docks, but no wharves or warehouses lying round about the waterside. You have at Glasgow the system of open quays and open docks, that is to say, without lock gates and so forth. That makes all the difference in the world in the method in which the traffic is handled, because, if a great deal of the traffic, for example, is handled in a dock district or in a port jurisdiction by means of barges, then, of course, you do not require the quay appliances for

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lifting and loading to anything like the same extent you require them where the traffic is handled mainly by land. Your Lordship will find when we come to it later that great distinctions exist in the working of the docks, because of that first fact, I mean the question of whether you have open or closed docks, and whether you have wharves and warehouses lying round the docks as in London, or absent almost entirely as in Liverpool; and it creates circumstances which I think I shall be able to show you make the standardisation of working conditions quite impracticable. Then there are other factors, which I shall have to develop later, which affect materially the working conditions at the docks, that is to say, the question of the distribution systems in operation there. You may have distribution systems at a dock on the landward side almost entirely railways, as for example at the docks at Southampton or Immingham. That creates a peculiar and a special condition of things. You may have them very largely canals, as at Hull, which again creates a special and peculiar condition of things. You may have them very largely roads, as at Liverpool, where the large bulk of the goods coming to and from the docks are handled by cart on the road, and that makes a particularly special condition of things so far as affects the method of working at those docks. Then you may have the mode of conveyance and distribution largely barge, as, for example, at Hull, or at London. Then at all the docks you will find at normal times a system of distribution of the goods to and from the docks by means of coasting steamers.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a personal matter, Sir Lynden, but I used to be in other days very much engaged in arbitrations with regard to Glasgow, and to my recollection Glasgow is rather exceptional with regard to railway facilities at the docks.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Glasgow has very excellent railway facilities.

The CHAIRMAN: On the northern side particularly.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: On the northern side, and I think quite recently developed on the southern side.

The CHAIRMAN: Then Hull you have mentioned with regard to the proximity of canals, Liverpool with regard to the necessity for road traffic, and then barge traffic again applies to London.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, to London, and to Hull, too. But the point of all this is to show, when the individual cases come before you, the great diversity of working conditions resulting from all these special and peculiar kinds of distribution systems at the different docks, and my point will be that, of course, it goes vitally to the root of the practicability of standardising wages or conditions of employment, which must, of course, assume conditions of work which are more or less of the same uniform character. Perhaps I may, just in somewhat general terms, develop that without unduly laying stress on it. If you take, for example, the case of a ship coming into port, it may, of course, go directly into dock, as it does in many cases; it may, on the other hand, take up a berth in the river and be loaded or unloaded by barge; it may, on the other hand, if it is a small type of vessel, go to the wharf of a private or a public wharfinger alongside the river; it may go, on the other hand, to the

waterside wharf of a manufacturer; and so you have a whole variety of divergent conditions existing up and down these different ports.

The CHAIRMAN: That is your category.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is my category.

The CHAIRMAN: May I add this, that I could not pay those visits along with my colleagues without being struck by another variety, and that is a great variety of labour in the very same port. You have a man wheeling his barrow. It is quite a mistake to think that he is altogether unskilled, because he inserts the point of the barrow in the particular part of a bundle, and he uses skill to do the complete job. However, that may be looked upon as the unskilled end of it. In the same port, making the same application and represented by Mr. Bevin with the same interest, is another person who is always labouring, not in the open but in shelter, in good well-heated rooms, who is engaged in delicately re-assorting fruit, perhaps inspecting nutmegs, and doing very fine labour. All those are making common cause for a minimum. That is the variety you have not alluded to. The striking fact about it is that all those various people are making common cause.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: I beg to announce, for the convenience of those engaged here, that next week, for circumstances which on consideration you will appreciate, we shall not meet upon Tuesday, as it is the day on which the King opens Parliament, but we propose next week, if we are able to stand the strain of it, to take on a solid block of three days together—Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday—and we hope that very considerable progress will be made next week. I thought it right to indicate that our next meeting, after 4 o'clock today, will be 10.30 on Wednesday.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, just before the adjournment I had gone two-thirds of my way towards making my point as to the diversity of conditions between the ports, and showing your Lordship, firstly, the difference between the classes of employees, secondly the difference between the working conditions resulting from the various causes at the different ports, and I am now going to complete that section of my argument by dealing with the differences between the different classes of workers within a particular port. It would be hopeless for me to try and deal with the differences between the different classes of workers at all the ports, and therefore I am going to take one port, merely by way of illustration; but later you will find that when you take other ports there are not merely the normal differences between the different classes of employees, but there are special and peculiar local differences, so that the total diversity becomes a matter of very great magnitude indeed. For the purposes of illustration I will take the port of Liverpool. Your Lordship will have the details much fuller later on, but if I may take for example the section of the workers who deal with cargo, there are the ship men, who include also the winch men—that is to say, the men who drive the winches on board the ships which lift the cargo into and out of the hold. Then there are the holders-on, who direct the fall on its way up or down. They number approximately about 9,200 men.

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The CHAIRMAN: Those three classes?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Those three classes. You will get the numbers in print later on, so your Lordship need not trouble to take extensive notes. Then, if you go to the other classes of cargo workers at Liverpool, you have the porters; they are the men who handle the cargo on the quays, and they include, not merely the porters, but the crane men who work the cranes, the checkers who check the cargo to bill of lading, mark the name of the consignee, the number, and other things; you have the counters-off, who count the packages; you have the weight-takers, whose duty it is to weigh the goods; you have the coopers, who repair the cargo. They are all included amongst that class of quay-men. In addition, you have also on the quay the crane-men who are driving hydraulic cranes, or electric cranes, or steam cranes. Then you have the watchmen, you have the shore-gang men, which include a considerable number of men engaged in docking and undocking the ships, in moving the ships in the docks, in dry-docking the ships, in cleaning the holds of the ships, in attending to the upkeep of the ship's gear, boats, rigging, and so forth. Then you have quite a large section of coalmen, who are engaged exclusively in coaling vessels. Then there is a large section of barge-men, divided into grades of captains, engineers, mates, and third hands. Then you have a large section of tug men, divided into masters, engineers, deck hands, firemen, trimmers, and boys. Then there is a very large section of men who are in the employment of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. I really hesitate to read the names of the different classes because they cover a great number.

The CHAIRMAN: You have given enough to indicate your case.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is all I want to do.

The CHAIRMAN: There was nothing in your opening statement about boy labour, Mr. Bevin.

Mr. BEVIN: It is covered in the general statement of permanent and maintenance staffs. All these sections that Counsel is now referring to so as to leave them, by local negotiation, relatively to the others as they are at present. That is the reason I did not instance them.

The CHAIRMAN: When I said boy labour, I meant boys generally.

Mr. BEVIN: Boy labour is limited to tugs. There may be a few on the staffs, but, generally speaking, a very large percentage would be adult labour; and the method that has been adopted in their cases is that it is a matter of very easy adjustment between the parties when the main line of the minimum is settled.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will not elaborate further the different classes of men employed in the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. I will only say that they cover five closely-printed sheets. Your Lordship will have them in detail later. Then there are also the warehouse keepers at Liverpool, and they have a considerable number of different grades of men, for example, the dockmen who receive the goods from the quays, the hoist men, the weighers, the men who make the book entries of goods coming in and going out, the truckers, the pilers (those who pile the goods), the samplers (those who sample

the goods), the markers (those who mark the goods), and other classes of men. The only purpose of these observations of mine is to impress upon the Court the very great diversity amongst the different grades of men even in one port only, taking Liverpool by way of illustration. As I interpret the observation which Mr. Bevin made in answer to a question by your Lordship, that all the different classes of men were making common cause in agreeing upon the principle of a national minimum, it is this: You have all these different grades of men, separated one from the other by a definite differential in point of remuneration, and, as I understand it, the common cause (not that I object to it or criticise it in any way, but only to get the fact) is this, that if the bottom men have their rates raised from the present level to the proposed level, the other men, as the result of local negotiations, will go up and keep something like the same differential. We want to get the real facts of the case, and that is what I understand by the common cause that is made.

Mr. BEVIN: Classing like with like.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My friend, Mr. Bevin, suggests an alteration, and I want to be perfectly fair. He says: "Classing like with like." That is quite a proper qualification.

The CHAIRMAN: So far as we are concerned, the sole question on wages put before us is a minimum. Upon that there is common cause.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is true.

The CHAIRMAN: Then upon that foundation you build a superstructure substantially on the analogy of past practice.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is the position as I understand it. That concludes all I desire to say on the first part of my observations—namely, the facts connected with the different ports, showing, as I submit they do, an enormous variation in local conditions, in working conditions, in the classes of employers, and in the classes of workers.

May I now come to the second part of my observations, those dealing with the claim itself? I propose to deal with them in two ways. I first of all propose to consider what are the main features of the claim. Secondly, I propose to discuss in detail each individual item of the claim. Take first of all the main features of the claim. The claim deals first of all with rates and the conditions of employment. The rates are rates of two kinds: firstly, an increased rate to bring the lowest classes of workers up to the minimum, and, secondly, an increased rate for overtime for Saturday afternoons and for Sunday work. Then, thirdly, there is a matter involved inferentially, and it is an important matter: that is the question of the merger of the war advances into permanent wages. That is a matter of very considerable industrial moment—I may say almost a controversy. That, although it does not appear on the surface, is, of course, involved if you fix a minimum of 16s. a day. By the merger of war advances into permanent wages I mean this: During the war, special advances, either under the name of war advances or war bonuses or some other such synonym, were granted by the national courts of arbitration, or agreed upon between the employers and the Trade Unions to meet the special circumstances arising out of the war. So far as they were granted by the National Courts of Arbitration it was a condition of their grant that they should, of course, come to an end

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as soon as the exceptional conditions had passed away. In some cases, by agreement, the prior permanent wage and the subsequent war advance have been merged in one; in other cases they have not been merged in one; and the question whether they ought or ought not to be merged in one is, I think I am stating it accurately, a subject of discussion at the present moment. Therefore, so far as port labour is concerned, the question of merger would be automatically concluded by fixing a minimum rate of 16s. a day, because that rate would be the rate to operate for the future, and would be something in respect of the pre-war rate and something in respect of the subsequent advance during the war. As long as we understand that that, although it does not appear on the surface, is inferentially implied, we know exactly what we are dealing with.

The CHAIRMAN: This point has been discussed before, and I think I got Mr. Bevin's answer to this effect, that what he was driving at was a minimum which should be an overhead universal minimum. Now nobody recedes from that on his side of the Bar. You on your side of the Bar have accepted that the proposal is that that overhead universal minimum shall wipe out all exceptional pre-war conditions, and establish a new standard of conditions. Do I understand that to be agreed? That is your attitude?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Then Sir Lynden Macassey is right in saying that to that extent it will be an alteration, it may be a rectification, at all events a steadying up and universalising of all the new conditions which have arisen during the war, so as to make the new conditions applicable to the normal state of affairs.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think there is no controversy on that. My only point is this, that the Court should understand that by so doing in this case they are doing what is known in industry as merging the war advance in the permanent wage.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a matter of terminology. You are quite right; whatever language you apply to it it is a merger.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: As long as the Court understand the second point, that that particular thing which I call for the sake of brevity merger is in point of fact a matter of very considerable industrial controversy. In some cases it has taken place, in some cases it has not taken place. The Court will understand that while they are considering the question of merger in this case precisely the same question is being considered in the world of industry outside this particular section altogether, and, as I shall have to develop later, important consequences follow from the principle at this stage, the propriety or impropriety of which I do not argue.

Then when I come to deal with the main features of the claim under the second head, conditions of employment, I desire to emphasise to the Court that there are six things which are implied, although they are not altogether specifically apparent on the face of the claim. As the claim stands, I do not know whether it is the real intention, but the minimum period of engagement would be, of course, a day, and the rate is to be 16s. a day. The minimum period of engagement in the industry now, under the 44-hour week national agreement of April, 1919, is half a day.

The CHAIRMAN: Just develop that, please; I want to see how that works.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Under the national agreement of April, 1919, which was afterwards reflected in local agreements in all the different ports, whereas formerly, as Mr. Bevin quite truly said, a man might be taken on for one hour or two hours, and then discharged, under the national agreement his minimum period of work is half a day, and his rate of payment is based on so much per half-day. On this claim, which is a claim for 16s. a day as a minimum wage, whether it is intended or not, it is in fact implied that the minimum period of engagement in the future shall be no longer half a day, but shall be one whole day. I do not know whether that is intended or not, but that is what the claim, of course, would effect.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not know. Just let me see the working of that. I should hold it to be a pretty strong measure that if there is work for hundreds of men for a part of a day, they could not take it because this arbitration resulted in all people being engaged for the day.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Under the present conditions of the 1919 forty-four hour national agreement, the minimum period of engagement is half a day. However, I do not think I need prolong this point, because Mr. Bevin tells me—I had overlooked it—that he told your Lordship that the intention was 8s. per half-day.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what was definitely said. It was put to him by me expressly.

Mr. BEVIN: With the exception of three or four ports where by agreement it was constituted six days.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a claim for 16s. a day, but what is meant is a claim for 8s. per half-day in a normal week of eleven half-days. However, the claim is framed, Sir Lynden; we shall endeavour not to ride off upon any technicalities. You are both agreed on that. You are quite right to raise the point, but I think Mr. Bevin dealt with it in his opening.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am quite satisfied with what my friend said.

The CHAIRMAN: There may be exceptional cases where trades now pay a full day always. Some ports pay a full day always. What we want to get is a general standard, so we will interpret the claim as being for 16s. a day, a normal week being forty-four hours divided into half-days.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think that clears it up, but I was bound to put the point, because, as it stood, the claim was not clear.

The CHAIRMAN: The Secretary reminds me that upon the first day's Proceedings, at page 43, you will find that Mr. Bevin has made that quite clear.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: At the same time, it is only right that we should understand that where there are particular local customs, as, for example, more than a half-day engagement, those particular local customs are to continue in future.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes; that question, at all

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events, is not prejudiced either way, it is left an open question; but we earnestly hope that when you come to small details of that kind you will not prolong the enquiry too much.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Certainly, my Lord. The second thing which is involved in Item 1 of the claim is this—that there should be one national minimum time rate throughout the whole of the country. That is the second thing involved. The third thing involved is that there should be one national guaranteed time rate for all piece-workers, irrespective of where they are working. The next point is that there is to be a minimum overtime engagement. Then the next point is that the basis of payment for shift work is to be fixed now for the future. Lastly, there is this: a minimum engagement for Saturday afternoons. Those are the various matters which are raised by the claim, and I shall have to discuss those in detail later. The claim is to apply to all the different classes of employers which I gave your Lordship earlier in the course of the case, and the claim is to apply to all the different classes of men who are mentioned in paragraph 11 of the claim, and are represented not merely by the Transport Workers' Federation, but by a long list of important Trade Unions which the National Transport Workers were good enough to furnish the employers' secretary with. Mr. Bevin points out that it is the same thing, that all these different Unions are affiliated with the National Transport Workers. It is a long and important list, and it may become important for another purpose later on.

Having just indicated in broad outline the features of the claim, let me come to a discussion of its details. The first point to which I have to refer is the question of one national guaranteed time rate to all piece-workers. May I state what I understand to be the intention? At the present moment a man, if he is working on plain piecework—that is to say, if he is being paid so much a ton for the cargo he handles—has his remuneration solely based upon the amount of cargo he handles at the piece price applicable to it. He has got no minimum now, except, I think, in one or two ports there is a minimum of guaranteed time.

The CHAIRMAN: I think Mr. Bevin said that that is so in London.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, in London, and I think Mr. Bevin said in Bristol, and possibly in other ports. The meaning of a guaranteed time rate, as I understand it, is this—that irrespective of the amount of work that is done a man is to receive always as a minimum what he would receive if he was not working on piecework but on a time basis. That brings the Court immediately to the consideration of what is the industrial practice with regard to the question of a guaranteed minimum time rate. The industrial practice falls quite clearly into one of two divisions, and the point the Court are here to consider is into which of those two divisions they will put the port work. Now, my Lord, in one great section of industry which is worked on a piecework basis there is no guaranteed minimum time rate. For example, if I take the cotton industry the cotton industry is entirely conducted on a piecework basis, and there is no guaranteed time rate. If I take the shipbuilding industry, in the shipyard there is no guaranteed time rate for pieceworkers. If one takes the great iron and steel industry, there is no guaranteed time rate. I think the reason is that where the custom of the

industry has always been piecework the amount of remuneration is to be fixed from time to time by mutual adjustment of the prices between the men on the one side and the employers on the other, and in some of these industries, as, for example, the cotton industry or the shipyard industry, there is a most complete and effective machinery existing for discussing the adequacy of piece prices from time to time between the employers on the one side and the men on the other. Therefore, in that branch of industry there is no such thing as a guaranteed minimum time rate. On the other hand, you come to the other section of industry in which there is a guaranteed minimum time rate. I will take, for illustration, the engineering industry. There a section of the engineering industry—a small section in point of fact—is on a piecework basis, and a worker who is doing the work on a piecework basis is always entitled to receive as a minimum what he would receive if he was working on time. I am also bound to point out that in one or two cases during the war, where piecework was introduced by the Trade Unions at the request of the Government, there was a guaranteed minimum time rate attached to the working of piecework.

The CHAIRMAN: Which trades do you say?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There are one or two trades, mostly connected with the engineering trade, in which in a particular district piecework was introduced and a guaranteed minimum time rate was attached—in the munitions trade.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you any example under the latter head of what I may call occasional labour? I will tell you what is in my head, and we will have the full argument afterwards. What is in my head about that is that when you give the list of the trades where there is no such guarantee you quote the cotton trade, shipbuilding, iron and steel. I suppose it may be taken as a matter of admission that there is always, so to speak, ready to hand a sufficient volume of trade to make it unnecessary, whereas the difficulty in the present case is that the volume of trade may not be there.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I admit that in many of the trades where there is a guaranteed time rate, as, for instance, engineering, there is some waiting for work, just as there is or may be waiting for work in the case of the dock trade, but I think the evidence will show your Lordship that there is not much loss of earnings through a worker waiting for work in the dock labour industry, and that where through causes to which he is in no way a party he is deprived of the right of earning through having to wait for work that is made up to him. If it is not, it most certainly ought to be. The case which Mr. Bevin put forward as an argument in favour of a guaranteed minimum time rate—namely, that if it was in operation the worker would not be prevented from working by the want of barges or the want of carts, or some element in the distribution system on which the work is dependent—is a pure case of waiting for work. Where a worker who is on piecework basis is prevented from making his piecework earnings by having to wait for work, that is a case for providing that under those circumstances he shall be paid. But that, I would submit, falls far short of making a general case for the establishment of a national guaranteed minimum time rate throughout the whole of the industry having regard to the industrial practice. As long as I make the distinction clear it will be,

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of course, for your Lordship to consider the force of the argument—I mean the distinction between a worker being deprived of his earnings through having to wait for work, it being no fault of his, and the distinction of putting in operation throughout the whole country a guaranteed minimum time rate in respect of all piecework. It is not a mere distinction in terms, but the difference does represent, I would submit, a real radical difference in industrial practice and in piecework trades, which are paid on a purely piecework basis—as, for example, in the shipyards, where although there is no guaranteed time rate, yet the worker is not allowed to be the worse off through his being prevented from working by reason of having to wait for work for some small period during the day. I want to make the distinction perfectly clear.

The view which I have put before the Court is this: Having regard to the magnitude of the work which is done on a piecework basis at the different ports, my submission is that any prevention of the worker in making his proper earnings ought to be specifically dealt with in one of two ways—either by providing that he shall not be worse off when he has to wait for work through no fault of his own, or by arranging that the piecework prices are such as to give him reasonable remuneration, and in point of fact the piecework prices are from time to time continually adjusted by the aid of percentages of increase, or in some such form as that, to increase the remuneration of the worker who is actually performing the work to which they apply.

The CHAIRMAN: Suppose an ordinary case of a workman in a port where there is no waiting for work, but there is plenty of work to be done, and suppose he is paid by piecework in the ordinary case, assuming honest work effectively rendered under a piecework basis, that would exceed the time-work allowance, would it?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, certainly; as, of course, regard is had to that in fixing what the piecework prices shall be.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot help having to feel that a thing which you will deal with later when you come to it—namely, the casual question—may cut into this part of the argument by-and-by, in this way: that the principle of whether there is to be maintenance, and, if so, what maintenance, may come to be related to this question of a national guaranteed time-rate; because once a minimum for a time-rate is fixed, observe, you could not apply a piece-rate to those who were not working at all, and you could only get a sum applicable to casuals out of work, which operated relatively to some guaranteed time-rate for the work.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not burke that point.

The CHAIRMAN: No, certainly not, and we are much obliged to you for developing the theme. I am only indicating to you that if we treat the case in compartments—and nothing could be better and more convenient—we may find at the end that there is a co-relation between one or two parts of the Inquiry.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes. I am obliged to your Lordship for putting any objection which your Lordship has in mind at the moment to my argument, because I desire to meet it, and those

whom I represent desire that it should be met. As I understand your Lordship's suggestion it is this, that in fixing the piece prices regard should be had to what a man would otherwise earn if for the time he was working on piece he were working on time.

The CHAIRMAN: I will be quite frank with you. Assume a man to get no work; he is on the register ready to work, but he gets no work. Assume a second man only to get half-work, and then that job is finished and there is no more at that time in that port for him to do—he only gets half, and he is on piece; and assume a third man, who is on a time rate. The desire of the claimants I understand to be that there shall be a general time minimum, so as to regularise the two cases; first, to put the piece worker, who may be suddenly thrown out of work in an hour, in the same position as if he were a time worker; and, secondly, to have some datum from which to calculate what is to be done with the man who is a casual altogether.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will answer specifically the last question which your Lordship puts by reference to what I understand is the actual practice. If your Lordship takes the case of a man who is started at the beginning of the first half-day on piecework, but before the termination of the first half-day finds his work done, he is in point of practice paid for the first half-day; he is not allowed to go away with only what he earns in an hour in his pocket.

Mr. BEVIN: You are wrong; that is the whole point.

The CHAIRMAN: Does that apply to all the ports in the Kingdom?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It certainly applies to a considerable number; but that is an entirely different thing from saying that where you have men working day in and day out on piecework they are to be guaranteed for that time a minimum time rate. That is a different thing. If a man in those circumstances starts a half-day by working on piecework and then finds his work done, certainly in many cases—I will not say in all—he is allowed for the half-day; but the difficulty which would arise if you put it as a broad case is this: I can put evidence before the Court to show that in certain ports—I will be quite frank with Mr. Bevin, and tell him, for example, in Hull—in one half-day I am told a man may start at the beginning of the half-day to work to a mark, that is to say, to get out as much cargo in the hold as belongs to a certain merchant; he may do that in an hour, and he may then turn straight off and work beyond that mark for the merchant to whom the cargo is consigned beyond that mark; and I am told that in a half-day you may have a man working for as many as two or three, and I am told—and the evidence will be given later—sometimes for as many as four employers. If the principle of a guaranteed half-day were applied to all piecework done under those conditions, of course such a man would receive automatically a guaranteed half-day's pay for each of the four employers. That I am sure cannot be the intention. As I put the case to the Court, it is this: that if a man is prevented from working on piecework by reason of causes which are beyond his control he should not be the worse off in those circumstances; but that is quite a different thing from establishing a guaranteed minimum time rate for all piecework throughout the whole of the port and harbour industry. Your Lordship

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will have the evidence later on this question of a guaranteed minimum time rate for piecework. I desire now to deal with the broad and very important question of principle of instituting a national uniform minimum rate.

The CHAIRMAN: You are rather reversing the order. That was your second proposition, the guarantee to piece-workers. We have had your observations about that. You now go back to your first point, the desirability of instituting a national minimum.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I may have been in error in putting it to your Lordship, but this was the point which I proposed to deal with next after the guaranteed time rate. A minimum rate may mean one of three things. I shall endeavour to explain to the Court what we understand by a minimum rate; and whether it is one of those three things or not is not determined by your calling it that, but it is very largely determined by the economic conditions under which it is put in operation. This question of a national minimum rate is one of the most important questions for consideration at the present time, and it does not affect merely the port and dock industry, but it affects a large number of industries throughout the country. A minimum wage may mean one of these three things: first of all it may mean what is commonly called a living wage; secondly it may mean what is sometimes called a standard wage; or thirdly it may mean what is more truly and accurately called a minimum wage, that is to say, a standard wage above which there will be special differentials. It is important for me to develop the radical distinctions between those three things, because in our view, unless the Court have the distinctions very clearly before them, they will hardly appreciate what are the apprehensions of the employers if a uniform minimum wage were introduced throughout the country. The minimum wage in the first sense of a living wage, I think, is pretty well understood, and one need not develop that, but a minimum wage in the second sense of a standard wage is what is commonly called a district rate, that is to say, it is the rate below which no man is expected or allowed to work at the work in question. A district rate is quite a definitely understood thing in any industry. You have in certain cases in certain industries a standard rate, but you have certain classes of persons receiving more than that rate; it may be a particular class. Take the engineering trade: You have the general rate, which is what the great bulk of skilled men are paid, but you may have a certain class of men, for example, who work in the tool-rooms at a special class of work, receiving a definite addition over and above the district rate; or you may have certain classes of men receiving individual advances over that rate in respect of special aptitude or skill. In that sense it is a minimum. In the second sense, where it is the rate received by all the workers in a particular grade of industry, it is what is called a standard rate. In the first sense, it is what is called a living wage. The issue is this: The industrial practice of the country—and I shall give the Court details in a moment—is not to fix a national minimum, but to fix a minimum for each particular district, thereby allowing for the economic differences and differentials which do, in fact, operate between one district of the country and another. May I, for the purpose of making the position quite clear, put the whole position as I understand it before your Lordship as far as it bears in the direction of my argument against a uniform national mini-

mum, and as far as it bears in favour of Mr. Bevin's contention in support of it. The first question, I think I am right in saying, of establishing anything in the nature of a national minimum rate was introduced into this country under the Trade Boards Act of 1909.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the chapter?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will hand your Lordship a copy of the Act. (**The same was handed in.*) In the year 1908 the House of Commons appointed a Select Committee to enquire into home work—the sweated trades. In pursuance of their report, in the next year, 1909, the Trade Boards Act was passed, and that empowered the Board of Trade to make a Provisional Order applying the Act, as your Lordship will see by sub-section 2 of section 1, to any specified trade to which it does not at the time apply if they are satisfied that the rate of wages prevailing in any branch of the trade is exceptionally low. The Act was applied directly to the four trades which are set out in this Schedule.

The CHAIRMAN: They were the sweated trades?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes; there were four distinct trades to which the Act applied.

The CHAIRMAN: Retail and wholesale bespoke tailoring, the making of boxes of paper, card-board, etc., machine-made lace and net finishing, and so on, and hammered and dollied or tommied chain making.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes. In addition to those four trades, under sub-section 2 of section 1 of the Act the Board of Trade was given power to make a Provisional Order establishing a Trade Board in respect of any specified trade if satisfied that the rates of wages prevailing in any branch of the trade is exceptionally low; and under section 4 of that Act your Lordship will see that a Trade Board when incorporated was empowered to fix a minimum rate of wages for time work throughout that trade, and also to fix general minimum rates of wages for piecework.

So there, my Lord, there was a case of a uniform national minimum time rate.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you got here anything similar? What I mean is this—that the Trade Board fix minimum rates for time work, and they also fix minimum rates for piece work, but was there any provision for fixing a minimum time rate as a sort of guarantee that the piece rate should not go below it?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I was going to point this out in a moment. Under this Act, No; but under an amending Act passed in the year 1918 power was given to a Trade Board to fix a guaranteed minimum time rate.

The CHAIRMAN: That was the amending Act?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That was the Trade Boards Act of 1918. Under that Act, by sub-section 2 of section 1, the Minister of Labour, who by this time had replaced the Board of Trade, could make a Special Order constituting a Trade Board and applying the Act to any trade on this condition: if he was of opinion that no adequate machinery exists for the effective regulation of

* Not printed.

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wages. First of all, may I make this observation: that it could hardly be suggested that either of the two conditions precedent to the establishment of a Trade Board under either the Act of 1909, or the Act of 1918, apply in this case. It could hardly be said that the docker's industry was one of the sweated trades as we understand the term, nor could it be said that no adequate machinery exists for the effective regulation of wages. Those are the two conditions which regulated the constitution of Trade Boards under the two Acts of 1909 and 1918. Under this Act of 1918, in addition to fixing a national minimum time rate, because they could either do it on a national basis or on a district basis, the Trade Board had the power to fix a guaranteed minimum time rate, that was under sub-section (b) of sub-section 1 of section 3. If your Lordship looks at section 3, sub-section 1 (b), beginning at the top of the section, it says: "Every Trade Board shall, subject to the provisions of this section, fix a minimum rate of wages for time work in their trade (in this Act referred to as 'a general minimum time rate'), and may also fix for their trade"—I skip (a) and read (b)—"A minimum time rate (which shall not be higher than the general minimum time rate) to apply in the case of workers employed on piece work for the purpose of securing to such workers a minimum rate of remuneration on a time work basis (in this Act referred to as 'a guaranteed time rate')." There are published documents which show the number of Trade Boards established, and which also show the general time rates which those Trade Boards have fixed. But my information is this—and no doubt it could be checked by application through your Lordship to the Ministry of Labour—that in no case has there been fixed a general guaranteed minimum rate for piece workers.

The CHAIRMAN: No national rate; no case in which there has been a national minimum.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Mr Bevin says I am wrong in that case.

Mr. BEVIN: Absolutely.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is my information, but it is most essential on this big question of industrial principle and policy your Lordship should have the whole facts on this matter before the Court; and I have no doubt that application to the Ministry of Labour will secure that information for your Lordship's purpose.

Mr. BEVIN: I should be glad, therefore, if application could be made for the Tobacco Trade Order, the Sugar and Confectionery, the Tin-box, the Brush Trade, and Mineral Water Trade Orders, which are the most recent issues.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The point I am on is this question of a national guaranteed minimum time rate for piece-workers.

Mr. BEVIN: That is right.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the question I am on, too.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The position will appear quite clearly if what I gather both my friend and I are anxious to do occurs—that your Lordship should have the information on that matter furnished to you by the Ministry of Labour.

The CHAIRMAN: I know, and that will be done, as you both seem to wish it; but I do not mind indicating to you quite frankly that if this has not been done under this Statute it will not deter us from doing what is right. What I mean is this: it is very useful to us to have precedent to go upon in a case where we mean to adopt a line previously adopted, but the whole of this Trade Boards Act Legislation is conditioned by this—that the Ministry has to declare through the Minister of Labour, for the instruction of the Trade Board, the conditions upon which it will extend the list of specified trades so as to include another trade. That has to be done, and he is conditioned in doing that by the fact that he must first be satisfied that the work is paid at an exceptionally low rate. Do you follow?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I quite follow, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: If we can, we shall preserve our freedom by not entering that restricted atmosphere. This thing will be determined on its merits. If precedents come along to help us we shall take them, but, if they do not, so much the worse for the precedents. I do not deprecate at all, in fact I value, your giving us those references to legislation; having looked at it myself I see that that practice is full of conditions and restraints which we do not wish to be bound by.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not at all refer to those Acts as suggesting your Lordship should be bound in any way by them. My object in referring to those Acts, and other Acts to which I shall make reference, is that in approaching this question your Lordship should have well in mind what has been done in respect of those industries throughout the country, industries of great importance; because, after all, my Lord, I think I am right in submitting this: it is very difficult to deal with any section of industry by introducing into that industry a principle without that principle immediately reacting upon other great sections of industry, and, secondly, it is valuable for this reason: that it is a clear admission that economic differences and differentials between different districts of the country, if they had to be recognised in other industries, certainly ought to be considered in this case as to whether they ought not to be recognised here.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite a fair observation.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I follow along that later line a little further, and I would only refer you, for example, to the Corn Production Act of 1917; there, my Lord, under that Act of 1917, section 5, sub-section 2, power was given to the Agricultural Wages Board to "fix minimum rates of wages for workmen employed in agriculture for time work, and may also, if and so far as they think it necessary or expedient, fix minimum rates of wages for workmen employed in agriculture for piecework." There, again, all minimum rates which have been fixed have been fixed upon a district basis, and I can refer your Lordship to the "London Gazette" of Tuesday, 23rd September, 1919, which in a long schedule sets out the minimum rates of wages for the different districts in the country.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you give us an example of that?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship, for example, takes the first page of the schedule you

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will see, first of all, in the first column, marked (1), all the country divided up into districts as you turn over the pages. Then, in the second column, you see the classes of workmen, and in the fourth column you see what are the district rates, and you will find, only for the purpose of illustration, it is divided, starting with the administrative counties of Anglesey and Carnarvon, etc. You will find that all classes there are paid the district wages which are set out opposite them in common form. Then, if you go on a little further, you will see that special classes of men in other counties are paid special rates; and the point I want to emphasise is this: that the whole thing has been done on a district basis as distinct from a national basis. To follow up the same line of argument, I would refer your Lordship to the Coal Mines (Minimum Wage) Act of 1912. There, by Section (1) of the Act, provision was made for the proposing of a minimum wage for workmen employed underground in coal mines. If your Lordship looks at Section 2 of the Act you will find it runs in these words: "Minimum rates of wages and district rules for the purposes of this Act shall be settled separately for each of the districts named in the Schedule to this Act by a body of persons recognised by the Board of Trade as the joint district board for that district"; and if your Lordship looks at the Schedule to the Act you will find all the different districts enumerated at length. They cover the whole of the country in which coal is worked, and my broad point is this, that in this most important Act the minimum wage is settled on a district basis, and not upon a national basis, as is the suggestion here.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you assist the Court by saying whether there has been a differential line drawn between districts under this Statute, and have different minimum rates been fixed?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am told there has. I have not had an opportunity of personally looking into it, therefore I would rather defer answering your Lordship's inquiry until I have made personal investigation.

The CHAIRMAN: We want to know, please, because this is somewhat similar; it is a very large industry, in many parts of the country, and the legislature adopt the line of district rates.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will look into it, and get your Lordship information upon it. Then, my Lord, to carry my argument one stage further, I desire to refer your Lordship to the Report of the Provisional Joint Committee of the Industrial Conference, which was held in Westminster on the 27th February, 1919.

The CHAIRMAN: The Report says the 4th April.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship looks at page 1 you will see the circumstances under which the Industrial Conference was held. It says: "At the Industrial Conference called by the Government and held at the Central Hall, Westminster, on 27th February last, it was resolved: 'That this Conference, being of opinion that any preventable dislocation of industry is always to be deplored, and, in the present critical period of reconstruction, might be disastrous to the interests of the nation, and thinking that every effort should be made to remove legitimate grievances, and promote harmony and goodwill, resolves to appoint a Joint Committee, consisting of equal numbers of employers and workers, men

and women, together with a chairman appointed by the Government, to consider and report to a further meeting of this conference on the causes of the present unrest and the steps necessary to safeguard and promote the best interests of employers, workpeople, and the State, and especially to consider questions relating to hours, wages, and general conditions of employment.'" I need not read any further.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not sure about this, and I will tell you why; I have been looking over this, and unfortunately I do not see that there was any dock representative either on one side or the other.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not think they were there, but if your Lordship looks you will see the vast number of trade unions who were there represented.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I see, including shipbuilding.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is quite fair to say that neither the National Transport Federation, nor the Miners, nor the Railwaymen, none of the great Triple Alliance, was present. That is a point for your Lordship to note; but my point is this: that this is one of the biggest and most important and influential conferences of employers on the one side and of trade unions on the other ever convened in this country, dealing with most important questions relating to the hours, wages, and general conditions of employment. If your Lordship looks at page 5 you will see what the procedure was. It says: "The first meeting of the Joint Committee, which was addressed by the Prime Minister, was held on March 4, and the following resolution was carried:—'That this Committee, in order that its work may be accomplished as expeditiously and thoroughly as possible, divide itself into three Sub-Committees, with the following terms of reference: (1) To make recommendations concerning.'" Then I need not read (1) or anything till I come to (2): "To make recommendations as to the desirability of legislation for a maximum number of working hours and a minimum rate of wages per week." Then on page 8, at the bottom, under the sub-head "Wages," you will find the recommendation of the Committee: "The Committee have agreed that minimum time rates of wages should be established by legal enactment, and that they ought to be of universal applicability. The Committee took full cognisance both of the difficulties of determining on particular rates and of dealing with exceptional cases. Having these considerations in mind, they make the following recommendations:—(1) Minimum time rates of wages should be established by legal enactment, and should be universally applicable." Just to complete the story, a Bill was drafted—

The CHAIRMAN: Before you pass from that, did the minimum time rate of wages cover the point raised here, the time rates that should operate with reference to piece-rate work?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, my Lord, it did not. I am just going to tell your Lordship the practical effect which was given to this recommendation. Following the recommendation of that Industrial Conference a Bill was drafted by the Government, which is called the Minimum Rates of Wages Commission Bill; it is Bill 198 of 1919. I should have liked to have given your Lordship

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a copy, but we found ourselves unable to get one. It is very short. May I read the clause to your Lordship?

The CHAIRMAN: Please.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: First of all, may I tell your Lordship that the Bill, when drafted, was submitted by the Government to this Joint Industrial Conference, and received the approval of the employers on the one side and the trade unions on the other? These are the terms of clause (1) of the Bill: "His Majesty shall have power to appoint commissioners consisting of a chairman and such other persons as his Majesty may think fit for the purpose of (a) inquiring into and deciding upon what such time rates of wages should be, regard being had to the cost of living in the various districts, and any matters which appear to the Commissioners relevant; (b) inquiring into and making recommendations as to the methods and successive steps by which such minimum time rates of wages should be brought into operation, and the machinery by which they may be varied as and when occasion requires." My point upon that is this: that in this Bill, drafted to give effect to the Report of this very important Industrial Conference, and accepted by the masters on one side and by the trade unions on the other, the question of minimum wages is to be dealt with entirely upon a district basis. While your Lordship has that Report in your hand, in order to avoid a second reference to it at a future occasion, would your Lordship just look at page 8, under the heading of "Overtime"? In the second clause of paragraph 10 it deals with the question of overtime, and it says: "Overtime, when worked, shall be computed and paid for in accordance with the custom of each particular trade in the several districts concerned, provided that overtime shall in no case be paid for at less than time and a quarter." The broad point I desire to submit upon this very important question of minimum wages is that if you examine what has been done, the statutory provision made for it in the past, and what is the intended statutory provision for it in the future, it is not on a national basis, but on a district basis; and, my Lord, I shall have to develop very shortly what appear to us, after a very anxious consideration of the whole matter, to be the results which would accrue, if instead of the district basis there were substituted for that a national basis. I was desirous really of following this question home, and I had intended at one time to go as far as Australia. I do not think I will go as far as that, but there this question of the minimum wage has been a crucial and an important question for many years past, and the question of a national minimum versus a district minimum has been very carefully considered by the two classes of industrial court, the Commonwealth Court of Arbitration and Conciliation, which deals with all industries which are partly in one province and partly in another (inter-State industries), and also by the Industrial Court in each particular State; and I can refer your Lordship to the very important legal contribution by the learned Judge who was President of the Commonwealth Court on the whole question of minimum wage.

In Harvard Law Review, Volume 32, 1918-19, at page 198 you will find a very learned disquisition by the learned Judge (Mr. Justice Higgins), who was President of the Commonwealth Court, on that question of minimum wages. I can summarise quite accurately the Commonwealth posi-

tion if I may by saying that the invariable practice of the Commonwealth Court is to fix minimum wages on a district and not on a national basis.

Then, again, my Lord, in South Australia there is a very important Industrial Court, known as the South Australian Industrial Court, which is presided over by Mr. Justice Jethrow Brown, the well-known author. There, in South Australia, if your Lordship looks at Volume I of the Reports of the South Australian Industrial Courts, you will find a number of cases specifically discussing the question of the minimum wage. I summarise the practice again in South Australia by saying that there this question of the national minimum versus the district minimum has been decided invariably on the basis of a district minimum. So, my Lord, my submission on this part of my argument will be this—that if one has regard to legislative practice in this important industrial question of national minima the great balance of authority in this country, and certainly in our Colonies, is all in favour of a district basis as against a national basis.

The CHAIRMAN: I think this is the right time to ask you this question: can you give us any idea of what in the view of those instructing you would be the cardinal distinctions between districts? Mark you, in the comparatively small island in which we live all the districts are practically seaboard districts, while the precedent which you quoted from Australia as a whole is a precedent from a vast continent. What we should like to get is any concrete help that you can give us (and you might consider it) as to the varying conditions of the prices of living in various parts in the country. Unless you give us a varying standard of that kind it does not appear to us that we are greatly helped by precedents such as you have given us.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think I can answer that—

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to add an observation in your favour to this effect: you have shown so much by way of legislative precedent here and legislative practice elsewhere as to put upon Mr. Bevin the duty of affirmatively establishing his general case. He may do it on the lines which I have already stated—namely, that climatic conditions are different, and there is a smaller area, and all the rest of it; but you have been so successful that if we are not to take your lawyer view of it the onus is put upon Mr. Bevin of establishing the case of universal as against district minima.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I want to deal now with that particular point.

The CHAIRMAN: One of my colleagues is good enough to suggest this to me: we do not ask you, of course, to undertake the very onerous task of distinguishing each port from every other, though some of us might wish that; but you might find your task easier if you were to limit your attempt to grouped districts. I do not suppose that is a difficult operation.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I start with this general observation—that, of course, the cost of living is not an item which affects only the members of the National Transport Workers' Federation, but it affects all trades.

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The CHAIRMAN: That may be, but that is not exactly the point that the members of the Court are desirous of getting information upon. The case against you, if I treat you as if you were contradicted, which I do not mean to do—the case being inquired into is a case for a universal minimum based upon the common foundation that as regards the price of living taken all over there is not very much between one port and another. That is the other side's point of view, and if you can displace that then your case for districts is fortified by the fundamental conditions to which I have referred.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I answer that point straight away by referring your Lordship respectfully to the distinction which I drew in an earlier part of my argument as to the three meanings in which the phrase minimum wage was used. If minimum wage is used only in the sense of living wage there is considerable force in the point your Lordship is putting, not of yourself but for the purpose of eliciting information from me; but where the minimum wage is not a living wage question but is a wage which includes not merely the living wage but, in addition to that, a wage to cover skill or aptitude of the worker or the arduous nature of the work, or the casual conditions under which the work is done, it becomes then not a living wage but a wage which is understood quite technically to be a standard trade rate, and it compares absolutely with what is the standard trade rate or the district rate in any other industry, the engineering, the shipbuilding, or any other industry in the different districts.

The CHAIRMAN: All those categories that are drawn up by professors and others are very often of a troublesome and misleading kind. It may lead to a frightful discussion to use the word living wage. You see what I mean? A living wage literally considered means enough to hold soul and body together; but that is not the way in which labour questions ought to be approached in this country, and we are all agreed about that on both sides. It will make my meaning clear to you if I refer you to an interesting table put in yesterday by Mr. Bevin, which we may call throughout this Inquiry the workers' weekly budget. You remember that summing up to £6 a week?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do.

The CHAIRMAN: There you find the elements of what, according to the case against you, constitutes a fair and reasonable standard—food, rent, boots, clothing, and all the rest of it. If you can take a document of that kind, and you can say, "Yes, accepting these as the elements of a fair standard to the worker, still that standard could be had 10s. Od. cheaper in Glasgow than it could be in London, or £1 dearer in Goole than it could be in Liverpool," and that kind of thing, if there could be conditions of that kind set forth, mark you, your case for districts would be fortified, though I do not say it does not stand upon other grounds.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am going to deal with that budget later, but I do not want, if I may say so with respect, to embark upon it just at the moment.

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly not.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I wanted to deal with the point also, which I am afraid I rather led your Lordship to diverge from, of the district minima as compared with national.

The CHAIRMAN: I only interposed because you were good enough to say that you rather appreciated knowing what was passing in our minds.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do, my Lord. May I just point out this: precisely the same argument applies to every other trade. If you take the engineering industry, which covers a very large number of districts, in each one of those districts there is a separate district rate. That is the practice in the engineering trade, and if you take any of the ports throughout the country you will find representatives of the engineering trade in those ports each receiving his own differential rate of wages. If you take the shipyard trades you will find that the shipyards situated in the districts of those ports each have their district rate of wages. For example, my Lord, take the Clyde district: they have a particular riveters' price list for riveting work on the Clyde; and on the North-East Coast, on the Tyne, in the great shipbuilding yards on both north and south banks of the River Tyne, they will have another and different riveting price list for precisely the same class of work; and if you go round the shipyards of the different districts of this country you will find that there is, both with regard to the time rate of wages and with regard to the piece prices for the same classes of work, a perfectly distinct district differential. That is an industrial fact of which your Lordship will be able to secure confirmation from any of the statisticians connected with Government departments who collate statistics of that kind.

The CHAIRMAN: Shall we see them here?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is in your Lordship's hands. If your Lordship calls for the information you can get it, but so far as the facts are concerned I can prove the facts with regard to each particular district.

The CHAIRMAN: And, of course, we are very glad to think that upon these facts there may be admissions and agreements made by one side or the other which will save a great deal of evidence; but what we are anxious to get is what is underlying them, what is the meaning of the differences, why are they? It is our duty, in advising the Minister of Labour, not to be, as it were, in the fetters of precedent. When a claim founded upon basal facts as to living is before us, a claim of an extent equal to a universal demand, if we were bound by precedent, without asking the reason why, we should be in a very weak position, and we are not going to do it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I stated what are the facts.

The CHAIRMAN: Quite right, and we appreciate your having given us that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Now, may I suggest at the moment what I think is the explanation of that, because at a later stage, as your Lordship has indicated what is passing in your mind, we will go into the matter, and we will endeavour to give, so far as can be given, the reasons for what are indubitable and definite outstanding facts in the industrial position.

The CHAIRMAN: That will be most helpful. Have you exhausted this district point now?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Then will this be a convenient time to break off?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship pleases.

(Adjourned to Wednesday morning next, at 10.30)

FOURTH DAY.

Wednesday, February 11th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

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The CHAIRMAN: What is your application, Mr. Mullins?

Mr. MULLINS: I wish to apply to watch these proceedings on behalf of the United Traders' Association of Liverpool. I do not anticipate taking any part in the proceedings, but they desire to be represented through me here.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Mullins, your presence is allowed.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord and Gentlemen: At the conclusion of the proceedings on the last day, I was dealing with the question of a uniform national minimum wage. In that connection, my Lord, I emphasised the importance, and it is an important matter, of distinguishing what we mean by a minimum wage. I pointed out that, as commonly used, the term applied to two distinct things: firstly, a wage which is called a subsistence wage, and, secondly, a wage which is called an occupational wage. Occupational wage in organised industry is arrived at by making an addition which is called an addition for trade skill or anything of that sort, a trade addition, to the subsistence wage; and you have, therefore, in an occupational minimum wage such as is claimed in this case, two elements, firstly, a subsistence element, and secondly you have the addition to that subsistence element in respect of the trade skill of a particular occupation, a form of occupational minimum. That point becomes of importance in connection with certain observations which I now propose to make to the Court.

I gave your Lordship certain illustrations of different organised industries; I pointed out that the invariable industrial practice was to have an occupational rate in each district. Districts are not necessarily large districts; you find differential occupational rates in adjoining towns.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you referring to dock labour, or to labour in general?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am referring to labour in general, and I am going to illustrate that by definite examples.

Just to recapitulate where I left off in order that I may proceed with my argument logically, I also indicated, and can prove, that what is true with regard to time rates is also true with regard to piece prices, and that you find in different districts for the same class of work done by the same class of men different piece rates. Then your Lordship asked me, and quite properly asked me, what was the explanation of those differences. It is therefore with that explanation that I propose now to proceed. Before proceeding, may I say that I was also asked a question whether, with regard to the coal industry, to which I have made reference, there were different district rates in operation. Your Lordship will remember that I directed the attention of the Court to the Coal Mines Minimum Wage Act, 1912, which provided for district time rates being settled by district boards in different districts. Your Lordship then asked, Has that been done? And your Lordship will find the information on page 111 of Volume 3 of the Coal Industry Command Inquiry. It is Parliamentary Command Paper No. 361 of 1919. I will lend your Lordship my copy, because I have the information in another form.

The CHAIRMAN: My Secretary will get a copy of that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will lend your Lordship this copy (**same handed.*)

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot help it (I am a Scotchman), and I find that one of the districts under the Statute is the whole of Scotland.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is an English Statute.

The CHAIRMAN: I think I am guided by the Act of Parliament, am I not?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I am turning to the Act itself to see if that is right. What is the name of the Act?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is the Coal Mines Minimum Wage Act of 1912.

The CHAIRMAN: That is right: one of the districts is the Mainland of Scotland.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes. I suppose that we may assume it is an injustice to Scotland—

The CHAIRMAN: No, the only assumption that occurs to me is that that was rather a sensible thing.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship is in a better position to judge than I am.

The CHAIRMAN: However, pray proceed.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I observe that Wales is in two parts, North Wales and South Wales.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I regret to find that Ireland is not mentioned at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you say page 111?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: What is your point?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I regret that I have not another copy, and I am following it from a different document, but if your Lordship will on that page take South Wales, for example, which is in that document (I am not putting it first), in June, 1914, there was a gross daily minimum wage fixed varying for each class of worker according to the description of the worker given in that column. Then that was increased in November, 1918, for each class of worker, and the third column gives the total daily minimum wage including percentage of war wage. Then if your Lordship turns over the pages your Lordship will find that in respect of each district there is a different district wage, not merely differing in respect of the district, but differing in respect of the various classes of men in the district. For example, if your Lordship looks at South Wales, for colliers the wage in June, 1914, was 7s. 4d. If one looks at Northumberland one will find that the wage of hewers is 5s. 6d.; if one looks at Durham one will find that the wage for hewers is 5s. 6d., but the wage for other classes of men in some respects is different. Then if your Lordship looks at Lancashire and

* Not printed.

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Cheshire your Lordship will find that the wage for the collier or coal getter in June, 1914, was 7s. 1.5d. Again, in South Yorkshire your Lordship will find that there were two rates, one of 8s. 9.90d. and the other of 7s. 7.10d. West Yorkshire is divided into two different districts, the Eastern Sub-division where the qualified getter's wage is 7s. 8d., and the Western sub-division where the qualified getter's wage is 7s. 1.4d. Then in South Derbyshire the wage for the same class of men is 6s. 0.6d. Derbyshire is divided into two districts, and in each of those districts there are varying wages for the different classes of men, not merely differing from the wages in other districts, but differing in respect of the wage for each class of men as compared with other districts. Again, in Nottingham, your Lordship will see the same thing. I do not want to spend an undue length of time on this point, but your Lordship will see that the whole basis of the Coal Mines Minimum Wage Act, 1912, is to fix a different district wage in each district. That, I think, answers the question which your Lordship put to me as to what, in fact, had been done under the previous Act.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you pass from that, may I mention this point to you? There are three columns: in the first is given the gross rate of minimum wage of 1914, in the second column is given the gross rate of minimum wage in November, 1918, and in the third column the daily minimum rate including percentage of war wage. Do you see that?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that 3s. 0d. and 1s. 6d. bonus a universal allowance?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, it appears to be, from the tables.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the universal flat rate, is it?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Now, will you guide me upon this: In one sense one's interest is in column No. 1, as showing what was the pre-war wage, but in another sense one is more interested in the ultimate figure. Would you kindly, as part of your argument, read the ultimate figure—or perhaps you will follow me: In South Wales the ultimate figure reached by the adjustment is 13s. 8½d., leaving out the decimal points; in Northumberland it is 11s. 3d., in Durham it is 11s. 0d., in Lancashire and Cheshire it is 12s. 6d., in South Yorkshire it is 13s. 3d., in West Yorkshire it is 13s. 1d., in the Western Division of West Yorkshire it is 12s. 3d., in South Derbyshire it is 11s. 9d., in Derbyshire 13s. 2d., and in Nottingham 13s. 2d. Now the extreme of variation seems to be between slightly over 13s. 0d. and slightly over 11s. 0d., and the point that the Court is anxious for you to help them upon, if you can do so, is this: has anything been stated by the Board which has worked under this Statute to indicate the ratio which was in their mind in fixing different prices for the same labour in different districts?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not know.

The CHAIRMAN: May I put this to you? You know, of course, do you not, the difficulty of coal

getting as between, we will say, solid thick workable seams and thin patchy seams, and the extreme difference between the case of a man who has to work largely in a horizontal position digging his coal and the man who can work with clear room for his arms. Has that anything to do with it?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I should certainly say yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Then you see what my point is. I am pointing out the difficulty, as you know in your profession, of being guided altogether by analogy, because here is an instance of a trade in which the conditions of labour are very different, and the strain upon the physical energy of the men is so very different in different cases that it may be the difference in rates is to meet that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am going to make that one of the foundations in my argument, that in fixing wages, especially the subsistence wage to get the occupational wage, you must certainly have regard to the class of work, and, having regard to the very great diversity of conditions with regard to the methods by which the work is done in the different ports, and to the class of work that is done, you cannot standardise. You must have regard to the character of the work in the case of ports, just as was done in the case of the coal mines.

The CHAIRMAN: Do not misunderstand me. With regard to the ports, I am not wishing to put anything to you except for the purpose of eliciting an answer. I want to elicit whether there is a difference, so as to see whether the argument applies or not.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My argument will be that there should be. I quite understand what your Lordship is putting to me, and it was probably my impetuosity in proceeding to put my argument a little before its proper time. Now, having answered to the best of my ability the questions your Lordship put to me with regard to the coal industry, I desire to proceed to a classification, so far as I am in a position to offer one, of these district differentials. One of the reasons for district differentials is the point I have just alluded to, namely, differences in the conditions under which the work is done, and in the character of the work that is done. There are other distinctions, and, as I shall show you, in this respect I am not theorising, but I am founding my submission upon what are indubitable facts. There are other economic conditions which produce a difference in wage: for example, there is the cost of living. Dealing entirely with pre-war conditions—because, as I understand, my Lord, we have to look at this problem not on the basis of the abnormal conditions which may exist, but on the basis of what are normal conditions—the difference in the cost of living in different districts undoubtedly affects the amount of the wage.

The CHAIRMAN: Your second point is the difference in the cost of living. What was your first point?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My first point is the different character of the work and of the conditions under which the work is done—a difference of work and a difference of working conditions. The second point, which produces a difference in wages, is the difference in the cost of living in different districts, food, rent, and other elements

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of that kind. Then, my Lord, there is another cause that has an effect, as I shall satisfy your Lordship, though why it has an effect is a little more doubtful, and that is the size, the population of the town in which the work is done. Your Lordship will have in a moment the official figures, which undoubtedly show the effect of the size of the town. I think, if I may venture to suggest it, that it operates in this way: it operates certainly with regard to the distance that men have to walk to and from their work; that is one undoubted respect in which the size of the town does affect the wages. Another suggestion I make is that the size of the town has an effect upon demand and supply; that, I think, must be one of the explanations. The third explanation, I think, of why the size of the town and the community has an effect is the reaction of wages in one industry upon wages in another. Those undoubtedly, I think, would be three respects in which the size of the town has an economic effect upon wages. This is not a matter of speculation, but is very carefully dealt with in a Report which Mr. Bevin has referred to more than once, published by the Board of Trade in 1913. It is called the Report of an Inquiry by the Board of Trade into Working Class Rents and Retail Prices, together with the Rates of Wages in certain Occupations in Industrial Towns in 1912. It is commonly known as the Cost of Living Inquiry of 1912. The reference to the Report is Parliamentary Paper C.D. 6955 of 1913.

In the year 1905 an Inquiry was made by the Board of Trade into rents and retail prices of food paid by workmen in a large number of towns in the United Kingdom. In the year 1912 a similar Inquiry was made. Unfortunately the Report is out of print, and I have not a copy I can put before the Court. I have had to borrow my copy from a library.

The CHAIRMAN: We have copies; it is a very important Report.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is a very important Report indeed, my Lord. There were 88 Industrial towns investigated as the basis of that Inquiry, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you proceed to that, would you remind me, if you please, of when and where the Index numbers were fixed with regard to the relative price of things at various dates.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord; I will do that.

The CHAIRMAN: That, as you know, is at the heart of everything.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord; it is the basis of the whole business. Not merely rents but retail prices and rates of wages in the separate towns where compared with an Index number; and the middle zone of London, excluding the outlying suburbs and excluding the congested inner portion, was taken as the basis for the Index numbers; and rents were compared on the basis of the number of rooms per dwelling, disregarding sculleries. The retail prices Index number was obtained by applying to the predominant price of each article a series of rates based upon the estimated working-class consumption of those commodities throughout the country as a whole; and to combine the Index number of rents and retail prices for the purpose of comparing that portion of the cost of living com-

prised in those two things, Index numbers were rated in the proportion of 1 to 4 respectively. The Index numbers of rent and retail prices were rated in the proportion of 1 to 4 for the purpose of combining the cost of rent and the cost of commodities and getting an all-over cost of living. That was done, as the Report says, after a considerable amount of investigation as to the accuracy of that particular rate. Then five separate Index numbers were calculated according to the rates of wages of two classes of men, skilled men and unskilled men in the engineering trade and in the building trade, which made four, and then compositors in the printing trade, taken by themselves; and the Index numbers for these three groups were based on the mean of the predominant wage rates for the separate groups included. The Index numbers arrived at in that way show, as the Report says, a considerably greater range of variation than the range of variation in the Index numbers for retail prices or for rent and retail prices combined. If your Lordship looks, for example, to page 2 in Arabic numbers, your Lordship will find there a Table which compares in each one of the 88 towns rents, for example, in 1912, in those towns, as compared with the London figure of 100. For example, if your Lordship looks at the right-hand side of the page you will see London is 100, and running your eye down the page you will see how the rents decrease, in many cases by large proportions, down to, for example, 42 in a place like Peterborough as compared with London. If you take Liverpool, for example, your Lordship will see the Index number for rent is 65, as compared with 100 in London, and in Manchester it is 64, in Cardiff it is 66, and the point of the Table is to show the great variation in 1912 there was between rents in the different places as compared with rents in London. Just to pass on to page 14.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you pass on from that, as the comparison is with the middle part of London, may we see where the docks are included? Are they in that or in the outer zone?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will get the description of the zones of London on page 15 in roman numerals in the Report.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, the middle zone, you see, includes Greenwich, Deptford, Lambeth, Chelsea, Poplar, Bethnal Green, and Stepney. With regard to London, what is important is, that where the Index number is admittedly taken for the country at large from the middle zone of London, which is reckoned as 100, the moment you go to the inner zone, which includes the docks, the Index numbers, except of rents, are higher by 16 per cent.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is quite true.

The CHAIRMAN: That is on the one hand.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am not sure that all the docks are in that zone.

The CHAIRMAN: I have read you the districts. On the other hand, you see, if there be 116 as the figure for the London Port District, it makes the contrast all the stronger between it and Peterborough at 42 and Liverpool at 65.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is quite true, my Lord. I did not want to press my case further

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than this: to show by the results of this Table what very, very important great variations there are in rents in the different districts throughout the United Kingdom, and to press upon the Court this submission, that an economic circumstance of that kind must invariably account for some part of the District differentials which we find, in fact, according to the practice of industry existed in the different districts throughout the country. That is as far as I put my submission on that Table. The same thing applies when your Lordship goes to retail prices.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you pass from that, have you any further columns which are supplementary to and subsequent to those you have given which bring that, so to speak, up to date?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, nothing further has been published. It may be that the Board of Trade or the Ministry of Labour have got information available in some form or another which would enable them to answer your Lordship's question, but nothing of that sort has yet been published.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Secretary, will you kindly note that in page 2 and the succeeding pages of Cd 6945 for the year 1913 there is made a comparison between the years 1905 and 1912 of rentals. Will you inquire if the Board of Trade is in possession of materials to enable a third column, applicable to the year 1914, and a fourth column, applicable to the year 1919, to be shown bringing the relative positions and rates up to date, for the information of the Court of Inquiry?

Sir Lynden, we will undertake to communicate with the Board of Trade, and we will place in the possession of both parties any information of that sort we get. That will, I hope, suit the purposes of both sides. It may be that it is the Ministry of Labour, but, at any rate, we will tap the proper source; if the information is obtainable, we will obtain it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Owing to the vicissitudes of politics it is now the Ministry of Labour, and no longer the Board of Trade, so far as these statistics are concerned.

Now I want to pass on to page 14 of that book, and to make the same observations in regard to retail prices, that, although you do not find the same range of variation between retail prices in London and in other towns, you do find in the year 1912 very substantial variations. For example, if you take those two pages you find that Index numbers are given for retail prices for meat, other food, and coal, and then for the combination of those three categories. If your Lordship will glance down, and take the Meat Table for example, you will find that while it is 110 in Aberdeen it is only 86 in Bristol, and it goes down to various other figures; I see Ireland is the cheapest. The same thing applies to other food. You have the variation there. Of course, you have a very material variation in respect of coal.

The CHAIRMAN: That depends on the distance from the seaboard and the distance from the port, does not it?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That must be the explanation, I think, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Having looked down this, it appears to me that the general mass of it sticks

very much to about the same figures in the general mass.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: When your Lordship says the general mass, you mean a combination of certain things in this table?

The CHAIRMAN: Take out coal, and all the rest comes very, very near. There are a great many instances of 100, 101, 98, 97, 103, and within these limits there is very little difference. Where there is an important difference is in a place like Limerick, in which the meat goes down to 79; but we are not concerned with that—that is an Irish case.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There is a range of variation of something between 15 and 20 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: I am reminded by one of my colleagues that that applies more particularly if you take the seaports.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Do not misunderstand me, my Lord; I am not straining the argument any further than to say here, for example, you have some of the economic circumstances which result in the differentials in district rates and wages. Now, if your Lordship would look, just to complete the story, at page 34, your Lordship will find on that page the Table of the rates of wages, and the index numbers are given which show the comparison between the rates of wages in the eighty-eight different towns and in London in respect of skilled men and unskilled men in the building trade, skilled men and unskilled men in the engineering trade, and compositors in the printing trade. There your Lordship finds a great range of variation in the rates paid in the different towns for the different classes of men.

The CHAIRMAN: That is in 1912?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Secretary, when you make your request to the Ministry of Labour for figures, you will please make it not only with regard to the rent and retail prices, but also the subsequent items.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Then again on page 52, it is only fair to draw your Lordship's attention to the Tables there, because they are used by Mr. Bevin in some of his Tables. At page 52 it gives a summary of the predominant retail prices paid by the working classes in October, 1905, and October, 1912, and the only point to which I want to draw attention is the considerable range of variation in the prices for the different classes of item. After this Committee reported, a Committee was set up to settle the rates of wages to be paid to the employees in the service of the Post Office. There were several Committees, but I think your Lordship will find the whole position summed up in the report of what was called the Holt Committee. It is Parliamentary Paper, 1913, No. 268. The name of the Committee is "The Select Committee on Post Office Servants (Wages and Conditions of Employment)." What that Committee recommended was this: that the wages of the workers in the Post Office should be settled, having regard to: (1) the different classes of work in the different districts; (2) the cost of living in the different districts; and (3) having regard to the district rates of wages: to the rates of wages prevailing for other trades in those par-

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ticular districts. Of course, it would have been impossible to have established the wages of postmen on a stable basis if they were out at elbows, so to speak, with the wages of other classes of workers doing more or less similar work in the same district. Perhaps I may give your Lordship the reference to it; I will not read it, as it is very long, but I have, I think, summarised accurately the position on page 42 of the Committee's Report.

The CHAIRMAN: I am asked by a member of the Court to put this to you, Sir Lynden: that the result of the Holt Inquiry has been subject to revision, or is in course of revision at this moment. Does your information agree with that?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I would not venture to contradict what your Lordship says at all. I can only go by the printed document and by the last return in regard to Post Office wages, which was document Cd 7355 of 1914.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that another one? The last you referred to was 268 of 1913.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: This is the last document, which is a return of Post Office wages, Cd 7355 of 1914; and that shows the action which the Postmaster-General then took upon the report of that Committee. If there has been any alteration since, I do not know of it. I have no reason to think, if one could judge from what one reads, that the principles which were laid down by the Holt Committee, which was the last of three Committees dealing with that matter, are being departed from. I understand the controversy now is the precise application of those principles to the Post Office employees, having regard to certain suggested cases which have come into existence since that time. If your Lordship is in a position to obtain the information, I, unfortunately, am not.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, you would agree with us all, would you not, that it would be utterly undesirable that we should proceed to settle a definite pecuniary claim on information which in any respect is out of date.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Oh, yes, my lord. Again, I do not want to be misunderstood. I am not asking the Court to do that; I am only asking the Court to have regard to these facts in these Tables as showing there is, and always has been, and always will be, differentials between the rates of wages in the different ports and towns in different parts of the country. I do not go further than that. I do not say in adjudicating upon the case your Lordship is to say it should be that, or should be this, or should be something else, on the basis of out-of-date information; but I have no reason to think that these economic conditions have changed.

The CHAIRMAN: We are pronouncing no verdict at all as to the relevancy of all this upon the main issue of the amount of wages in this particular claim; we allow it in, and are very glad to have your argument, which is at present directed logically to the issue: shall the wage fixed be universal or differential.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is as far as I put it.

The CHAIRMAN: I quite understand it, and that is perfectly right.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If I may just complete all I want to say on this subject by referring you to the Industrial Courts Act of 1919 your Lordship will see the present position. If you look at Section 6 of the Industrial Courts Act, 1919, it runs in these words: "The Provisions of the Wages Temporary Regulation Act, 1918, which are specified in the schedule to this Act, shall, subject to the modifications specified in the second column of that schedule, continue in operation until the 30th September, 1920." Then, if you turn to the schedule of the Act, you will see the sections of the Act of 1918 which remain still in force. Section 1 is the obligation to pay the prescribed rates of wages, and Section 4 is the definition of "prescribed rates of wages." When your Lordship turns to look at this important Act, the Wages Temporary Regulation Act, 1918, you will find it proceeds again on, and for the moment stereotypes, all these district differentials so far as they exist. Section 1 of the Wages Temporary Regulation Act, 1918, imposes an obligation upon employers to pay the prescribed rates of wages. Section 4 defines the prescribed rates of wages in these terms: "For the purposes of this Act the prescribed rate of wages shall be as follows: (a) As respects a man or boy employed in any trade or industry or branch of a trade or industry in a district the prescribed rate shall be recognised time rate or other basis for determining wages (with any allowance for overtime, night work, week-end, or holidays when worked and additional war bonuses or war advances) generally applicable on the eleventh day of November, nineteen hundred and eighteen to that class of workmen in that trade or industry or branch thereof in that district." So that until the 30th day of September, 1920, the Industrial Courts Act prescribes that the wages that shall be paid in each district shall be the prescribed rates in that district for the particular trade or industry or branch of trade or industry in question.

That completes all I want to say on the first part of the claim, the question of a uniform national minimum, except this: I submit that the Court cannot disregard these district differentials. One thing which has emerged as a fundamental fact of war experience is this: that every time the Government attempted to ignore these district differentials they landed themselves in trouble. Certainly many districts in the country regard with most careful scrutiny the rise and fall of wages in other parts of the country. For example, if I may give you one instance, the Clyde and the Tyne in the shipbuilding industry. You cannot give a rise of wages in one district without it reacting immediately upon the other. Some districts, like Clyde and Belfast, absolutely follow one another in wage advances or wage reductions, and you cannot, I submit, if there is going to be a stable settlement of the dock industry conditions, disregard these differentials which operate to-day and think, by a mere stroke of the pen, you can wipe them out, and that you can thereby bend into inaction and inactivity economic forces which have operated to produce these differentials in the past, and which, whatever you may say, will exercise a similar effect in the future. The same thing applies, and I may as well put the point in this place, to the local differentials which are in existence in the different ports.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you mean by "local differentials"?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Where you have dif-

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ferent classes of men in the Dock Labour Industry doing different kinds of work you will be unable to standardise those men.

Mr. BEVIN: And you are not asked to.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That relieves me; I was not quite sure what Mr. Bevin's intention was. I would only ask your Lordship to observe this, that while it is not suggested to standardise differentials, that is to say, different rates of pay, between men doing the same work in a port—while it is recognised that conditions and circumstances will be too strong for that, yet it is suggested that while you cannot do that in a port you can do the same thing for the whole of the country. Every argument derived from experience, and I should have thought every inference in common sense, is enough to indicate that if you cannot do that thing in a port amongst the different classes of men working in the port, you certainly cannot do it between all the ports in the country. That is the submission I make with force, I submit, on that point.

Now, my Lord, if I may make just one concluding observation on that part of my argument, one of the great difficulties that confronts all of us (and in this respect I think I can group the employers and the Trade Unions together) is the insistence with which the men in the different ports do maintain what you may call differentials or past practice, or anything else you like to call it. We had all hoped, and this is an illustration of great force, that when a universal 44-hour week was introduced in April, 1919, it would be possible to secure work going on continuously each half day: that work would go on from 8 in the morning till 12, and from 1 to 5 continuously. That, I think, was the hope, not merely of the employers, but certainly, I think I may say, it was the representation made to them by the National Transport Workers' Federation as part of the bargain in introducing the 44-hour week. But we have found this, and your Lordship will have the evidence before you in the box, that in many cases we have gone back to the old practices, and that men do not work continuously from 8 in the morning till noon, but they insist upon breaking off for a period of 15 to 20 minutes to go off for a smoke, or for refreshment, or purposes of that sort. That is one of the greatest difficulties in the case. You simply cannot wipe out and nullify these old traditions and these old practices which exist, not merely in a port itself but between the different ports in the country.

Now, may I just very shortly summarise what the effect will be of this uniform national minimum wage and the attempt at standardising which is involved in it? So far as each port is concerned, it will involve the same increase as you give to the minimum grade of worker to work him up to the proposed 16s. a day being given to every grade of worker. I do not think you can put that any lower than I am putting it. If you have grades of workers to-day who are in receipt of a wage by so much in advance of the wage of the lowest graded man, you cannot bring up the lowest graded men without at the same time bringing up the other grades; and that will be proved conclusively from the fact that you have found in the past that when one grade has been raised all grades have been raised. It has been the practice throughout the war, except, I think, in the case of the first war bonus given, that every single war bonus has been given on the basis of a corresponding amount to each class of worker.

The CHAIRMAN: May I interpose on that and say that I understand the proposition is that there is a certain prospect that that very large category might be reduced, by combining rates which vary fractionally or fragmentarily to various classes of workers into a sort of common datum for certain classes of workers. Have you any observation to make on that?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Well, my Lord, I do not understand that to be the proposal.

Mr. BEVIN: I made that perfectly clear.

The CHAIRMAN: I so understood it, and Mr. Bevin confirms my recollection.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not know to what extent that goes: whether it is merely where there exists a difference of, say, 2d. or 3d., or whether it goes so far as where there is 1s. or 2s. a day, I do not know how far it goes at the present moment. All I can say is this, that accepting Mr. Bevin's suggestion as being made with the fullest desire of effecting that, I would say that experience, and the evidence which you will hear, disproves the possibility of that being done as a practical proposition; that where you have the actual differences existing between different grades of men who have always had these differences acknowledged in the past, and acted on in the past, this Court will not be able, by a mere stroke of the pen, to wipe out those differences. Take, for instance, Liverpool. There the cargo workers, that is to say, the ship-men in Liverpool, receive to-day a wage of 12s. 2d. Those are the men who work on the ship. The men who work on the quays, handling the cargo off the ship or handling the cargo when it goes on to the ship, receive a wage of 11s. 8d., that is, a difference of 6d. If the proposition is that both those classes of men who have received that wage in the past are going to be content to receive the same wage in the future, on the evidence which we will submit it cannot be accepted. I will give you an illustration of that specific thing: I will give you not one case, but several cases, where ships have been held back under these circumstances; the firm wanted so many men to work on the ship and so many men to work on the quay, and there were not enough of either, and the ship men would not agree to work on the quay, and the quay men would not agree to work on the ship, even although they were paid the rates of wages applicable to the work in question; and the work could not be done, and the ship has been detained. I was not going to deal in detail with it here, but I sincerely hope that your Lordship will not think that Mr. Bevin's aspiration can be reduced into hard concrete fact until you hear the evidence of what has happened in the past, and until you hear the impracticability of insisting in the past on the very same thing which it has been suggested can by some way or other be enforced in the future. The whole effect, in my submission, of the raising of the rates of the minimum rated men to 16s. per day is simply to lift up the whole differential system of wages in the different ports by so much above the common level of to-day. The second effect, of course, will be to involve a similar increase, or a similar basis of standardising wages, to all clerical staffs and other staffs associated with the administration and working of the docks.

Mr. BEVIN: They are not members of the Federation.

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Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, they are not members of the Federation.

Mr. BEVIN: They deserve it, I admit.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not know why they have not responded to your invitation, then; but there it is. My submission is this: if this (as I submit) artificial basis is introduced into that section of the employees who are dealing with the actual handling of traffic on the docks, it cannot be resisted in respect of other classes of workers carrying on business in the docks.

The CHAIRMAN: There has been a very great rise in wages during these past years to the manual worker—I mean in the ordinary sense of dock labour. Does it consist with your experience that there have been relative rises to the other staffs, including the managers, the foremen, the clerks, and so on?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not know—but I shall get the evidence for your Lordship—that the precise increase of wages has been given in the two cases, but this I do say, that the increase of wages naturally, as you would expect, to one class reacts upon the wages in respect of the other classes.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not asking as to a specific proportion; I mean the fact of an increase to one class of labour in the past has resulted in further allowances, we will say, to the clerical staff; is that so?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am told that there is no question about that—that where increases of wage have been given to one class who are handling the cargo at the dock, the same increase of wage has to be given to the other classes.

The CHAIRMAN: I only referred to the clerical staff because you yourself mentioned them.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, those are my own words.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not say actuarially in proportion, but I mean substantially a rise of the same character and dimension was given in the one case as in the other; is that so?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am endeavouring to give an answer which shall be true as far as the whole port industry is concerned, because, of course, I deal with them all; and I will not say in every case, but in some cases, may I say a proportionate increase.

The CHAIRMAN: You will establish that no doubt when the time comes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, if your Lordship pleases. The third effect will be the effect of this standardisation upon piece prices. A very large amount of work is done—in some ports almost the whole of the work is done—on the piece work basis. If the wages of the time workers are to be put on this basis of 16s. per day minimum, that must react, of course, straight away upon the piece prices. The proper way, I am submitting with considerable confidence, in which in such circumstances piece prices should be dealt with is certainly not by way of adjusting them when they are reacted upon by the alteration of the time rates. Piece prices, where they exist now in the different ports, should be a matter of consideration

by themselves, and I think Mr. Bevin has put it that the piece workers will have to have their case separately considered and dealt with; I do not quite know how, but undoubtedly they will have to be dealt with, because you cannot alter the rates of wages of the time worker without producing an immediate effect upon a piece worker who is in the same port; and I think it would be a very serious thing if it were proposed that the earnings of the piece worker should be increased by the same amount as the time workers, or upon any such basis of that sort.

The CHAIRMAN: That opens rather a serious field of inquiry. Are you not, however, omitting the fact that all that is wanted here is to fix a minimum? I quite follow the part of your argument, which you have made so clear, that that minimum might involve a relative up-lift of time work in the various grades to which you have made reference. I quite follow that; but does it follow that if there is a guarantee of the minimum rate, as it were, necessarily you must alter the piece rate?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Surely, if you introduce for the first time a guaranteed time rate of the same amount as the rate of the time worker it must involve, and immediately involve, an increase of the piece prices. Let me give your Lordship an illustration. During the war there was the famous introduction into industry of the celebrated 12½ per cent. The 12½ per cent. was as fixed originally intended to be given to skilled men who were teaching women to work in the workshops, and who found themselves often in this position, that the women they were teaching were making more earnings than the masters who taught them; an attempt was made to remedy their position by giving a bonus of 12½ per cent. That was extended to all the time paid men in the engineering trade; it went through the whole of the engineering trade, the shipyard trades, and every other trade by way of sympathy, until at last I think the men who scavenged the roads and the market gardeners got the 12½ per cent. But the point is this, that no sooner was that given to the time workers than the piece prices of all the piece workers in all the various industries were raised by 7½ per cent. in order to compensate them for the fact that men who were working on time received an additional 12½ per cent. upon their time earnings. If a guaranteed time rate is introduced equal to this 16s. per day minimum, it will be quite impossible to avoid the entire upsetting of all the piece prices throughout the different ports. I want the Court really to have that in mind.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, I see the importance of this, and we all see the importance of it, in this way: you have come, no doubt, in the course of your argument, to the question of the effect of the proposed increase, and you are entitled to forecast the consequences of an increase in one department and to say that it means a general up-lift, not only of all classes, but even all piece-workers; but I am not sure that Mr. Bevin would agree that his argument was conditioned or clogged in that way. He would say, I think, that if he has his minimum, it does not necessarily follow that the piece rates will have to be raised.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Might I bring to your notice what Mr. Bevin said? It is on page 8 of the official notes of the Second Day.

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The CHAIRMAN: Curiously enough, I have my finger upon that point.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: He said this: "We want also that when the 16s. 0d. is conceded, the piece-workers shall be dealt with, as they have been under previous national agreements, largely by local negotiations, but with the understanding that they shall be given such an advance as would leave them in relation to the day workers in the position in which they are at the moment."

The CHAIRMAN: That seems to verify your position that, although it is given the name of a minimum, it involves a general up-lift all round.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is so. That is the claim, and I am only engaged now in putting before the Court what, in our judgment, are the essential points of the claim, and the direct effects of the claim, call the claim by whatever name you like.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you assent to that, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, but it was calculated in the cost and the number of the 125,000 as part of my case; only in arriving at that cost I pointed out, as you will see in another part of the notes, that a part of the 125,000 would be day workers and a part would be piece workers. I handed in to you sheets showing you the number who would be on the minimum, and the remainder would be adjusted locally; but in my estimate of the cost of the whole advance that is covered by the table which I submitted.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: To pass to another point, the effect of this standardisation upon the different ports, your Lordship will have representatives of the different ports before the Court, and they, I think, will satisfy your Lordship that the prescription of a uniform national minimum in respect of all ports throughout the country would bear very hardly upon them, and, having regard to the conditions under which their ports are carried on, would result in serious injury to their trade and to their business. That is a general statement; the proof of it, I think, will be submitted with force to the Court at a later time.

The CHAIRMAN: I meant to interpose with an observation, and I think that this is, perhaps, the time to do it, because you are now on the effect of standardisation in the different ports. I put it without in any way arguing it, but in order to let you know the kind of difficulties which occur to the mind. Suppose you have different prices—and in prices I include rent and coal, and everything else—different index figures on the whole applied to different ports, the result of a differential rate, according to your argument, might be a preferential rate. Let me make that clear, in order to give you a wide illustration. I take an extreme supposition, in order to test the argument. Suppose the expense of living in London were one-third more than the expense of living in Glasgow; the result on the uniform standard would be a preference to Glasgow, would it not?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: On that supposition.

The CHAIRMAN: On that supposition, it would be a preference to Glasgow.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Supposing that that

circumstance were not nullified by some other counter-circumstance.

The CHAIRMAN: I know, but I want to test the argument against the minimum so as to give you the full effect and weight of it so far as you have proceeded. In such a case you would establish that the universal rate demanded by abolishing the differential in what the wages would fetch, would establish a preference to those ports where living is cheaper. It would be a preferential rate to those ports; would not that be so?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: On that supposition, yes.

The CHAIRMAN: You see, therefore, the importance of challenging what I have called the workers' budget put in by Mr. Bevin. A minimum is demanded, and you object to it in the sense that there can be no universal minimum struck. I have not consulted my colleagues about it, but you may take it from us that we are not going to down tools, and give no answer at all to the demand by saying that to strike a minimum universally is impossible. We will not do that if we can help it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am not suggesting that you should, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: That down-tools' policy being abandoned, we shall now suppose that we go to work. Mr. Bevin's case is: "Go to work and give a universal figure." Your case is: "No, because that is impossible." But that will not do; you must go further; you must meet Mr. Bevin's case—I am only suggesting this to you—by saying: "Now there are acknowledged districts in this Island, and there are the index prices applicable to those districts, and instead of 16s. the rate should be 15s. in one port, 13s. 6d. in another, and 12s. in another." That is one way of doing it, is it not? That is to say, applying the scale of living, including rent, to the various districts the true worker's budget minimum would be so-and-so. I think it would follow that that would mean a specific application to the various ports; and we shall hope to have some light from you upon that inquiry. In the other case you would be entitled probably to present this view: I do not say that it would be a strong case, but perhaps it might be your strongest view: If you are fixing a minimum, you will say: Strike your average of all the seaports, strike your cost of living, and Mr. Bevin's figure is not confirmed, and, on the contrary, it ought to be so-and-so." I am pointing out to you two courses open to you. If we do not reject this because it is an impossible task, we must address ourselves to it either upon the lines Mr. Bevin presents or upon another of two lines: first, on differential lines, specifically differentiated, applicable to the various ports; or, secondly, strike an average of all those various ports, and even it up so as to produce a figure which Mr. Bevin's argument justifies. Have I made the position clear?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Quite clear.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not conceal from you that it will be a task of some difficulty, but observe, the difficulty is all because you two parties have not agreed about it yourselves, and you must help us.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Quite so. I shall bear closely in mind what your Lordship says, but may

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I suggest that the two courses which your Lordship indicates are not mutually exclusive.

The CHAIRMAN: That may be.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think there is a third course, and the third course is the course which I was going to adopt. The third course is this. I was proposing to satisfy your Lordship (I hope) that there was no case for a uniform national minimum, having regard to its nature and effect, and, secondly, that there is no case for attempting to lay down on the one basis only of the cost of living the minimum for each port. My submission will be later, and I may just as well make it now to meet what your Lordship has said—

The CHAIRMAN: Just indicate it, please.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It will help possibly to clarify my argument. My submission is that what your Lordship has to do is what is done in all other industries, and what has been done almost universally throughout the war: take the rates as they exist to-day in the different districts and look at them and examine them to see whether they are adequate, having regard to the ordinary tests of adequacy which are applied. Cost of living is one, and there are other tests which are applied, to which I must refer later. But that means this: if you examine the existing rates and find that in a particular port, or over the whole country, there is a case for an increase—I am not at the moment admitting that there is, but if there is a case for an increase—then if you give a flat increase, that of course maintains the existing district differentiation. That was done throughout the war; all the war bonuses given were in the nature of flat increases of so much on the ordinary and existing district rates so far as time rates are concerned. The whole purpose of that was to avoid interfering with what is a most important matter—the mutual relationship of trades one to another. You may dislike it as a fact, but it confronts one as a fact, that there is a mutual relationship existing in the country between different trades, and you cannot raise or reduce the wages of one trade without reflecting at once upon the wages of other trades. That is the course I am going to submit the Court should take; take the existing district rates as they stand to-day, examine them, test them by the different tests which are commonly applied—one test would be what your Lordship mentioned, the cost of living, but that is only one test: there are other tests to which I must make reference—and then see if those wages are adequate. If your Lordship finds that those wages are adequate, or if your Lordship finds that in any particular case—and I am not denying that some cases do want individual consideration—there is a case for an increase, either a flat increase over all grades, or even, though I do not admit it for a moment, if your Lordship finds that there is a case for a general increase all over, that is a very different matter from attempting to strike uniform national minimum rates, or even grouping the ports all together to try to strike what I may call a combined district minimum rate. I am bound to say that I think the Court would find themselves in very great difficulty if they attempted to combine the different ports into districts and to strike a minimum rate for those ports without regard to what are the existing minimum rates in those ports for dock labour as it exists to-day, or for all other trades. It is the latter course that I was proposing to adopt, though I will deal, of

course, with what your Lordship has said to me on the point. That was all I wanted to say on the effect of the uniform national minimum, firstly on the labour in each port handling the cargo, secondly on the clerical and other staffs, thirdly on the piece prices, and then fourthly in different ports.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it in accordance with your information that in the case of these war increases which you quite properly say have been made, while it may be the case that they have been, so to speak, added to existing rates, they have had the result in many cases of taking out the pre-war differences?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The answer is both yes and no. It is yes in the sense that of course if you add the same amount of money to different local rates you arrive at different percentage differentials; but if you add the same amount of money to different rates you still maintain the same difference in pounds, shillings, and pence between the different rates.

The CHAIRMAN: When the time comes you will have to satisfy us about that, because there may be doubts upon that point. I am putting the point to you that the result of the war bonus has been as it were a smoothing out of certain differentiations, and that apart from the percentages to which you properly allude there has been a smoothing out actually in money received.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: As far as my information goes, I want to be accurate, and only one case occurs to my mind at the moment: from the papers which I have seen there are certain individual places where meal hours have been paid for since the commencement of the war, and, of course that would *pro tanto* alter the amount of money.

The CHAIRMAN: You are in possession of the point?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord. As a general proposition, if you had before the war two certain differential rates of any amount you like, and you add the same amount of money to each, you still maintain the same difference in money. You may alter the percentage of the excess of one rate over another. That I agree, but that is not what is looked to in industry.

I will now proceed to deal with the second item of the claim, which is overtime. The claim is, "That when working on there shall be paid time and a-half, with a minimum of 4 hours, and the following conditions should be observed: When the men take a half-hour for tea they shall cease work at 8.30 p.m. and be paid 4 hours at time and a-half; where one hour is taken for tea, the men to cease work at 9 p.m. and be paid for 4 hours." First of all, on the question of the tea hour, the National Transport Workers' Federation take what, in our view, is a very proper course in that respect: they try to encourage men going off and taking their tea hour, and the employers try to do the same thing: and the bargain, I think, if I may put it so, between the National Transport Workers' Federation and the employers was to provide the men with facilities for going off for tea, and I think you will be satisfied that certainly the Transport Workers' Federation have not been able to impress their men with the desirability of so doing, and we find that, so far as that provision (because it is really a provision) of the

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national 44-hour agreement goes in some districts, it is quite unenforceable.

Mr. BEVIN: There are no facilities.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Mr. Bevin says there are no facilities for the men getting tea. Your Lordship is going to inquire into that, but I think you will find that where there are facilities men do not go; they prefer to work on and get the day through, and that is a great difficulty—one of the many difficulties—which we have found in enforcing anything in the nature of a national settlement.

Mr. BEVIN: Can you name the ports?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am going to leave that. This overtime claim when reduced to concrete figures involves two things: firstly, the guarantee of a minimum amount of overtime, and, secondly, the rate of time and a-half at which that overtime is to be paid for. If I take the case where the tea hour is not worked, and a man works on, say, for half an hour only, he would be paid for that half-hour 4 hours at time and a-half, that is to say, he would be paid 6 hours ordinary pay for half an hour's work; that is to say, he would be receiving twelve times his ordinary pay for the half-hour he worked. If he worked on for an hour he would be receiving 4 hours at time and a-half, that is to say, 6 hours' pay for one hour's work; he would be receiving six times his ordinary pay. I submit with some confidence, that, having regard to the practice of industry, that claim can hardly be described as a reasonable claim. In the same way, if he works on during the tea hour the position is this: If he had a half-hour for tea and he works on through the half-hour for tea, he receives for the half-hour that he works 4 hours at time and a-half, that is, 6 hours; he receives 6 hours' pay. As he works through the half-hour for tea he will receive another time and a-half for the half-hour that he works, namely, he would be paid for three-quarters of an hour in addition on the ground that he had worked through the half hour tea; so that he would receive 6½ hours' pay for the half-hour he worked, the half-hour being the tea interval; and so the claim goes on. I would submit that it cannot really be considered to be a reasonable claim that, if half an hour, or one hour's overtime is worked—and I shall have to deal with the necessities for working overtime—in respect of that there should be a minimum pay of 4 hours at time and a-half; that is to say, 6 hours' ordinary pay.

My Lord, the expressed intention of the scheme is to impose a penalty upon the employers of port labour. That assumes that the working of overtime is something which can be entirely avoided, and so completely can the working of overtime be avoided that, if an employer does work overtime, he is to be penalised by this payment. If your Lordship has regard to the fact that the claim is expressly put forward as a penalty on working overtime, it is obvious it is a great deal more than what is a reasonable payment, if the Court come to the conclusion that overtime may be worked, having regard to the inherent conditions under which port and harbour traffic is carried on. There are all sorts of circumstances which result in the necessity of working overtime. Your Lordship will hear in detail, by witnesses who will come with facts, that certainly should go a long way towards convincing the Court of the necessity of working overtime as an ordinary incident. There

is the character of the trade; for instance, the coastwise trade. The coastwise trade, if my information is right (the Court will have an opportunity of checking it), cannot be carried on if there is not to be reasonable facilities for working a proper amount of overtime. In certain ports there is the question of tides, involving essentially the working of overtime, because you cannot conduct the business of one of these big ports with the sort of mechanical regular routine on which you would conduct a machine shop; I mean, the tides and the weather and nature has a good deal to say in that respect. In the same way you have in many ports seasonal trades, and those trades result in a considerable glut of imports at a particular time, while at other times there is a comparative shortage of that particular kind of cargo. Those circumstances, the weather, the character of the trade, the local effect of the tides, the question whether there are seasonal trades or not, mean that there must be some reasonable margin between the ordinary working day and the period of time that may be worked by overtime if you are to carry the trade of the port through. The Court cannot, I submit, come to the conclusion that this claim in respect of overtime which is put forward as a penalty ought reasonably to be allowed unless they say that, having considered the whole of the circumstances, there is no necessity as port traffic is carried on to work the overtime at all, and that, therefore, any employer who does work overtime properly subjects himself to this penalty. There is one question which Mr. Bevin has raised, and it is a question which one naturally views with considerable sympathy, and that is the question of giving fair notice if overtime is to be worked. Of course, nothing can justify any employer refusing to do what any reasonable, humane employer would do: give such notice as is possible to men who are required to work overtime. In many cases notice is not practicable, the employer himself has not the information, but where notice is practicable, there ought to be no difficulty in assuring that such notice as is possible should be given in respect of overtime that is intended to be worked. I do not want to say anything more on the question of overtime than that. Your Lordship will have to consider the point.

The CHAIRMAN: I know, but we should be very glad if those instructing you could afford us an alternative scheme. We have heard the very forcible observations you have made as to the nature of the claim, which is the claim to penalise overtime, and you meet that by saying that overtime is a necessity of the trade, and therefore it should not be subject to penalty. Assuming it should not be subject to penalty, would those who instruct you be able to afford us any alternative as to the reward to be paid for overtime?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We could give you the actual facts of what is paid in respect of overtime at the different ports. We have all that carefully collated, and that no doubt can be put in by the different witnesses; there will be no difficulty whatever; but the principle that we should ask the Court to adopt is this—

The CHAIRMAN: That is what I want to get at.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That a reasonable amount of overtime should be obtainable if required at a reasonable rate of pay.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not quite sufficient for

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my purpose, because we want to see what either side would represent to be a reasonable figure.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is difficult to lay down any standard basis because of the variation of conditions in the different ports. Your Lordship will have information from the different ports as to what is paid in those ports. It would take me a long time now to go through it and give the evidence which will be given later, but it is going to be given.

The CHAIRMAN: I am just adopting the principle of letting you know the kind of thing we expect to have when you come to present your case in detail.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: All that information has been got out, and your Lordship will hear it exactly. You can run your eye down the rates of overtime that are paid now, and see at once how they compare one with the other, but they are the result of long practice. If there are any particular respects in which it can be suggested that it is unfair, that must be considered, but as a broad general standard principle I confess I should not like to commit myself to anything more than this, that having regard to the peculiar character of the port industry a reasonable amount of overtime is necessary, and ought to be obtainable at a reasonable rate of pay.

Then the third item of the claim is: "If men work any time after 8.30 or 9.0 p.m. a full night to be paid. 'Full night' to be as defined in local agreements." That, as I understand it, is to meet the case of a man working on after the close of the normal working day, working past 8.30 or 9.0 p.m., and then proceeding to work into some part of the night. I think your Lordship will hear that that really turns on the same kind of consideration as the question of what I have been addressing to the Court on the subject of overtime. It is a question, if it is necessary to get a ship away, that a man should work after 8.30 in the one case or 9.0 o'clock in the other. I think your Lordship will see that there is a reasonable ground for asking that that work should be done if it is really necessary, and is reasonably paid for.

Mr. BEVIN: It cannot be less than the night if you take a man's night.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will hear the exact details of the practice in the different ports, and I think we shall be able to show your Lordship what exactly is done.

Now I come to the question of shift rate, and this is a very important matter. It is the fourth item in the claim: "Where men work on regular shift work not less than time and a half to be paid for the second shift, and in the case of piece-workers rate and a half." There are these two outstanding facts. Shift work is not to any material extent being worked at the present moment. There are one or two ports where, in regard to particular classes of trade, shift work is in operation, but the object is, as I understand it, to provide in advance what shall be the basis of shift work payment if and when shift work is introduced. On that I make this general observation, that it is extremely undesirable, before this most difficult question and controversial question of shift work has been put into practical operation, for this Court, without knowing any of the circumstances, to provide in advance what the rate of pay shall be. The whole conditions on which the introduction successively of shift work depend are these: firstly, that the work should

be so regular and continuous that it is possible to organise two shifts, a day shift and a night shift, or three shifts, a day shift, an afternoon shift, and a night shift, to carry the work on continuously, and the whole basis of the business is continuous regular work. That is an exceedingly difficult matter to arrange for, so far as ports are concerned. Secondly, there is this further condition: that the removal of cargo from the quay must proceed continuously and concurrently with the discharge of cargo from the ship. You cannot discharge your cargo in a continuous stream from the ship unless your means of getting that cargo away from the ship over the quay to wherever it is going can also be operated continuously; and at the present moment that, unfortunately, from the circumstances of the case, is not a practical proposition. It also involves this, my Lord, that there should be continuous work during the whole period of the two shifts by railways, by carters, and by all the other means of distribution. That is admitted at the moment as not in progress.

The CHAIRMAN: May I interpose this question? I really do not know how the thing stands, but both parties, I have no doubt, will desire to assist us. May this question of shift work not have some relation to the question of the left out and unemployed casuals, in this way, that if there were some definite system of registration of the total available work, and also a definite system of making a certain allowance even to those who are not at work, you might be able, under the system of shifts here and there, and perhaps not infrequently, to establish a double shift, putting on all your unemployed casuals on the double shift. I am not saying that that is the idea in my mind, but I wish that the practical men on both sides would deal with it. It may have a bearing on the question of the possibility of the utilisation of casual labour. If you raise any obstacle to the shift system you thereby increase the element of casual labour; if, on the other hand, you facilitate the conversion into shift labour on occasions when you can use up the unemployed casuals, you may to that extent relieve the position.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is a proposition which your Lordship has enunciated in the hearing of many practical men on both sides, and they will consider it. My submission at the moment is this, on instruction, that shift work at the moment is not a practical proposition in regard to port industry, and that therefore it is very undesirable, before the thing has been worked out and the conditions fixed, that the rates and conditions of working shifts should be settled in advance, without any of that knowledge before the Court to guide them, because there are so many different ways of arranging payment for shifts. There is the practice of fixing so much for the day shift, and a greater payment, half as much more, for the night shift, as is, for example, asked here; but that has the difficulty, and it is a practical difficulty, that has occurred dozens of times, that men will go on the night shift instead of the day shift for the purposes of bigger earnings. There is also this practice, that an addition is made for the night shift, and that that addition is divided one half to the night shift and one half to the day shift, so that you have a uniform payment for both shifts, the men alternating round. The payment for the day shift is the same as for the night shift, but the extra payment that would be put on the night shift is divided, one half on the night and one half on the day, so that the actual payment for both shifts is the same.

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The CHAIRMAN: That is rather clever. Is that done?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is done in industry, as well as the other, and there are other bases of working shift work, that is to say, the shift may be a certain number of hours, and you pay the man not for the actual hours he works, but for a greater number of hours at his ordinary time rate. That has got certain advantages under certain circumstances. Therefore my submission is this: when this whole question of the payment of shift work is a matter of such intricacy in industry, it is very undesirable, before the actual conditions have been thrashed out, under which shift work can be put in practice in the ports, that the Court, without that knowledge and without that information, should settle what ought to be the rates of remuneration. That is the practical point I am putting, and your Lordship will hear my evidence upon it. I am not for a moment saying that where it is practicable it ought not to be done. I do not think there is any difference of view between Mr. Bevin and ourselves upon that matter. The only point of issue is this: before we can know how it can be done, and where it can be done, and when it can be done, we ought not to prejudge the question by settling hypothetical rates of pay and the basis of remuneration.

Mr. BEVIN: Shift work is being done.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I agree there are certain cases where shift work is being done.

Mr. BEVIN: At time and a half?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Very likely. I think I have said that there are some cases where shift work is being worked at present.

Mr. BEVIN: And paid time and a half?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, and your Lordship will hear the circumstances under which that is being done, and they bear no relation whatever to the circumstances which must obtain in dealing with general cargo and other matters of that sort. My Lord, on claim 5, "Saturday afternoons and Sundays up to starting time on Mondays to be paid for at not less than double time at day or overtime rates." To deal first of all with the question of Saturday afternoons, there are two considerations.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, immediately before the adjournment I had come to claim 5 in respect of Saturday afternoon and Sunday work. To deal first with the Saturday afternoon part of that double claim, I think I am stating accurately the position in the big majority of industries to be this, subject to a distinction to which I shall draw attention, that Saturday afternoon is treated as overtime is treated, namely, a business to be paid for in accordance with the number of hours that are worked. Now, my Lord, I recognise a distinction between the great bulk of industries where there is a guaranteed week and an industry such as the port labour industry, where it is not a guaranteed week, but a minimum engagement of half a day. That, in the judgment of the Court, may or may not be a distinction of importance, but in the industries where you have a guaranteed week this is most certainly the fact, that Saturday afternoon work is paid for at overtime rates

according to the number of hours worked. In other industries, where each day for the purposes of overtime stands on its own—that is to say, where overtime is not subject to a minimum of so many hours worked through the week—Saturday afternoon is also paid for according to the number of hours worked. In this case, my Lord, of course the dock industry is on the basis of a guaranteed half day. That is a distinction, and a distinction of some importance, and the Court will have to consider, in respect of this industry, whether there is any special reason to depart from what is the custom in the big bulk of industries generally, namely, paying for Saturday afternoon according to the number of hours worked. I will be quite candid with the Court, and say that there will be cases which will come before the Court of certain ports which are already paying for Saturday afternoon on the basis that if a man works for one hour or for two hours on the Saturday afternoon he is paid for the whole half day. I do not like to generalise upon this particular point, because I recognise that there are practices which go both ways, and the Court will have, I think, to consider each case on the basis of the local circumstances.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you inform me of this fact, whether in ordinary contracts of affreightment for lay days and demurrage days any regard is paid to Saturdays?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am told, my Lord, that in a contract of affreightment Saturday does count as an ordinary day.

The CHAIRMAN: That was my impression.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That, of course, is one of the circumstances to which the Court will have to have regard; but having regard to the divergence of practice amongst the ports, I do not want to generalise in this particular matter. I think it is a matter on which the Court should suspend their judgment until they have heard the facts with regard to the principal ports.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not want to press you, but on the other hand you are respondent to a definite claim, and the Court would like to know what your proposition is in reply to it, so as to have your evidence and your reply upon a definite line of fact.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I can answer that, my Lord, in this way: our suggestion is that the conditions which have grown up in the different ports on the basis of the local conditions do provide that the nature of the work and the nature of the payment on Saturday afternoons shall be maintained, that there is no case for altering those conditions.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps that is implied in what you are saying, that the basis of the arrangement should be the existing local circumstances.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, and to satisfy the Court that those existing conditions are reasonable conditions we shall give full evidence of what those conditions are, and what the rates of remuneration are. That is the way in which I wish to deal with that. Now, my Lord, with regard to Claim 6, "Steps to be taken to secure the reduction of overtime to reasonable lengths and systematic overtime to be abolished," on that claim I say this, that subject to the necessary exigencies of local condi-

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tions of trade, tide, weather, and seasons, we are heartily in agreement with the National Transport Workers' Federation that as far as possible all overtime should be confined to reasonable limits, subject to this, that there may be some exceptional cases; for example, it may be necessary for a ship to be finished so as to get away to avoid waiting the whole of the day, and in those circumstances I think it will be admitted to be reasonable that an exceptional amount of overtime might be worked in order to clear that ship.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there anything inconsistent between that and your antagonist's proposition? Just read it again. What does the claim say?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: "Steps to be taken to secure the reduction of overtime to reasonable lengths, and systematic overtime to be abolished." We are in agreement with that, understanding it in the sense I have just mentioned.

The CHAIRMAN: That refers to systematic overtime; they want the system abolished, leaving you the exceptions, I understand; but who is to judge of the exceptions?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship has asked me a question now which I can deal with at this moment or at a later stage. I will deal with it now instead of at a later stage.

The CHAIRMAN: Later, if you please; I do not want to disturb your logical reasoning.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will deal with it at the moment. Mr. Bevin has made what, to my mind, is a substantial case for the creation of some sort of machinery for the discussion and negotiation of wages and conditions of employment in different districts. I think the trend of industry is in that direction. If, for example, one takes the scheme which is known as the Whitley Council scheme, there, my Lord, the basis of organisation of employers on the one side and trade unions on the other is this: There is a Joint National Council formed to discuss matters common to the whole of the industry; in each district there is a Joint District Council formed for the discussion of matters peculiar to the district; and we find that this system represents the general constructive ideal of government at the present time. We find that there are existing in certain trades some peculiar types of organisation; for example, in the engineering trade there is a national conference under an agreement which is commonly known as the York Agreement. There are district conferences held in each district at which matters of importance in the district are discussed between the employers and the trade unions. There is the same thing in the shipbuilding trade. Some ports have already accepted the progress on industrial organisation in the direction I have mentioned by establishing Committees of that kind in their districts; for example, in Liverpool there is a Committee in existence which does admirable work. It consists to the extent of half its number of representatives of the employers, and half its number of representatives of the men, and it is called the Dock Labour Joint Committee, and it has a recognised status under the agreement which prescribes the rates of wages and conditions of employment for dock labour at Liverpool. Now, my Lord, I am going to suggest that it would be an admirable thing as one of the outcomes of this Inquiry if provision could be made for the

establishment of similar Committees in different ports which would comprise, so far as the employers are concerned, not merely the port authorities, but all the other classes of port labour employers, port authority, ship-owner, barge-owner, tug-owner, warehouseman, wharfinger, and each of the different classes of employers; and I venture to suggest that if a Committee of that sort could be established as in Liverpool, and its operations could be attended with the same goodwill that seems to characterise its working in Liverpool, that would be a very material step forward towards harmonising conditions of labour in the different ports. Therefore, I suggest that that question which your Lordship mentioned—the question of whether overtime is or is not necessary, or whether a particular amount of overtime is or is not reasonable having regard to the local circumstances, is precisely one of those very questions which ought to be discussed by a Dock Labour Joint Committee constituted on the lines I have just indicated.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope you will not think that I am referring to myself, but you have omitted an important point: Suppose you have a balance of interest on that Port Committee, who is to be the chairman of it?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: What I suggest with regard to that, my Lord, is this, that that is precisely one of the questions which ought to be left for mutual adjustment. I think I am stating what is probably the common sense of the industry, even although it may rather outrage the logical mind, when I say that questions of that kind of local machinery and local procedure, who should be the chairman and who should not be the chairman, to-day, to-morrow, or the next day, are precisely questions which ought to be left to local negotiation and local settlement.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall be interested to hear about that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will hear the evidence, and I think without unduly flattering either Mr. Sexton on the one hand or Sir Alfred Booth on the other, that Liverpool affords an example of what can be with advantage done in other places. That is a constructive suggestion which I was going to offer at a later stage, but which I offer now, that a Dock Labour Joint Committee of this kind should be established to deal with all such questions as I have indicated, and if so established would be in consonance with the whole progressive trend of industry as exemplified in the Whitley Council's schemes, and also by existing practice in large industries like the engineering, shipbuilding, and other similar industries.

Then, my Lord, I will pass, if I may, to the seventh item of the claim, which is: "Where men work or are paid for two shifts in succession they shall not be permitted to recommence work for twenty-four hours, or two shifts, from the time of ceasing." I think on that point, except under very exceptional conditions, that represents certainly what is in a great part the existing practice, and certainly which, in any case where it is not the existing practice, is accepted by the employers as what ought to be the practice except where exceptional circumstances make it impossible to carry out. I am not going to offer any opposition to the underlying principle of that, subject to this, that, of course, it is very difficult in an industry, organised as the port labour industry is, for an employer to satisfy himself that a man when taken on now may not have worked at

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some period inside the twenty-four-hour limit mentioned here for some other employer. I do not know how he is going to satisfy himself about that, because I am afraid some men do it. But so far as the employer is concerned he, I think, takes the view that that is not an unreasonable proposition, and does not more than represent what is the practice at most of the well-run ports except in circumstances of some special emergency.

Now, my Lord, the eighth item of the claim is that "Permanent men shall have their wages adjusted in order that they shall be in the same relation to casuals as existed prior to the establishment of the forty-four-hour working week or the signing of the new national agreement." The permanent men referred to there are men of every class: they include, of course, the maintenance men who are employed on the maintenance of the docks, and dock workers, and things of that sort, and they also include the supervisors, foremen, and people of that class. The practice in the past has been that the wages of those men have been closely related to the wages of casual labour, and undoubtedly if casual labour receives an increase as the result of these proceedings it will be necessary to increase the wages of permanent men. That has been the practice, and that is one of the effects which the employers say would automatically result from the claim made in this present case. There is only this one special observation to make with regard to foremen; Where you have foremen who are working with time-paid men and both the foremen and the men are paid on a daily basis, then, of course, it is a pure question of preserving a certain relationship in pounds, shillings, and pence between the wages of the foremen and the wages of the men; but where you have a foreman who is paid on a time basis working with men who are paid on a piecework basis, it is very difficult in certain circumstances to preserve any distinct relationship, because the pieceworking men in the gang may to-day be working on a specially remunerative line of work, and their earnings may, in fact, be greater than the earnings of the foreman who is paid on a time basis. Therefore, my Lord, in subscribing to the generality of the proposition laid down in the claim I must reserve the case of foremen who are working on a time basis with pieceworkers working on a piecework basis, because although in general the distinction between the foreman and the men will be marked, it would be impossible to say that that distinction shall exist and be the same every day of the week or on every line of work. I do not think that would be practicable.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that a substantial difficulty?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is a case which arises fairly frequently, and your Lordship will hear about the difficulties of it later.

Now, my Lord, I come to the ninth item of the claim, which says: "Where overtime conditions as outlined in the present proposals vary with local conditions, and are found after local negotiation to be impracticable, districts to be given power to vary the proposals, provided that the total amount paid for overtime shall not be less than herein proposed. I do not quite know what the effect of that is: Quite frankly, I do not know what is meant.

The CHAIRMAN: It seems to me to be a suggestion that the overtime conditions, if they are varied, shall not be varied for the worse.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I read it rather as representing an apprehension in the minds of the claimants that their standardised conditions of overtime may in cases not be found to be practicable, and some other system may have to be adopted.

Mr. BEVIN: I should like to explain that point to save a good deal of trouble.

The CHAIRMAN: Please do. Will you first read the claim through?

Mr. BEVIN: "Where overtime conditions as outlined in the present proposals vary with local conditions, and are found after local negotiation to be impracticable, districts to be given power to vary the proposals, provided that the total amount paid for overtime shall not be less than herein proposed." That refers to certain limited coastal ports and certain places where men have to travel long distances to their work, where the tea hour and things of that kind may not be able to be put in a general rule: in other words, in every case of national agreements there have had to be some slight exceptions to meet some slightly altered conditions. Assuming, for instance, a steamer were working in the Thames out in the river, it would probably be unwise in that special case to bring the men off ashore for their tea and to take them back again. We agree that in very exceptional circumstances, after local negotiation, some slight variation of the hours and time may need to be made provided that in making that variation the employer is not to be in an advantageous position with regard to his competitors in the total amount of money paid. That was the reason for that claim. Generally speaking, all over the country where men are working in docks and wharves, and places of that kind, the general rule which we have got down is practicable, but in shipping there are some slight exceptions, and rather than lay down an arbitrary line which everybody had to follow, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, we gave to our local representatives, or proposed to give, power to vary them in those very exceptional circumstances.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am much obliged to Mr. Bevin. As I understand it, it admits that local conditions are not such that you can reduce them all to one uniform standard.

Mr. BEVIN: May I again put it: I do not want confusion on my statement. This may happen in a port—not between ports at all—but it may happen in the Port of London, we will say. It is not a question of a difference between ports, but it is a difference in a port. That is what the thing is intended to cover, and that is all.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I did not mean at all to quote Mr. Bevin's observation unfairly. My observation applied not merely to differences between ports, but to differences in ports, and as I understand it, it is an admission that the differences in ports, as Mr. Bevin says, are such that you cannot reduce them all to one rigid common standard; and, my Lord, to that extent we are in agreement; that is largely our case. But if your Lordship looks at the proviso to Claim 9 it is that whatever the local conditions are the amount of money to be paid for overtime is not to be less than that proposed in Claim 2. Although our local conditions may vary, the amount of payment for the working of any overtime is not to vary. We are to have uniformity of payment, but

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not uniformity possibly of the conditions of working overtime.

The CHAIRMAN: You see it is rather difficult to apprehend this. We are much obliged to Mr. Bevin for intervening. I understand that your first observation applies to shipping, does it not?

Mr. BEVIN: It arises more particularly in that case.

The CHAIRMAN: Would this be in accordance with the views of both parties, reading section 9 to be something like this: "In exceptional local conditions in or between ports allow such elasticity as to adapt these conditions."

Mr. BEVIN: That is what we mean by the proviso.

The CHAIRMAN: The proviso is, I gather (see that I am right about it), that whatever you do you are not, by means of that elasticity, to adapt your local conditions so as to deprive the workman of his uniform minimum rate.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: That is all.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think there is no question about it that that is the intention; that is one of our objections, if I may say so. The intention is quite clear.

The CHAIRMAN: I know; but let us take the things in their order. We shall assume a settlement come to on the main proposition; for, after all, that is the big thing. All that is wanted, as I understand by this 9th proposition, is to say: do not apply your rules to overtime, and all the rest of it, in such a cast-iron fashion as to result in an impracticable state of affairs. Let there be such elasticity as will adapt the local conditions to these exceptional circumstances, always provided that you are not using the exceptional conditions to deprive the men of their general rights. We shall assume that we settle the general rate one way or the other on one scale or another. Assume that to be settled. Then, of course, its universality as a minimum would be destroyed if you allowed local exceptions to cut it up. That, I understand, is the meaning of it. I do not see myself, but it is not for me to advise a man of such experience as you are, Sir Lynden, that, put in that way, anybody is harmed at all. I think both parties are agreed to it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It depends on what you put in that way.

The CHAIRMAN: I am putting it in the logical order that I have stated.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: On your Lordship's assumption.

The CHAIRMAN: You start on the assumption that the question No. 1, or the principal question in the case, is answered in a certain way. Then you have the concession that there may be exceptional circumstances. You know in the sphere of law that an exception ceases to be an exception the moment it destroys the rule. That is all Mr. Bevin contends for. He says: do not destroy our minimum, adjust the application of the minimum to the local conditions, the tea hour, if you like,

but let the men have the rate which is commonly determined. That, as I understand it—I may be wrong; it is for you to judge and advise—does not seem to me to prejudice you. I understand on the heads 6 and 7 that there is a likelihood of reasonable agreement without anybody intervening. I think you might say the same, without detriment to your clients, with reference to No. 9: that you will consider it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I can answer your Lordship now. There is never any difficulty in formulating a rule; all the difficulty in life arises from applying the rule to the particular circumstances.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite so.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The real difference, in substance, between Mr. Bevin and myself is this: He says: I can assume such uniformity of conditions that I can formulate a general rule, and then leave the exceptions from that general rule to be dealt with under paragraph 9. Now, if I may just finish, on the other hand, I say: No, there is such a diversity of conditions that you cannot formulate a general rule.

The CHAIRMAN: That is on the main proposition. I was taking you one step further. I was assuming that, one way or the other, with the assistance of the very able men who are my colleagues, we came to some general idea as to a fixed minimum. Assume that. Then, that being so, whatever be your exceptional local adjustments, I think you would agree that they should not be such as to destroy the general rate gained under process No. 1.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If it is assumed that there can be, or should be, a general standard rule, of course I am driven to accepting a clause of this sort providing for the exceptions.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, you know, this point that you are on now is a strong support to your view that here is, by concession of the other side, a state of matters, not unique, but probably frequently arising, of exceptions, and therefore it is a case for local conditions being adjusted to local needs, and not by the general rule. That is, of course, your argument on the main point.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, that is the main point.

The CHAIRMAN: All my observations were upon the other view.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My only difficulty is that I always like to see exactly where I am going.

The CHAIRMAN: Far be it from me to lead you or to presume to guide you.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I was bound to put to your Lordship what strikes me as a fundamental difference separating Mr. Bevin and myself, unhappily. He assumes such universality of conditions as enables him to lay down a general rule. I, on the other hand, assume, and shall try to prove, such a diversity of conditions as to prevent a general rule being established. That makes, really, the question of claim 9, so far as I am concerned, immaterial for the purpose of my general argument, except to emphasise this point.

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The CHAIRMAN: Except that it emphasises your point.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It emphasises this point, that it recognises there will be in cases such divergence as to make it necessary for that sort of thing to be dealt with by local negotiations. Now, may I go to paragraph 10 of the claim, which says: "Where in any district men are working under conditions more advantageous than present proposals, the new national agreement shall not operate to depress such conditions." That, I submit, emphasises the argument I was earlier addressing, that you cannot, and this is an admission of the fact, eliminate local differentials; where they exist to-day, they will continue to exist in the future, and, in point of fact, this very clause in the claim provides for their continuance.

Mr. BEVIN: That was taken from the Trade Boards Act.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not doubt at all there are precedents for it. I have said now all I want to say upon the claim, and I want to go to another section of the case. I want to deal now with the case which has been made in support of the claim by Mr. Bevin. The first matter I have to deal with is the question of the increase in the cost of living. On that point I have to deal first of all with some tables which were put in by Mr. Bevin. The tables are the C. Tables. Those are the only tables I wish at this juncture to refer to. C. 2 is the first table I have. That is the table put in to show that the average increase between the end of July, 1914, and December, 1919, is 198½ per cent. Your Lordship will notice several things about that table. First of all, it deals with three classes of commodities, which are classified in the second, third, and fourth columns. One is headed, "Cereals and Meat," the second is headed "Other Foods," and the third is headed "Textiles." The average of 198½ per cent. is the arithmetical mean of the sum of the averages in those three columns. There are certain observations one is bound to make from the statistical standpoint in regard to this Table. Your Lordship will want for the purpose of my argument the other Tables to which I must refer successively. In C.2 your Lordship will see in the second, third, and fourth columns a certain number of commodities grouped together. Column 2, cereals and meat, column three, other foods, column 4, textiles; the percentage of 198½ is the arithmetical mean of the sum of the average of the percentages in those three columns. If your Lordship adds up all the percentages in columns 2, 3, and 4, and takes the arithmetical mean, you will get 198½, the figure given there. Your Lordship sees, taking column 2, the figure at the bottom of the column is 249, the figure at the top is 100; subtracting 100 from 249 you write down 149; in the same way in the next column, subtracting from 250 at the bottom of the column the figure of 100 at the top, your Lordship will write down 150; then in the next column you would write down the difference between 396 and 100, namely, 296; adding 149, 150, and 296 together, you get 595, which, divided by 3, gives you 198½. That is Mr. Bevin's figure. The observations one is bound to make from the statistician's point of view on this Table are these: first of all, a very small range of articles is included; secondly, it is assumed that each of the things in those columns are of equal value—in other words, that textiles is of the precisely same value as cereals and meat.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I raised the same question when I saw the Table.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship raised the same question, and therefore this Table is subject to the criticism that is always directed against an unweighted average.

The CHAIRMAN: I was groping throughout Mr. Bevin's speech to see how he purported to get a datum line which should be adjusted; it cannot be a datum line to take the average of things one of which is used ten times more than another, because the datum line is completely distorted in my view unless you take some household expenditure on particular articles and add them together. You will never come to anything on the doctrine of averages, where the things that are averaged are of a different extent of consumption.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Instead of getting a level claim by this system you get an Alpine height, and it leads to very curious conclusions. However, that is my comment on that Table. Now, may I pass to the next Table, C.3?

The CHAIRMAN: Really, what the Court wants is that when you take a thing of that kind, like C.2, with a manifest fallacy underlying it, you should give us a counter statement to undo the fallacy and show what is the truth. Now could not the statisticians engaged in assisting you do that and say: "C.2 amended in accordance with common sense would read" so-and-so?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, my Lord, that is not practicable.

The CHAIRMAN: Is not that practicable?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, and I will tell your Lordship in two words why. I am going to give your Lordship certain figures.

The CHAIRMAN: It may not be practicable, but anyhow it will take a lot of argument to convince me that it is not; I think a statistician worth his salt could do it in the matter of an hour.

Mr. BEVIN: This was taken from the "Economist." I hope the Editor will be able to deal with the criticism.

The CHAIRMAN: The figures are all right; it is the doctrine of averaging their mean which leads to trouble.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There are certain gentlemen who are called correctors of the press; I am not going to assume that rôle here. I am going to give your Lordship figures later, but I have an objection to building what I think is a sound superstructure upon a foundation of sand. That is why I am bound to discard this Table for the reasons I have given.

The CHAIRMAN: You are engaged at present on a purely and properly destructive task.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: On the principle that I can only do one thing at a time. I am coming to the second stage later. The second Table is C.3, and the prices which Mr. Bevin has taken in the second column of C.3 are prices taken from the Cost of Living Inquiry to which I referred this morning, that is the Parliamentary Paper

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Cd. 6955. First of all, I would point out this: on page 86 of that book to which I referred this morning your Lordship will find, for example, the predominant retail prices paid for bacon in all the 88 towns of the United Kingdom; and the particular kind of bacon which is budgeted for in the second column of this Table is called "collar"; and your Lordship will see the prices for collar in the third column on page 86, and in the same column on subsequent pages for all towns. Your Lordship will see the considerable variation in the price for that commodity in those different towns. As long as we understand exactly what has been done, the position is clear. Mr. Bevin has taken a figure of 4½d. to 6½d. per lb. for collar, which he puts in the second column of this Table C.3; and, if your Lordship would look at page 86, you will find, I think, that with one exception—

Mr. BEVIN: It is taken for Liverpool, a typical town for docks; more typical than Peterborough, for instance.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: With one exception, you will find that that is the cheapest price for that commodity in any town. The percentage of 470, which is put in the fourth column, is the percentage of 2s. 6d., the present price, over the cheapest price for that commodity in any town. Of course, my Lord, that, as a figure, may be accurate for that particular case, but, as a generalisation, it is quite wrong, because in point of fact, as shown by the Table, persons in other towns were paying considerably more, and it would be unfair to base the percentage of increase on the cheapest in those 88 towns and neglect all the others where the prices were dearer, and therefore the percentage of increase would be less. That is only a comment by the way.

The CHAIRMAN: In Portsmouth the collar of bacon is 7d. to 8d.; in Sheerness it is 7½d. to 9d.; in Hull it is 6d. to 7d.; the figure they have chosen is a very lucky figure, Liverpool 4½d. to 6½d.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If the 4½d. were increased to 9d., it would just cut in half the increase of percentage of 470 and make it just half. That is the point.

The CHAIRMAN: 4½d. to 6½d. is the figure they have taken. Anyhow, we have your criticism. What is the London figure for that, do you know? I see the London figure is 7.8d. (that is 7¾d.) to 8d. and a fraction. I see your criticism there.

Mr. BEVIN: I selected Liverpool because that was a typical dock place where there had been no advance since 1905. I would like to make that clear.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am not at all complaining about the selection of Liverpool. I am only showing what is the statistical effect of selecting Liverpool, which is the cheapest town.

The CHAIRMAN: It is quite justifiable and proper to explain that; I am much obliged to you.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is the basis on which the percentages in the fourth column are obtained. Then, my Lord, I go one stage further in criticising the legitimacy of these percentages; because, if your Lordship will look, the average increase at the bottom of the fourth column is

239. That is the sum total of the percentages in the fourth column divided by the number of articles. Again, my Lord, it is an unweighted percentage. The practical effect of that is this: that for every 16 eggs which a person ate in October, 1905, he, in the same time, ate 1 lb. of collar of bacon, 1 lb. of back of bacon, and 1 lb. of streaky bacon, and 1 lb. of rolled bacon. It really leads to the most extraordinary result, but that is the statistical effect of the unweighted average in this case. As long as that is understood to be the effect, I make no further comments upon the figures. It seems, for example, if I go further, that eggs are of the same value as bread; and, my Lord, in the last column of the Table, at which the average percentage of increases of October, 1912, over October, 1905, is arrived at, you will see that in the total no less than 600 is brought into account in respect of eggs, while only 50 is brought into account in respect of bread. Your Lordship will see in the last column opposite eggs there are two entries of 300—300 in respect of British eggs, and 300 in respect of foreign eggs; the sum of those two is 600; so that 600 is brought into the mathematical computation in respect of eggs. If your Lordship looks further down, only 50 is brought in in respect of bread; and then it is all added together, and the average percentage of 179 is arrived at. Perhaps your Lordship will bear my observations on this Table C.3 in mind when I come later to deal with the actual budgets as ascertained by the Committee on the Cost of Living presided over by Lord Sumner. I need not deal further, from my point of view, with Tables C.3 (a) and C.3 (b); all these tables proceed on the basis of this unweighted average, and they are summed up in Table C4 (b). That gives the increased percentage of present prices over 1905 as 223½; and the increase of present prices over 1912 as 188¾ per cent.; and those are arrived at by taking the arithmetical mean of the averages which have been obtained on the unweighted basis I have just referred to, which leads to what, I submit, are entirely fallacious figures.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that an accurate expression: unweighted average?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, it is a statistical expression.

The CHAIRMAN: One sees exactly the idea, that expresses it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I gave a sample illustration.

The CHAIRMAN: Nothing could be better than the illustration of eggs and bread, which is 600 against 50.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It assumes this, to put it in the plain vernacular, that of every article that enters into the household budget, you consume in a given time the same amount. My sympathies are with the person who does that. However, that is the table. I am coming back to Mr. Bevin's budget in a moment, but before I come back to it I want to deal with figures which are obtained on a different basis by the Ministry of Labour, and, later on, the Cost of Living Committee presided over by Lord Sumner. There have been published for many years past in the "Labour Gazette" two parallel sets of figures, and I will hand up to the Court a copy of the "Labour Gazette" for January, 1920.

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On page 5 you will see on the left-hand column, about a quarter of the way down, the heading "Retail Prices." Those retail prices which are given there represent, as stated, the average percentage increase of the prices of food of each month during 1919 and January, 1920, over the basis figure of July 1914, which is taken to be 100. I can tell your Lordship in a word what that means. It means that a certain budget to which I shall have to make detailed reference later was selected by the Ministry of Labour—or I suppose it was the Board of Trade in 1914—as the standard budget, and the prices for the various commodities included in that standard budget were taken out, and the sum total of the cost was written down as 100.

The CHAIRMAN: That deals with prices of food?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: This is food only?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes. For each month subsequent to July, 1914, the exact same budget was taken, and the cost of the ingredients of the budget priced out at the then current predominant prices, and by so doing a figure was arrived at; for example, in the case of January, 1919, of 130 per cent., and in the case of January, 1920, of 136 per cent. over the basis figure for July, 1914. Your Lordship will see on that same tabulated statement, about one-third down the column, that the figure for January, 1919, is 130 per cent., and for January, 1920, 136 per cent.; and, as stated in the letterpress a few lines above the table, those are the average percentage increases as compared with July, 1914. Then a few lines below the table it says: "It should be noted that the percentages given in this article represent in all cases fluctuations in *prices*" (in italics), "on the assumption of a uniform consumption, no allowance being made for possible alterations in consumption which may have modified the actual expenditure on the articles included"; so that particular budget was taken in July, 1914, and that budget was carried consistently through each month up to the present, irrespective of the fact whether the articles in the budget could be obtained or not. For example, just as much butter as was included in the July, 1914, budget is assumed to be consumed in each budget since; and I have an observation to make later upon the effect of that. On the same page on the right-hand side you get another tabulated statement headed "All Items."

The CHAIRMAN: Before you leave that, I understand your last observation to be that these are not market prices in regard to all the articles, because there is no market price at all in regard to some articles?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is so. This is the position: many of the articles taken by way of illustration were not obtainable to the same extent in 1918 as in 1914. Take, by way of illustration, butter. A certain amount of butter was included in the 1914 budget, but, of course, as the war wore on, butter was unobtainable. There was a controlled price fixed for butter, but you could not get the butter.

The CHAIRMAN: But there was a controlled price?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, the price was fixed

for butter, but you could not get the butter. In the same way, prices were fixed for other articles which were not obtainable in the later years of the war as they were in 1914, but substitutes had to be obtained for them. Notwithstanding that, the same budget is carried right through. We are only wanting to get the facts at the moment, because the circumstance to which your Lordship has directed my attention forms the basis of some observations which I have to make in a moment. The figures given here were merely the percentage of increased cost, which assumed each article included in the 1914 budget to be obtained in the month in question at a price which would raise the budget to the extent shown above the original price of 1914.

The CHAIRMAN: Anyhow, if they could have been obtained, you say, that it would not have been legitimate for merchants to charge more than the figures which are here?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is quite clear.

The CHAIRMAN: Because the prices were controlled?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is quite clear.

The CHAIRMAN: If you were to put it on any other basis, that they were willing to pay an enhanced price, of course, the figures would all be distorted by the enhancement?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think, perhaps, if I might give five minutes to it without interruption, I might put my argument clearly. In 1914 a budget was selected by the Ministry of Labour in respect of the working classes, and each commodity was put into that budget as ascertained by actual investigation to be in point of practice included in the budget. Then that very same budget was taken in each successive month after July, 1914, and was priced out for each commodity at the then current prices; and the additional cost of the budget in that month over the cost of the budget in 1914 was written down as a percentage, such as you find in the left-hand column on page 5, namely, 130 per cent. in January, 1919; and in January, 1919, the cost of the precise same budget, including precisely the same ingredients in the same proportions, is ascertained by the Ministry of Labour to be 130 per cent. over what it was in July, 1914. But that only deals with food, of course. There are other items which come into the cost of living: for example, there is clothing, there is fuel, there is light, there is rent, and things of that sort; and when those figures were taken into computation it reduced the percentages of the retail prices given in the left-hand side of the column; and taking them into account, because neither clothing, nor fuel, nor light, nor rent was ascertained by the Board of Trade to have gone up in the same percentage, it reduces the percentage for food and for clothing and for fuel and for light to the respective figures given on the right-hand column on page 5 as against the percentages for food.

Mr. BEVIN: Did you say that clothing had not gone up?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: As shown by the Board of Trade figures.

Mr. BEVIN: Not in fact—by the Board of Trade figures?

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Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am only on the Board of Trade figures. I did not say that clothing had not gone up; I said that the Board of Trade figures show that clothing has not gone up in the same percentage as food.

Mr. BEVIN: That is my point; you say that clothing has not gone up in the same percentage as food in fact?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I say, my Lord, that according to the figures which are published by the Board of Trade it is shown that to take January, 1919, the figure which the Board of Trade, or the Ministry of Labour, give for the increased cost of food over July, 1914, was 130 per cent.—I take the first one—and if your Lordship takes the figures for the same month, not merely for food, but also for clothing, also for fuel, for light, also for rent, that percentage figure is reduced from 130 to the figure of 120, given in the column on the right-hand side. That is the position.

Mr. BEVIN: The poor official who tabulated them could not have obtained any clothes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am bound to say this—Mr. Bevin has said it, and it is a fact—that these figures have been objected to on many occasions by the trade unions.

Mr. BEVIN: They have.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: And have been criticised in much the same way as Mr. Bevin has criticised them here. I do not object at all to his criticism. In the year 1918 a Committee was appointed, and I will hand up copies of its Report. (*The same were handed in.*) If your Lordship looks at the second page of this Report you will see that the terms of reference are stated. "Treasury Minute dated the 21st March, 1918. The Chancellor of the Exchequer states to the Board that he has appointed a Committee consisting of the following," and their names are given—Lord Sumner is Chairman, and the other members are Professor Ashley, Professor Bowley, Mrs. Knowles, Mrs. Pember Reeves, Mr. Newton Smith, Mr. Mallon, and Mr. Coggan—"to enquire into and report upon (i) the actual increase since June, 1914, in the cost of living to the working-classes, and (ii) any counterbalancing factors (apart from increases of wages) which may have arisen under war conditions." This Committee prosecuted a most exhaustive inquiry. What they did in the first place was to take the actual budgets which were used by the Board of Trade as the basis of their figures of retail prices of cost of living in 1914, and, secondly, to send out a large number of other similar forms to collect what were, in fact, similar budgets for the year 1918. Your Lordship will see on page 5 of the Report that they describe in paragraph 13 what they did. "We prepared and circulated a detailed form (which with its accompanying instructions will be found in Appendix III.), and circulated over 10,000 copies of it." Then it says, as Mr. Bevin emphasised: "In the nature of things it was to be the mother of the family that we must apply for house-keeping details"; and so they got a large number of budgets sent in. Then they took a standard family, which they arrived at on the basis of their returns. It mentions, in paragraph 18: "It is also the case that our budget family includes on the average rather more than one supplementary earner, in addition to

the principal wage-earner. But this does not appear to be abnormal, and the same is true of many families in the 1904 budgets." Then it says, in paragraph 19: "In reducing to averages results obtained from families composed of persons of both sexes of varying ages, it is necessary to reduce persons of all kinds to a uniform standard unit. This is done by expressing the consumption of women and children in terms of that of men, according to one of the scales worked out by specialists in dietary. We have employed the scale used by the Inter-Allied Scientific Food Commission. On this basis, our 'standard family' of the employed-at-home class is found to consist of 4.57 equivalent 'men' or 'units,' including 1.2 supplementary earners." That is a larger family than the family which Mr. Bevin took in his £6 per week budget. He took father and mother and three children; these took a father and mother and four children, which they found on investigation to be the average figure.

The CHAIRMAN: It seems to be a father and mother and 3½ children, does it not?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship gets the exact constitution of the families on page 14. If your Lordship would look first at page 13, in paragraph 15 you will see the description, which is afterwards amplified in the table on the other side of the page. That paragraph begins: "The families of classes (1), (2), (3), and 4"—it gives a description in paragraph 12 on page 12 of what that means. There it says: "On scrutiny 66 budgets were found to be inadequate or inconsistent, or to relate to families of widows, or to be otherwise not typical, and these were rejected. The remainder were grouped in six main classes:—(1) Clerks, where the householder was apparently of the middle classes; (2), (3), and (4), 'skilled,' 'semi-skilled,' or 'unskilled,' the classification being made according to the occupation of the householder." Then a little further down you see that family No. (5) is the case where the man was away on service, and a little further down still family (6) is where the householder was away on munition work. Then passing to paragraph 15 on page 13, which gives you a description of the families and of the constitution, it says: "The families of Classes (1)"—that was clerks—" (2), (3), and (4)"—that was skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled men—"differ from the families of the 1904 budgets in that their members are older and the number of workers is greater." Then it goes on to give a description of the table which they adopted, namely, that of the Inter-Allied Scientific Food Commission, for the purpose of arriving at the food requirements of those families. It says: "From consideration of those 1904 budgets, of which we have seen the originals, and of the published averages, it is found that the average family in 1904 consisted of 5.6 persons, equivalent to 4.37 units. The average family of Classes (2), (3), and (4) of the 1918 budgets consisted also of 5.60 persons, but these are equivalent to 4.57 units." There is a remarkable coincidence between the size of the families in the two cases. Then if your Lordship looks on page 14 you will see a table which gives you the constitution of the families in different parts of the country, and at the bottom of the column which is headed "Three previous columns combined" your Lordship will see the figure of 5.60 as the average number of persons in the average family of skilled men, semi-skilled men, and unskilled, equivalent on the Inter-Allied Scientific Food Commission's scale to 4.57 men. That is the

* Not printed.

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family which they took. On page 7 of the Report your Lordship will find their budget. It says in paragraph 31: "When food is combined with other expenses, as in the following table, the final increases per cent. in the cost of living as a whole are found to be, for skilled workmen's families 67, for semi-skilled 75, and for unskilled 81. The figures, as given for separate classes, must be regarded only as approximations, but they are believed to be sufficiently accurate to establish the percentages within narrow limits." Then it gives below the approximate estimate of the average weekly expenditure of a standard urban working class family in July, 1914, and June, 1918, and your Lordship will see that taking the skilled family on the basis of the actual budgets which they obtained there was a percentage increase of 67 in June, 1918, as against July, 1914, the figures being 82s. 4d. in 1918, as against 49s. 3d. in 1914; and taking semi-skilled families in the same way, there was an increase from 41s. 8d. in 1914 to 73s. in 1918, making a percentage increase of 75; and taking the unskilled, you get a similar percentage, an increase of 81 per cent., making a general average increase of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled of 70. Then your Lordship gets the material paragraph, paragraph 34. In paragraph 34 it says: "There is, however, an amendment to be made on another ground, for in forming the general average the same proportion between the classes has been used as in the 1918 budgets. In these (as in the 1904 budgets) the unskilled class was probably under-represented, and the increase of 70 per cent. shown in the table is therefore too low. When allowance is made for this, we estimate that the general average rise in expenditure is 74 per cent. from July, 1914, to July, 1918."

It is not unimportant now just to compare what the Board of Trade figure for retail prices is in July, 1918. What we have done is to collate for the convenience of the Court in one table the Board of Trade figures of prices for each month up to date since July, 1914. I will hand those in for the convenience of the Court in a form capable of reference.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you put some identifying number on that?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The Secretary of the Court will put a reference number on it.

The CHAIRMAN: We will call it F. 1. (**The table was put in and marked F. 1.*)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The figure which I should like the Court to compare is the difference between the cost of living as ascertained by Lord Sumner's Committee in July, 1918, as 74 per cent. over July, 1914, with the figure for the increase in the retail prices as given by the Board of Trade and summarised in the document which I have just put in; and if your Lordship looks at the document which I have just put in you will see, under date July, 1918, an average figure of 118. It is in the right-hand column, headed "Average," under the July, 1918, date.

The CHAIRMAN: The average for small towns is 118 per cent. increase?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: That is for food?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, that is for food.

The CHAIRMAN: Then what is it for everything?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship will just take a note of that figure I will hand you another abstract of the Board of Trade figures which gives the cost of living—that is to say, food, plus rent, plus clothes, plus fuel, plus light. (**The table was handed in and marked F. 2.*)

There, again, if your Lordship looks down the upper section of the table, under the year 1918, your Lordship will find as against July, 1918, the figure of 109, and that represents the percentage increase of food, rent, clothing, fuel, and light in July, 1918, as compared with July, 1914, on the Board of Trade's basis, which, of course, proceeded, as I have mentioned, on the assumption of there being in existence exactly the same budget, consisting in precisely the same proportions of similar classes of food. If your Lordship will compare this latter figure of 109 with the comparable figure ascertained by Lord Sumner's Committee in paragraph 34 on page 7 of the Report, you will see Lord Sumner's Committee's figure is 74 per cent. It says: "We estimate that the general average rise in expenditure is 74 per cent. from July, 1914, to July, 1918." Therefore, as the result of Lord Sumner's very exhaustive statistical enquiry, he showed conclusively that the figure of the cost of living, as stated in the Ministry of Labour's figures, was considerably over what in fact existed.

The CHAIRMAN: Anything under the hands of Lord Sumner and his Committee, one of the most powerful Committees we could have in modern times, must be received by this Court with the greatest respect. We follow that, but upon the other hand is not the result of his inquiry limited to the results of answers to questions sent out to a certain number of families.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: That necessarily confines it to the answers they received, but is it not further confined to an average age arrived at in a particular way, an average age limited to forty-five, or something like that. Is not that so? I have seen that somewhere.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, my Lord, I think probably what your Lordship has in mind is the scale of the Inter-Allied Scientific Food Commission, which reduces according to age into terms of men units, women, and children, the children being of different ages. Your Lordship is quite right. On page 14 of the Report you will see a classification of the number of persons included in the different families classified according to age.

The CHAIRMAN: I have got that in my head; how I do not know.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think your Lordship is right. If you look at page 14 you will see that the Committee, for the purposes of statistical information, have classified the different members of 190 families, taken as a section for the purposes of illustration, into different ages.

The CHAIRMAN: What I want to know with regard to that is this: Can no one tell this Court what is the average age of a docker?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We can find that out.

Mr. BEVIN: I could answer that in this way, that in proportion to the number employed the biggest number that would get employment under the casual labour system would be between twenty-five and forty. The other would be more extremely casual, because they would be weaker either before or after. That is the only possible way, I think, that one could answer your question, that the men who do the heaviest proportion of the work would be between those ages.

The CHAIRMAN: It would be a pity to apply to a docker in the United Kingdom, whose average age is, we will suppose, thirty-five, statistics applicable to average ages of forty-five.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If that were so, it would be.

The CHAIRMAN: There must be something of

* See Appendix No. 46.

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that sort for this reason. I observe that Lord Sumner's Committee deals with it in this way. It says, take two families, so as to avoid splitting: first, there is the head of the house—if a man nowadays can be called that. There is that involved in the two cases. Then there is the wife. Then there are two children wage-earners in the one case and three in the other. That is nine persons in two families. That is the sort of idea that he has apparently. Then he adds to that about another three who are partial wage-earners themselves; so that the inclination of the mind is to consider the case of a family at the more advanced stage. It is perfectly familiar to all who have studied the social problem that the critical age for the struggling workman in this country is the age when the little ones are coming forward and are unable to earn anything for themselves. That is the time when, if he has been a thrifty man, he will feel the advantage, and if he has been a thriftless man he will be very nearly on the rocks. That is the period to which Mr. Bevin's figures apply, and if the dookers' case on the average may be treated as the case of a man of about thirty-five Mr. Bevin would be right. If you can help us about that, on either side of the bar, in the course of this Inquiry we should be very much obliged, because it is the light and the truth of it we want to get at. When you are driving an average you must see that you are taking the right basis. We will undertake to go over Lord Sumner's report with considerable care, and we are much obliged to you for your analysis of it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If you look at page 5 of the report you will find exactly what is done. As far as I can see there was no process of selection. It would be wrong, I think, to assume that Lord Sumner's Committee proceeded on the basis of selecting certain families with reference to age or anything else.

The CHAIRMAN: One of my colleagues has been good enough to call my attention to it on page 13, where it says: "The families of classes (1), (2), (3), and (4), differ from the families of the 1904 budgets in that their members are older and the number of workers is greater; for the absence of a great proportion of the men under the age of forty-five (whose families are represented in class (5), leaves in the remaining population an unusually small proportion of families where the children are young. For this reason, if for no other, it is necessary to make adjustment before the old budgets can be compared with the new. The best method appears to be to use a table of food requirements for the different ages and sexes, in which a man's requirement is counted as one unit and women's and children's requirements as definite fractions of this unit."

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Then they go on to make the adjustment which your Lordship has suggested. It goes on: "The table adopted by the Inter-Allied Scientific Food Commission, for use in consideration of the requirements of the Allied countries, is as follows"—then they set out the food requirements. Then they proceed to make the adjustment which your Lordship has properly pointed out ought to be made on the basis of these very figures.

The CHAIRMAN: I am obliged to you. What do you say is the meaning of this very striking contrast between the report of Lord Sumner's Committee and the statistics of the Board of Trade?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The explanation of your Lordship's question is given, I think, in the report itself, at page 20. You will find it under sub-head 5: "The estimate of the Ministry of Labour." I

think this shows exactly what your Lordship wants. If I may read paragraph 31, it says: "The Board of Trade has for many years measured the average change of retail prices, a work now transferred to the Ministry of Labour. The method used is appropriate to measure the change of prices, but not the change of expenditure or of the cost of living. In normal times, when consumption changes slowly and habits are not altered, these three quantities move in close relationship, and the index-numbers of retail prices can be applied with little adjustment to measure the change in the cost of living; but in times of movement, even much less catastrophic than those of the war years, general index-numbers are limited in their application. The term 'cost of living' is not now used by the Ministry of Labour in connection with their price measurements. The method employed is as follows: It was assumed that in July, 1914, the proportionate expenditure of the working class on the principal foods (namely, those shown in Table 7 above, together with fish, eggs, rice, oatmeal, coffee, cocoa, jam, treacle, and currants) was the same as indicated by the budgets of 1904. This involved the assumption that relatively less was bought of these commodities which had risen most in price, but (as we have shown in paragraph 7 above) the actual changes between 1904 and 1914 were too slight seriously to affect the calculations. An investigation is made every month as to retail prices, which there is every reason to suppose is accurate and adequate for its purpose. The changes found each month in the prices when they are compared with the prices of July, 1914, are applied item by item to the expenditure assumed in July, 1914, and the increase in total expenditure thus found is expressed as a percentage of the 1914 expenditure. The result shows what the increased expenditure on the group of foods included would have been if the quantities of each purpose had been the same throughout, and is therefore not competent to measure the change of expenditure or of the cost of living, unless it could be shown that the changes in consumption had in their effect balanced one another. In fact, while the average rise of prices of this group of foods is stated on this method to be 118 per cent. from July, 1914, to June, 1918, expenditure on the same group (using the same 1914 budget) is found to have increased only 90 per cent. in the same period. The alterations in consumption which lead to this difference can be traced in Table 5 above, and it has been discussed above to what extent the dietary has been lowered in avoiding part of the increase. When foods, other than those in the list of foods included by the Ministry of Labour, are considered, it is found that the expenditure on them has increased also by 90 per cent., and so the general increase is 90 per cent., as found by the Committee. The common use of this number as a measurement of the change of the cost of living cannot be defended; it is not so used in the publications of the Ministry of Labour. It may happen, of course, that expenditure increases more rapidly than average prices, and, in fact, the figures in paragraph 30 show that this has been the case during part of 1918."

The CHAIRMAN: As I say, we shall have to consider this very carefully. It seems to me a very extraordinary thing, that while the average rise of prices reported to this Committee for this group of foods was stated to be 118 per cent., expenditure on the same was found to have increased 90 per cent. in the same period. Now, assuming that 90 per cent. instead of 118 per cent. is the increase, may it not be for the very human reason that the wages will not go so far, and therefore they have bought less of the ordinary necessities?

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Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That point is also dealt with in the report, and I can give your Lordship the reference. If you look at paragraph 51 on page 9, it says: "Having concluded our inquiry under both heads of our reference, it is natural that we should consider whether our conclusions are confirmed by other indications at our disposal of the material condition of the body of the nation. It will be recalled that we have found, on the evidence of the budgets of working-class expenditure, that in June, 1918, the working classes as a whole were in a position to purchase food of substantially the same nutritive value as in June, 1914." I cannot carry the position past the date of this report, because no further figures have been given, and I therefore do not know what the present position is, but I should imagine, from the internal evidence in this report, that the Ministry of Labour would be in a position to bring up to date, so to speak, the findings of this Committee of Lord Sumner's.

The CHAIRMAN: May I mention another point which my colleagues have indicated to me on this? I have mentioned the possibility of taking it from the ordinary family standpoint, that when things cost more less of them would be got, because the money would not go further, but one of my colleagues has indicated to me that things may be costing so much that they may be driven to other and substituted foods.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think that was recognised by this Committee. I think that is common experience during the war, that when you could not get a particular commodity which you used in 1914 you very often were driven to the nearest substitute.

The CHAIRMAN: As in the case of margarine and butter.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The particular point in the passage I have just read in paragraph 51 is this: "It will be recalled that we have found, on the evidence of the budgets of working-class expenditure, that in June, 1918, the working classes, as a whole, were in a position to purchase food of substantially the same nutritive value as in June, 1914. Indeed, our figures indicate that the families of unskilled workmen were slightly better fed at the later date, in spite of the rise in the cost of food."

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Lynden, before we separate to-day I want to tell you that we are interested in these figures you have given, and such reports as you have called our attention to, but we do not feel disposed to view an inquiry of this kind on the same lines as those other inquiries. We are asked to make an award which will be regulative for the future. The report of the Sumner Committee was a report on certain data of fact as to the past, in which unquestionably the former mode of life has been disturbed by war conditions. The articles purchased were of necessity changed; some of them may have been lower in quality, all of them if possible were as low priced as could be got. Anyhow, we are hoping in this country for a more settled state of everything, including the markets. Is not the fair comparison between the ordinary household expenditure of 1914 and what we, with all the evidence at our command, would say that in our judgment would be the ordinary expenditure in a normal household for the future. I quite admit, and everybody must admit, that all these figures are open to the observation that they are war figures, and there is a strong point about that, but, anyhow, when you quote us a war figure here applicable to returns obtained during a period of ex-

treme stress, I say that the family may have been so far adjusted to the war conditions as to squeeze its purse up within its means. That hardly helps us in saying what shall be a national minimum on the assumption that a family will go forward, not on war conditions, certainly not on the old 1914 conditions, but on conditions between the two which may be described as general post-war normal conditions. That is the point of view that we look at it from. You most admirably, if I may be allowed to say so without presumption, pointed out to us the contents of these reports. The contents startled us by the difference between Lord Sumner's Committee and the Board of Trade Committee. If the Sumner Committee's figures were adopted there would be two difficulties: in the first place, we would be prescribing for the future what has been founded on data for a limited, constrained, and difficult period in the past; in the second place, we would be prescribing for a set of families whose heads of households are not in the same data as the heads of households in the other one. I think we shall have to make an independent survey of all these matters.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship, of course, would understand me wrongly as suggesting that I am arguing that you should be bound by Lord Sumner's report.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall not be bound by it, but we cannot help in our position being greatly moved by a report of that Committee at that time. All my observations are directed to this: I want to see the data on which they based their conclusions, and what was the object.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: All I say is this: that the Court has had imposed on it, amongst other things, the burden of seeing how the cost of living to-day is in excess of the cost of living in 1914.

The CHAIRMAN: Subject to this: that it is not within reason to suppose that the inflation of prices will continue at that rate. Mr. Bevin may say it is, but we say it is not; you say we may assume a certain softening of the market.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord. Of course that has been assumed in the national settlement with the railwaymen. Of course, their wages have been fixed, and after a certain wage is determined upon, provision is made for a sliding scale up or down of a shilling per week for every 5 points rise or 5 points fall in the cost of living.

The CHAIRMAN: You have just exactly hit the point with which we may conclude to-day's proceedings. I want to know from both of you if you have nothing to suggest to this Board which would make this a sliding rate in such a limited way as would prevent these everlasting appeals to fresh Committees, and these social troubles, so as to have something which will be adjustable as between the men and their employers. We will not carry it further to-day.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship pleases.

The CHAIRMAN: What are your prospects of finishing your speech to-morrow?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I shall do my very best to finish.

The CHAIRMAN: By midday to-morrow?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, because I am bound to call Sir Alfred Booth to-morrow, so the longer I take the less time he will get.

(Adjourned to to-morrow morning at 10.30.)

FIFTH DAY.

Thursday, February 12th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).
Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK Mr. JOHN SMETHURST
Sir LIONEL FLETCHER Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.
Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H. Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS
Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON } Secretaries.
Mr. G. H. INCE }

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I have an application to make this morning. I find that although I have not yet occupied the attention of the Court to the same extent as my friend Mr. Bevin has occupied it, yet if I did so—and it will be necessary for me to do so—I should not be in the position of calling Sir Alfred Booth as a witness. I have kept (if I may use the phrase) Sir Alfred Booth here up to the last moment, and he must leave London this evening on his way to America. Therefore I would ask, as he is one of our principal witnesses, and has been in touch with the whole of these negotiations from their inception, and was responsible for the formation of the National Council of Port Labour Employers, that in order to give the Court the assistance of his evidence I might be permitted to put him into the box now so that he can leave this afternoon for America; and then I would compress as far as I can the concluding observations which I have to make, and I do not think I shall occupy a greater time than my friend Mr. Bevin has occupied in the whole. I do not know whether my friend would object to the course which I suggest.

The CHAIRMAN: You were good enough to make a communication to me in writing to the same effect as you have now publicly made.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: I have communicated that to my colleagues. There is no doubt a little disturbance of the ordinary form of procedure, but in the circumstances we think your application is justified, and we would ask you now to put Sir Alfred Booth into the box, subject to this question, that I understand Sir Alfred Booth, according to your letter, is Chairman of the National Council of Port Labour Employers?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am told that technically there is no chairman, but Sir Alfred Booth has been, if I may say so, the "leading hand" or the "charge hand."

The CHAIRMAN: Just so. What we are anxious to do is to know this before you put him into the box. He will speak to the case broadly; that is to say, he will not speak to one particular section of the case applicable to one particular port, but he will deal with the whole case broadly, as I understand?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Of course, he will deal with the case broadly, but at the same time he must, of course, rely upon Liverpool.

The CHAIRMAN: On his own experience?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Upon his own experience in Liverpool.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what we would naturally have expected.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: And as illustrating the general observation, he will put in details of the conditions at Liverpool.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Otherwise there would be considerable duplication; because he, in addition to dealing with the case broadly, was in any event my chief witness from Liverpool. I will

ask my junior, Mr. Bruce Thomas, to examine him.

The CHAIRMAN: The witnesses in this case will all be examined upon oath.

SIR ALFRED BOOTH, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q.—You are the Chairman of the Cunard Steam Ship Company, and you have taken a close interest in the problem of dock labour for a number of years?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Have you been a member of the Liverpool Dock Labour Joint Committee since its formation in 1911?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you acted as the Chairman of the employers' side?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—During the war were you the Chairman of the Liverpool Committee for the co-ordination of the naval and military and civil requirements of the port?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And of the Port Labour Committee?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Can you tell the Court in a word what the general nature of the trade at Liverpool is? Where does Liverpool stand among the other ports of the kingdom as an export port?—(A.) Liverpool is the first export port of the country and the second import port of the country.

Q.—The principal import port being London?—(A.) The principal import port being London.

Q.—At Liverpool is the whole of the port accommodation under the control of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q.—I do not think we need go into the details of the trade at Liverpool; probably they are known to the Court sufficiently. Will you tell the Court who the actual employers at Liverpool are?—(A.) In Liverpool the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board are employers of labour so far as the maintenance of the port is concerned, and also so far as labour in their own warehouses is concerned. The work of loading and discharging ships is done either by the ship-owners themselves, or by what are called master porters or master stevedores working on account of the owners of the ships or on account of the merchants. Some little work is also done by the merchants direct.

Q.—Generally speaking, the whole of the ship work in discharging is done by what you call shipmen?—(A.) Yes, we call them shipmen.

Q.—And the quay work in discharging is done by the master porters?—(A.) A man called a porter, yes.

Q.—And the whole of the loading, both quay work and shipwork, is done by the shipmen and not by the porters?—(A.) That is right.

Q.—Would you tell the Court what are the different classes of labour that are employed in the port?—(A.) We have the dock labourers themselves, divided into two classes of shipmen and porters; there are the coalmen, who do the bunkering in the steamers; there are warehousemen and men working in cold storage warehouses; tugboatmen, lightermen, and a great many other smaller divisions of labour of an analagous nature.

Q.—We shall have them before the Court in a moment in a table which you are going to put in, I think?—(A.) Yes.

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Q.—Will you tell the Court shortly the method of handling cargo at Liverpool?—(A.) The steamer comes alongside the dock; a large portion of the cargo is discharged on to the quays, passes through the transit sheds, and is removed for delivery either by carts and lorries—motors—or by rail. The majority of the cargo which is taken away by land is, as a matter of fact, moved by road and not by rail. In addition to that a certain amount of cargo, particularly grain, is delivered overside into lighters.

Q.—The methods of payment and the conditions generally in connection with the payment of the workers at Liverpool are set out in an agreement which is known at Liverpool as the White Book?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Will you hand to the Court a copy of the White Book?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: We propose at this stage, my Lord, to hand in all the documents which Sir Alfred proposes to refer to; probably it will be more convenient. (**The same were handed in.*)

The CHAIRMAN: In citing documents, Mr. Bruce Thomas, will you kindly attach identification marks to them? This Agreement is marked "Booth A1."

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes.

The WITNESS: The White Book is an Agreement which sets out the terms and conditions of labour. The first clause relates to the hours. The second clause relates to the rates of pay for shipmen. You will see that they are very complicated, and there are a great many different rates beginning with the minimum rate and going up. The third clause relates to the pay for porters. Clauses 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 relate to the general provisions of the Agreement, the most important of which perhaps is Clause 8, whereby a Joint Committee is formed which regulates the interpretation of this Agreement and deals with all difficulties which may arise in the course of employment. That body is a body consisting half of representatives of the employers and half of representatives of the Union—the men.

Q.—That book constitutes the terms of the Agreement as to the rates of payment at Liverpool which has been made between the National Union of Dock Labourers and the employers at Liverpool?—(A.) Yes. That Agreement was first drawn up in 1911, and the big change which has occurred since with regard to the conditions was the formation in 1912—I think it was the year after—of the Board of Trade clearing house scheme, when we started registration; and from that time onwards the great bulk of the wages of the dockers have been paid at the Central Clearing Houses in the different areas of the docks, instead of being paid by the individual employers.

Q.—In clause 8, on page 11, of the White Book the Joint Committee is referred to?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And it provides that any questions that arise as to the interpretation of the Agreement, revisions of rates of pay or hours of work, and the conditions of employment for any particular class of work, are to be submitted to the Joint Committee?—(A.) That is right.

Q.—And I see there is an important paragraph on the next page, page 12, which provides that "the Joint Committee shall also have general powers to consider any questions which may con-

cern the mutual welfare of the employers and the dock labourers"?—(A.) That is right, and the first use that was made of that power was to start this registration scheme and the clearing of wages through a central authority.

Q.—This Joint Committee which is in existence at Liverpool consists of, I think, five members of the employers' side and five of the workmen's side?—(A.) It is more than that now. The number has grown. I forget what the number is, but it must be at least eight a side, I think, now.

Q.—Do you know whether that is an organisation which exists in a number of other ports of the kingdom for settling questions that may arise as to rates of pay or any other questions between the employers and the workers?—(A.) I rather think ours was the first completely organised dock labour joint committee, but I understand that others have been formed since. I know they have similar arrangements at Hull—there, I believe, the work is split between three different committees—and also at Bristol, and I think at Glasgow they have a somewhat similar arrangement.

Q.—Does that Committee sit regularly at Liverpool, or often?—(A.) It sits very frequently—roughly, once a month, I might say; but in times when there are special questions before us we might sit quite frequently, of course.

Q.—And it does deal with a large number of questions which arise?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—I want you to refer the Court now to the table in the bundle which has been handed in called Table "Booth. B."—(A.) Yes, I have that.

Q.—Before we turn to that, there is one further question upon the Joint Committee. Is that Joint Committee, in your view, a method to be recommended for dealing with questions which arise at a port?—(A.) I have a most firm belief in the value of that Joint Committee, and in the importance and excellence of the work which we have done during the last nine years. We cannot pretend that we have solved every problem, but we have solved a great many, and we have certainly got rid of, smoothed over and settled, an enormous number of difficulties and nasty questions; and, frankly, I do not know how we could have got through the war as peacefully as we did in Liverpool without that Joint Committee.

Q.—Do you recommend the constitution of a similar Committee in other ports where it does not already exist?—(A.) I do, very strongly.

Q.—Was it upon the recommendation or as the result of the deliberations of that Committee that the registration scheme to which we shall refer later came into force in Liverpool?—(A.) Yes, it was.

Q.—Table "Booth, B." sets out, I think, the classes of labour in Liverpool, the duties, the periods of engagement, the rates of pay, and the overtime and other conditions?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—I do not know whether you want to make any observations upon that Table?—(A.) I think that table explains itself.

Q.—There is just one question upon it which I should like to put to you. Although the present rate for shipmen is shown as 12s. 2d., there are, are there not, a very large number of cargoes in respect of which special payments are made?—(A.) Yes. That will all be found set out in Clause 2 of the White Book Agreement. The minimum rate for the shipmen before the war was 5s.; that corresponds with the 12s. 2d. rate now, and all the differentials above the 5s., both

* See Appendices Nos. 48-54.

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for different duties and for the discharge of particular classes of cargo, still exist.

Q.—In fact, the White Book is full of differential rates?—(A.) It is a table of differential rates so far as Clauses 2 and 3 are concerned.

Q.—Have those differential rates all been agreed after negotiation at the Joint Committee?—(A.) Any changes in them have been agreed after negotiation by the Joint Committee. The original Agreement itself was very largely based on a book of rates which the Union worked under before 1911.

Q.—And all the red ink additions are alterations which have been made by the Joint Committee consisting of the employers and the men?—(A.) That is right.

Q.—I think the Joint Committee interprets the Agreement?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And they, of course, are very familiar with the local circumstances?—(A.) They are.

Q.—The second table, I think, to which you wish to refer is Table "Booth, B.1." Does that table set out the rates of pay of bargemen?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—I do not think we have anything to say upon that at the moment. Then we turn to the next table, which is "Booth, C." That shows the immediate pre-war rates for shipmen, porters, and coalmen, and it shows the piece prices and each successive increase during the war, and also the reduction in hours made under the 44-hour agreement. I do not know whether you have any observation to make upon that Table?—(A.) Only this, that on the right of that table—I had not noticed it before—it is stated that working hours were reduced from 51 to 44. I just want to put in a caveat with regard to that. The 51 hours included 2 hours of overtime customarily worked. So far as ordinary time is concerned, the reduction was from 49 to 44.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not quite catch the first part of your sentence.—(A.) The 51 hours included 2 hours which were paid at overtime rates but customarily worked as a regular thing.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: There are a certain number of permanent men employed in the port, such as foremen, and their weekly wages vary very considerably, do they not?—(A.) They vary very considerably according to the employment that they are in and the various conditions under which they work.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you please ask the Witness, Mr. Thomas, what is the date of the 49 plus 2 hours?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The reduction from 49 to 44 was on April 22, 1919.

The CHAIRMAN: That was a reduction from 49 to 44?—(A.) Yes, from 49 to 44 if you regard hours which were worked at ordinary time rates, and from 51 to 44 if you regard the number of hours in the week which were customarily worked.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: But it is more accurate to state that the reduction was from 49 to 44, because you are then comparing like with like.—(A.) That is my view—that that is the right figure to take.

The CHAIRMAN: Just listen to what I put to the Counsel, please, Sir Alfred. I should like Mr.

Bevin, on behalf of the workmen, and Sir Lynden and Mr. Thomas on behalf of the others, to see whether any table can be prepared in which hours are substituted for days. Do you follow me?

Mr. BEVIN: Do you mean days substituted for hours?

The CHAIRMAN: No, it is all days in the table, and what we want is some relation of the pay to the hours. It is easy enough to begin with your claim, Mr. Bevin, which is simply a division by eight. Your 16s. per day, we understand, is equivalent to 2s. per hour. That dated back has no standard of comparison because the number of hours worked was different, and therefore if you would convert the 49 hours time into so much per hour at that time and compare that with the 44 hours time and so much per hour for that, we should be obliged. It is in order to see the hours worked relative to the wage earned. Perhaps as both parties are so well advised they could favour the Court in that particular.

The WITNESS: I can give it to you upon this table at once. The hours per day in Liverpool were 9.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Of course, my Lord, upon that there is just this, which no doubt your Lordship has got in mind. The broad general basis of a national agreement for the 44-hours week was that for the shorter week there should be no reduction in earnings.

The CHAIRMAN: I am quite aware of that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I know your Lordship had that in mind.

The CHAIRMAN: I am aware of that, only we want to have a bird's-eye view of the relative value to the working-man of his hour in the old time and the relative value to the working-man of his hour in the new time.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That can be done.

The CHAIRMAN: We appreciate entirely the value of leisure, and very much appreciate the arrangement come to with regard to the standard day, but it is another thing that we have in view. We want to compare the value in money per hour in pre-war days with the value in money per hour now claimed. It is totally irrespective of, and will not be prejudicial to, the claim made by the workmen which is based, not upon that consideration, but upon the living consideration of which so much has been made. Nobody will be prejudiced by satisfying our minds upon that subject.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We will do that and try to agree it with Mr. Bevin, subject to this: we will not undertake to get all the ports. It is very difficult to get information at short notice, but we have the information from a substantial number of the ports, and we can give your Lordship that.

The CHAIRMAN: Meantime we shall make an excellent start because I understand Sir Alfred Booth is prepared to make the conversion on the spot.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: For Liverpool?

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The CHAIRMAN: Yes, for Liverpool. Would you mind interpellating that, Mr. Thomas?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Can you give us the hourly pre-war rate at Liverpool for shipmen?—(A.) The number of hours worked from Monday to Friday was 9, and the minimum rate for the porter—I take that because I can do the division—was 4s. 6d., which is 6d. per hour. The rate of pay for the porters now is 11s. 8d. for a day of 8 hours from Monday to Friday.

The CHAIRMAN: That averages out to 1s. 5½d.?
—(A.) Yes, 1s. 5½d.; I have it here.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is on the next page.

The CHAIRMAN: Those are the porters?—(A.) Yes, those are the porters. That is the lowest-rated man—the porter working on ordinary work.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Then the shipman?—(A.) The shipman before the war obtained 5s. for 9 hours' work, which you see is something just over 6d., and he now gets 12s. 2d. for 8 hours' work.

Q.—That is 1s. 6¼d.?—(A.) That is 1s. 6¼d.

The CHAIRMAN: 6 2-3d. I think is the proper calculation?—(A.) Yes, 6 2-3d. to 1s. 6¼d.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Have you got out some information with regard to the average weekly earnings of the shipmen and the porters at Liverpool?—(A.) I have the figures of the total amount paid by the Clearing House in wages, and the total number of the men to whom that was paid. That is kept regularly at the Clearing House, and I fancy Mr. Sexton has no objection to my giving those figures.

Mr. SEXTON: No.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: What does it show that the average varies from?—(A.) I must first of all explain what the figures mean. The great bulk of the dock labour employers have their wages paid through this Ministry of Labour Clearing House, but some of the employers do not pay through the Clearing House, but still pay themselves, so that the total amount of wages paid through the Ministry of Labour relates to the number of men that the Ministry of Labour itself pays, but there is no guarantee that a certain number of those men have not also worked for firms who have paid them wages direct. There is further the point to be borne in mind that in some cases what we call "subs," not very large amounts—that is, an advance of money on account of wages—may be paid to these men and deducted from the amount paid to them weekly; so that there is some small addition to be made with regard to possible earnings of these men. It must be regarded, therefore, as a minimum figure when you come to take the average with regard to the men involved. I see that for the first week in February there were 22,461 men paid by the Ministry of Labour, and the total amount of wages was £73,769, making an average right through of £3 5s. 8d.

The CHAIRMAN: Per week of how many hours?
—(A.) That includes any overtime that these men may have earned. There is no information as to how many hours were worked.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Have you also got the information for the first 4 weeks of December,

1919? I think it is on page 9 of the print.—
(A.) Yes, I have that information.

The CHAIRMAN: You mentioned in your last answer February. Of what year was that?—(A.) That is the first week of February of this year.

Q.—Last week?—(A.) Yes. For the first 4 weeks of December the average varied from £3 4s. 6d. to £3 11s. per week. Somewhere about £3 5s. seems to be the present level.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That includes the total sum paid through the Clearing House?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And from no other source?—(A.) To these men, who would have a small amount of earnings coming to them from other sources, not large, but a certain amount.

Q.—Will you give the Court your views as to the employment that the casual labourers at Liverpool are able to obtain in a week, if they desire to work?—(A.) I think that one can only answer that question broadly from such information as one is able to get. I think at the present time there is work for every man who wants to get it, substantially throughout the week. We still have a system of getting shortages reported to us from at any rate some of the leading employers, and we are able to watch the rise and fall of the shortages reported, and from that we are able to get some idea as to whether the leading firms are finding it difficult or easy, day by day, to get the labour they want. At the present time, and for the last few months, the shortages reported have been fairly steady, not very large, but of such a nature that I think indicate that there is employment for the men who want to work a steady week. That does not mean, of course, that in other parts of the docks there will not be men who are seeking employment and do not find it, because there is not, and cannot be, complete interchangeability of labour between one section and one district and another.

Q.—If a man is known at the docks (what you call an established man, I think), can he as a rule get a full week's work?—(A.) Yes. He is at present always getting a full week's work, and he also gets the amount of overtime that he and the employer think suitable. I think that at present the employers are working about three half-nights a week on the average overtime, and that is the amount of overtime that a steady man of that kind following a particular firm would be getting in addition to his weekly earnings.

Q.—A half-night of employment is from 5 to 9 o'clock?—(A.) From 5 to 9 o'clock.

Q.—You will have something to say about that later, I think? In your view is there room at Liverpool for a great many more men being employed regularly; or rather, is there room for a great many men being employed as regularly as the best men now are employed?—(A.) Yes, I think there is room for more men, if they wished to work as regularly as the best men work, to get work of that kind and in that form.

Q.—You have drawn attention to the rate of pay of the shipmen which is now 12s. 2d. a day, of the porters which is 11s. 8d., and I think of the coalmen which is 15s. 4d. That appears on the table, which is Table C?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And you have referred to the differentials set up by the White Book?—(A.) Yes.

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Q.—Will you give the Court your view as to whether the labourers at Liverpool would readily give up these differentials?—(A.) These differentials have always been very jealously guarded by the dock labourers in Liverpool, and quite naturally so, I think. We have often discussed at the Joint Committee, as a matter of fact, or discussed privately between ourselves and the Union, as to whether there was any real ground for the differences made between the shipmen and the porters, but I think that we have always felt that if we brought the porter up to the level of the shipman, the shipman would at once insist on having his differential of 6d. re-established. The best instance that I can give with regard to the way in which these differentials are guarded by the docker, and the value which he put upon them, is the case which arose last summer arising out of the 44-hour agreement. We agreed then with the Union that we would make a re-arrangement with regard to overtime work. At the time when the 44-hour Agreement was made, the war bonus at a flat rate was paid to the men, whether for day time or for overtime, at the rate of 3s. 3d. for the half-day or for the half-night. We decided, as part of the general settlement which we hoped was going to work well and be a good thing both for the employers and for the men, to increase the pay for night work to definitely time and a half. Now if you look at Clause 2 of the White Book on page 3, you will find that the ordinary shipman there gets 5s. per day for ordinary work (these are the pre-war rates), and 8s. per night. So that for the half-night the shipman for ordinary work got 4s.; but a stevedore who is mentioned immediately below, getting 2s. a day more in the day time from time immemorial, had 5s. more per night, or half-a-crown more per half-night; so that for the half-night the stevedore was getting 6s. 6d., whilst the ordinary shipman was getting 4s. The addition of war bonus made no difference to that differential; they each drew 3s. 3d. war bonus, so the differential remained half-a-crown. When they were put on the basis of time and a half, the ordinary shipman's pay for the day was 12s. 2d., or for the half-day 6s. 1d., and time and a half on 6s. 1d. gave him 9s. 1½d. The stevedore, as his day rate is now 2s. more, made 14s. 2d. for the day, 7s. 1d. for the half-day; and therefore 10s. 7½d. for the half-night. So that he was now getting only 1s. 6d. more for the half-night than the ordinary shipman. They went on strike at once. They must have the old half-crown. We were powerless, and the Trade Union were powerless to settle this matter, except by re-establishing all the old differentials on the overtime rates, although we had signed an agreement that the rate of pay for overtime was to be time and a half.

Q.—The agreement you had signed was an agreement with the Union?—(A.) Yes. Every man under that agreement for his overtime work got more than he had been getting before, but nevertheless unless he got as much more as the lowest man got more, they would not work.

Q.—The Union were unable to enforce the agreement that they had made?—(A.) They were.

Q.—I do not know whether you would wish to say anything about the shipmen not working as porters. Are they definite and distinct grades, and will a shipman do work on the quay as a porter?—(A.) No. I do not think he would, even if he were paid the same money. I am not

finding any fault with this; I think it is perfectly natural. Each man specialises, or tries to specialise, in a particular branch of the work. He gets to understand that and does not like, under a foreman he does not know, to undertake a class of work which he is less familiar with. It is a perfectly natural feeling. At the same time it does make it very difficult to absorb the balance of labour, and it does lead to this strange fact, that you have men left on the stand at one place and wanted at another, and yet those men will not take a job where there is work to do.

Q.—At Liverpool you have just stated you find that the men—as you say, quite naturally and properly—do not interchange?—(A.) They interchange very little.

Q.—Do you know whether much interchanging does take place at other ports?—(A.) I have no knowledge of my own about that.

Q.—Will you tell the Court what has been the result in the past of giving an increase, or improving the conditions of one class of labour working at the docks?—(A.) It necessarily at once reacts on all corresponding classes of labour, and this application is specifically made on the basis that it shall apply to all the classes of labour who either customarily or by previous agreement have obtained the same advance. But, of course, it goes beyond that. It is bound to affect the analogous trades of labour—particularly such trades as the carters and other men working alongside the docks. I understand there has been an application put in for the carters already, to bring them up to the same level as the dockers would be brought to if this application were granted. It gets, of course, beyond the docks, because the engineers and ship repairers are working on the ships in the docks alongside the dock labourers, and from them it spreads to the whole engineering and shipbuilding trades of the country. It is bound to do.

Q.—Upon that I think you wish to refer to Statement "G" in the bundle that has been handed in. That Statement shows the existing rates of wages in various trades in the Mersey district which are compared with dock labourers?—(A.) Table "G" gives the rates pre-war and present, with regard to a large body of labourers in Liverpool, the dock labourers, the engineering and shipbuilding trades, the motormen, carters, and the building trade. That Statement I think illustrates the point I was just trying to make.

Q.—You have shown there, in the fifth column, the present hourly rates for shipmen, porters, coalmen, and all the other trades that are set out on that table?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—That shows that the present hourly rate of shipmen is 1s. 6½d., of porters 1s. 5½d., and coalmen 1s. 11d.; and you have compared that with the present hourly rate of skilled and semi-skilled workers, and workers in the building trade?—(A.) Yes. The point I wanted to make about that table is that as matters stand at present it shows a certain stability, a certain even plane, I might say, between the unskilled labourers (using "unskilled" entirely in the technical sense) in these different trades. During the war, with regard to the advances that were given by the Committee on Production, and later by the Ministry of Labour, I think they were all very careful to keep this point in mind, that the great body of trades had to go up together. When they had their arrangement, in the later stage of the war, of revisions every four months, that was the idea, that

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instead of putting up one trade and then waiting till the others came along with their demands, there would be periodical reviews at which every trade would be stepped up together, in the light of the new conditions which had arisen since the last revision. Now, it appears to me perfectly clear that if this big advance is granted now to the dock labourers, making the minimum there for that class of unskilled labour 2s. per hour, the wages of the whole of the rest of the country must go up by a corresponding amount. I think this table shows how these great trades, the engineering and shipbuilding trades, which work side by side with the dock labourers in the port, would necessarily go up, and, through them, every other industry in the country would be affected. I should like to say a word about that, because it seems to me that we have got to consider what the result of that would be. You can say that wages must go up, but how are you going to ensure that the working man will get any benefit from the increased wages? If the wages of the whole of the country go up to this very substantial extent, the only result would be that more Treasury notes will have to be printed in order to provide the weekly wages bill. The demand purchasing power will go up in proportion to the advances in the wages, and the supply of goods will certainly not go up; in my view it will probably at first go down. That means another rise in prices, or, as one would really more accurately describe it, a further depression in the value of the £. So that the workman will get more counters at the end of the week, but he will find that the total number of counters which he gets are actually worth less when he tries to turn them into goods than the smaller number he had before; and the further consequence of that, which I think the Court must take into very serious consideration, is that the effect that this further inflation of the £ would have on the exchange, which measures the value of our paper against the countries which still base their currency in gold, is bound to be further disastrous. We have seen the effects of that to a considerable extent during the last month; if we are to have this further increase, which for my part I am certain will be brought about by this wholesale increase of wages, we might get the exchange down to a point at which there begins to cease to be a medium of foreign exchange at all; our money remains legal tender in this country, but it ceases to be a means of carrying on foreign exchange and foreign trade. We have seen that already in Germany and Russia and Austria; the currencies there are useless so far as foreign trade is concerned, and if we see that here, or any approach to it, and have to carry on our business by means of barter, I think it is perfectly obvious that the trade in this country and employment in this country must be reduced by an enormous proportion, and nothing but bad, and nothing but suffering and hardship, will result to every individual in the country, and, in fact, not only this country, but the whole of Europe, because the exchange between the United States and the United Kingdom is the only exchange that remains as an exchange that can be used in commerce between Europe and the United States. All the other exchanges have gone. It is only the United Kingdom exchange that remains. If you have continuance of the wild fluctuations we have had during the last few weeks, and on a consistently downward level, we shall simply be going on the road that the German mark has gone, and business will come to a standstill. Now, it is considerations such as those which have made me feel that there is a great deal more in this application than is,

perhaps, seen at first sight, and no sane man could agree to it without taking these very grave considerations into account.

Q.—You heard Mr. Bevin in his opening statement say that wages here through a considerable time had been chasing food prices, and had never caught up. Will they, in your opinion, ever catch up food prices if production remains at its present level?—(A.) They never can. We have seen this right through the war, that the money wages were raised and three months afterwards the men have found that they have been given Dead Sea fruit; that they were getting less for their increased money than they got for the smaller amount of money before; and then came the fresh demand, and you had to go up again. Of course, during the war we had to make the best of things, and it was probably the only way in which we could carry on; but now we are in a different position, because during the war we were maintaining our credit with America by the sale of securities and by the shipping of gold; but we cannot go on doing that any more. It is finished.

(Q.) I think I caught correctly what Mr. Bevin said in his opening statement: that better production could not be promised at the docks.

Mr. BEVIN: No.

The WITNESS: It is only better production that will increase the value of the £ and give the workman more for his money. There is no other way.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Is it your view that the only sovereign remedy for the present high prices is the increase in production?—(A.) Yes, coupled, of course, with increased economy and reduction of wasteful expenditure on the part of the rich.

(Q.) I think you have made it your business to look into a very considerable number of returns that have been prepared comparing the output at Liverpool in 1919 with 1914?—(A.) Yes.

(Q.) And those returns will at a later stage be put in and proved in detail by a number of witnesses?—(A.) That is right. I have, however, made it my business to look at these, and, of course, I have been watching the matter all along, as far as I was able, and the impression that I have got from these figures is that in Liverpool, at any rate, the reduction in output represents a fall of about 25 per cent., of which 11 per cent. would be accounted for by the reduction of the day from nine hours to eight.

The CHAIRMAN: 25 per cent. is between what periods?—(A.) The period immediately before the war and to-day.

(Q.) Between pre-war and present?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: And have the returns from which you have arrived at your figure of 25 per cent. reduction been returns of cases where the question of congestion does not arise?—(A.) Yes, we were careful to eliminate congestion, and to take cases where the quays were clear at the time of the observation, or when the statistics were taken.

(Q.) Those matters will be gone into in detail by subsequent witnesses, but upon that information you wish to make certain observations to the Court based upon the present tonnage that is coming into the ports and passing over the quays?—(A.) I do not think I quite follow that question.

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(Q.) Will you turn to page 20 of the print. What has been the reduction in the hours of dock labour? I think you have given that since April of last year?—(A.) 11 per cent. in Liverpool. It is greater in some other ports.

(Q.) That is five hours per man per week?—(A.) Yes.

(Q.) If you take the low figure of 100,000 to represent the dock workers in the various ports of the kingdom, the loss in hours under the 44-hour week agreement would be half a million a week?—(A.) Yes.

(Q.) That for the year, allowing six bank holidays, is 3,187,500 days of eight hours each?—(A.) Yes.

(Q.) Can you tell the Court what, during the year ending the 31st July, 1919, the imports into the United Kingdom were, as compared with the year ending 31st July, 1914?—(A.) I do not think I am really very competent to deal with these figures. I think that perhaps it might be well to leave them to some more statistically-minded person than myself.

(Q.) To take it quite generally from the figures that have been laid before you, and which will be proved later, does it appear that the imports are down 20 per cent.?—(A.) Yes, that is the one figure that has been impressed on me that we are not getting through the ports within 20 per cent. of what we got through before the war. That rather confirms my estimate that there must be some decrease in efficiency.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you speaking for Liverpool or for London?—(A.) I am speaking now for the whole country.

(Q.) 20 per cent. for the whole country?—(A.) Yes.

MR. BRUCE THOMAS: If the imports are 20 per cent. down, and the men are doing their best, and overtime is to be abolished, how is the country to obtain its necessary supplies?—(A.) Of course it cannot do it. You would have to build new ports to do it, which would take some years.

(Q.) And at what cost?—(A.) The cost would be inconceivable—quite out of the question. The only way to get more into the country is to get more in at the existing ports, and that cannot be done without a reasonable amount of overtime, even if the men were giving the same output as they were before the war.

(Q.) And if your information is correct as to the reduction in output, it is necessary, of course, to re-establish the old output?—(A.) Yes.

(Q.) I think that the view that you hold as to increase of output being the remedy for the present condition of food prices is not held by you alone?—(A.) No, I gather not from what I read. I have seen the poster which has been put up a great deal in a great many places with regard to the views of certain distinguished and well-known Labour leaders; it is called "The Gate to More," I think.

MR. ROBERT WILLIAMS: "More Profits."

MR. BRUCE THOMAS: You have mentioned that; have you got a copy of it?—(A.) I do not think I have.

MR. BEVIN: You might save the distinguished Labour leaders.

MR. BRUCE THOMAS: Is *this* the document that you refer to? (*Handed.*)—(A.) That is the one.

(Q.)—I think the unanimous expression of views of Mr. Clynes, Mr. Hodge, Mr. William Brace, Mr. J. H. Thomas, and Mr. Brownlie coincide with the views that you have expressed here to-day?—(A.) Yes.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is nothing odd or grotesque about this document except its title?—(A.) No, my Lord.

(Q.) Otherwise it is a record of addresses by men that you very properly called "distinguished men"?—(A.) Absolutely.

(Q.)—They are not responsible, any more than you are, for this grotesque title?—(A.) I presume not.

MR. BRUCE THOMAS: I want you to give the estimate that you have of the cost of conceding these demands at Liverpool; and from that I think you are able to base an estimate for the whole country?—(A.) Mr. Bevin gave an estimate based on an estimate of the number employed in the industry. I have proceeded in quite a different way. I have taken the record of wages that we have in Liverpool, the wages paid through the Clearing House, and attempted to get a maximum figure on that which would be the outside limit of the increase. I have taken the amount of wages paid during the last week in December, which was £81,121. I find that by investigating the returns we get of the amount of overtime that was worked by a large number of the leading firms in Liverpool, the amount of money earned in daytime was 75 per cent. of that, and the amount of money earned in overtime was 25 per cent. I have applied those proportions to the whole amount, although the proportions are derived from a certain number of employers only, but they are large employers. Then I applied to the amount of money earned in daytime, and the amount of money earned in overtime, the appropriate increases in accordance with the claim, and I arrive in this way, for that particular week, at a figure of £39,000, which would mean £2,055,000 in the year for that particular section of transport workers in Liverpool. I take that to be a maximum figure, because I find that in the previous weeks, working in the same way, I should not get as large a figure. For instance, in the first week of December I should get £1,800,000 instead of a little over £2,000,000.

THE CHAIRMAN: What class of workers does that apply to?—(A.) That applies to the dock labourers, who are paid by the Ministry of Labour. They number between 20,000 and 22,000, and there are about as many more again who would be directly affected by this claim. I can therefore say, as an outside figure, that the increase in Liverpool, I think, could not be more than four millions, and I do not think it could possibly be less than three millions. To arrive at the cost for the whole country the only guide I could think of was to consider the proportion of the trade of the whole country which Liverpool was doing in bulk, and I took 20 per cent. as being the approximate figure, which I think is near enough for this purpose. I would then have to multiply the Liverpool figure by five in order to get the cost for the whole country. That would give me as an outside figure £20,000,000, and possibly a minimum figure of £15,000,000. I do not put that figure forward with the idea of saying that it is an accurate figure for the whole country, because it is only a guess; but it is arrived at from figures which I

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know were drawn up on a proper basis for Liverpool.

The CHAIRMAN: When you say the loss for the whole country, do you mean the workmen's wage bill would be less?

Sir ALFRED BOOTH: No, I did not say the loss, I said the cost of the increased wages bill for the whole country; the amount of the increased wages for the whole country, would be, say, five times the amount in Liverpool. That is a rough way of getting at it.

The CHAIRMAN: You mean the increase demanded in the present application?—(A.) Yes.

Sir JOSEPH BROodbANK: What is Liverpool?—(A.) Liverpool on my figures would be a maximum of £4,000,000 and a minimum of £3,000,000.

The CHAIRMAN: On the assumption that that was one-fifth of the total, then the other is a mere matter of multiplication?—(A.) Yes, and you will quite see that that is a very big assumption, my Lord.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is the estimate on the basis that you have stated of the direct cost of conceding the demands as they are put forward?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—You, of course, have not included in that, and are not able to say anything about the indirect effect that it would have?—(A.) No, it was quite impossible to give any estimate of that at all.

Q.—There was one point that I wished you to draw attention to which appears on Table G. The district rates, the present hourly rates, for shipmen are 1s. 6½d., for porters 1s. 5½d., for coalmen, 1s. 11½d., for fitters' labourers 1s. 5½d.; and turning to the skilled trades, they are for turners and fitters 1s. 11½d. and for drillers 1s. 8½d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Do you consider that the present hourly rates of the dock labourers are properly related to those of the other trades?—(A.) Yes, I think so.

Q.—The demand for a 16s. minimum for a 44-hour week represents 2s. per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—That would mean that the porters would get 2s., the shipmen 2s. 1d., and that would be substantially more than the skilled turners and fitters and the drillers, actually working on the ships that the shipmen were loading, would get?—(A.) Yes, and even the boilermakers, who now get 1s. 11½d.

Q.—In your view would that be a state of affairs which would long exist?—(A.) It could not possibly; it would be altered almost immediately.

Q.—Now I want you to refer to the 44-hour Agreement. That, my Lord, is A.2. There is a bundle of Agreements, and the 44-hour Agreement is the document printed in green?—(A.) That is the Agreement made in Liverpool as a consequence of the national recommendation for the 44-hour week. It is not a national agreement, but a Liverpool agreement.

Q.—Will you tell the Court about the national recommendation, the outcome of which was these various local 44-hour agreements? I think you had an application from the National Transport Workers' Federation early in 1918, and you negotiated, I think, or a body of employers did, with regard to the reduction of hours?—(A.) Yes. The outcome of the negotiations, the national recommendation, was that the Employers' Com-

mittee agreed to recommend to all the ports that they should make local agreements to bring about this reduction of hours on the basis that there should be two half days, with provision for an early start—every man to be on the stands at 7.45—and for work to be carried on at full swing until 5 p.m., in order that in the afternoon spell again there should be four hours' clear work.

Q.—As the result of those negotiations, the recommendation that you have already mentioned was sent to all the ports?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I should like to hand in a copy of that recommendation, which was the result of those negotiations. (**The same was handed in.*)

The WITNESS: We then set to work in Liverpool to try to make an agreement by which we could carry out those recommendations.

Q.—The recommendation was for the half day to be fixed by local negotiations?—(A.) The principle of the eight-hour working day was to be accepted, and a quarter of an hour was to be added to each half day to cover the time necessary for taking on men, starting and stopping work, so that the men should present themselves at 7.45, and not leave the premises until 5.15. That was afterwards modified, not so far as the 7.45 was concerned, but so far as the 5.15 was concerned, in that arrangements should be made in any way that was found locally possible, so that work should continue at full swing until 5, any man left on after that to close hatches, and so on, being paid for doing so. We then set to work to try to make a scheme which would work satisfactorily in Liverpool.

Q.—There was no national 44-hour agreement, but agreements were, in fact, made with each authority?—(A.) That is right. They were made with each body of employers in each port. It was a national recommendation.

Q.—And the agreement that was made at Liverpool in consequence of this recommendation is what is known as the Green Agreement?—(A.) Yes. May I deal with that now?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If you please.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you give us the date of this recommendation?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The recommendation was sent out, my Lord, on March 7, 1919. There had been several conferences with the National Transport Workers' Federation, and that is the date when it was despatched to the various ports.

The WITNESS: We then set to work in Liverpool to try to make an agreement, and we did it through the Joint Committee. The Joint Committee was summoned, and we discussed at several meetings, covering altogether three weeks, how we were to do it. The great point that we had in mind was the preservation of those 4-hour spells unimpaired by absenteeism or bad turning up in the morning, or early getting away at night; and the representatives of the Union on the Joint Committee and the employers were entirely at one as to the spirit in which they wanted to work this agreement. We wanted to do more than merely settle a new way in which we would work in the day; we wanted to get a proper arrangement for working a half-night, a period which was important so far as the ocean trade of Liverpool was concerned. Before the war the regular engagement for the half-night was from

* Not printed.

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6 o'clock until half-past ten. The men who were kept on to work the half-night finished their day work at 5 and went away for an hour to tea, and came back at 6, working until half-past ten—altogether, 4½ hours. During the war, owing to the alteration in the hours when public houses were closed, the men adopted the alternative engagement, which had always existed in our agreement as an alternative, but was seldom used, or was less often used, of working through, as we call it, from 5 to 9 instead of going away to tea; so that the men were actually supposed to be at work from 1 o'clock until 9 o'clock without a break. Obviously, that was an impossible engagement from any decent working point of view, but the men insisted on working that engagement in order that they might be through with their work early, and the employers had to fall in with that arrangement in spite of the obvious objection to it being physically impossible for the men to give good work for such a stretch without slipping away for refreshment. More and more the practice of the men of slipping away for twenty minutes or for ten minutes or half an hour for tea in the afternoon while work was kept nominally going crept in, and grew to be an established practice. It had to be recognised, because, obviously, no man could work from 1 o'clock in the afternoon until 9 o'clock at night without any break at all. The great objection, from our point of view, to this practice, and to the continuing of this practice, was that they had a recognised slip-away time at this time, and it became almost impossible to prevent unrecognised slipping away at other times. It is difficult enough to check absenteeism at any time, and you cannot have timekeepers tied up to every man right through the day. When there is a recognised period when the men can go away, your Lordship will see how difficult—in fact, how almost impossible—it becomes to check absenteeism at other times. I think on the Joint Committee we were all at one that we wanted to stop this and get back to the proper arrangement of a man getting away to his tea and having a proper hour's rest when staying for the night and then coming back to his work. It was all in keeping, as we thought, with the spirit of these recommendations, in which great stress had been laid on the point that you could not expect to get good work out of a man at the docks if you kept him on for more than a 4-hour spell. Therefore, in this Green Agreement we provided that the half-night should be from 6 until 10—not from 6 to 10.30, as it was before, but from 6 to 10—and at the same time we raised the rate of pay for overtime from the existing rate, which was the pre-war rate, plus the flat war bonus, to time and a half all round, as mentioned already. We hoped that this increased pay would lead the men to accept the new practice, or, rather, the re-introduction of the old practice of going away for their tea at 5 o'clock. This agreement, as I say, was the subject of long negotiations. We tried to meet the points that the Union leaders raised in every way, and finally the agreement was signed, and I thought myself that I had never done a better three-weeks' work in my life, because here was a process of working which would promote efficiency and output, and treat the men as they ought to be treated, as human beings. They would not be expected to work for impossible spells without going away, and at the same time we should be able to stop absenteeism because there would be no recognised absenteeism at any period of the day. This agreement was signed, and immediately after the signature the men objected, and refused to work on it. The employers felt that the matter was of such importance that they tried to get the dock officials under the 44-hour agreement to try

to secure 4 hours working in each spell, as we had been promised, and it was necessary, from our point of view, that we should stick to it. We said we were ready to modify the engagement for the half-night in any way that the men might suggest. We would make it from 5.30 to 9.30, so that they could get out to the public houses before they closed at 10 o'clock, or we would reduce the number of hours of the half-night engagement from 4 to 3½, with a proportionate reduction of pay, or from 4 to 3 again, with a proportionate reduction of pay, in order that a recognised and proper break between the spells should be maintained, but it was useless. The end of the story was the letter which we got from the Union.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That, my Lord, is in the bundle which Sir Alfred Booth has handed in. There is a document marked M.1,* which consists of some correspondence which passed between the Secretary of the Employers' Association and the Secretary of the men's representatives. (To the Witness): I think the two letters you wish to refer to are those dated the 4th and the 10th of June?—(A.) Yes. May I read those two letters. They are quite short. The first is a letter from the Secretary of the Employers' Association to the General Secretary of the National Union of Dock Labourers: "Dear Sir, I am in receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant. It was understood at the meeting of the Joint Committee on Monday that you would reply to my letter of the 22nd May, more particularly in regard to the query raised therein as to what step your Committee propose to take to enforce adherence to the overtime clause in the original agreement as signed by the President of your Union and yourself"; and the answer to that was: "In reply to your letter on the question of overtime, and your inquiry as to what our Committee intend to do with respect to the late agreement, I beg to state that the old Executive Committee has been superseded by a new Executive Committee elected by the Annual Meeting of the organisation in Galway. It will, therefore, not be possible for them to carry out any agreements with respect to overtime that they had not previously been a party to. May I also add that the decision with respect to overtime was arrived at at the Annual Congress, and which, with the authority of the organisation, supersedes any previous decision that has been arrived at. I would, therefore, be obliged if you would let me have a reply on or before Friday next to lay before the new Executive Committee." So that the whole work we had done in arriving at an agreement which I hoped was going to lead to efficiency and good work in the docks was thrown away, and we had to go back to the old arrangement of working through from 1 o'clock until 9 o'clock with the men slipping away for their tea as before, with the natural consequence that the men slip away at all times of the day, and we cannot help it.

The CHAIRMAN: When did the supersession of the old Executive Committee which made the agreement by the new Executive which had not made it take place?—(A.) At this Galway meeting. The date is given in the correspondence. It must have been at the end of May, I think. The agreement was signed in April; I have not the day of the month, but it was signed in April, and in May the Executive of the Union was changed, and repudiated the agreement.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Just to put the position

* See Appendix No. 50.

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very shortly, for three weeks you negotiated with the Executive, and arrived at an agreement?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Immediately the men refused to work under that agreement, or under a very important part of it?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—That agreement was made in April?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—In May a new Executive Committee of the Union was appointed?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And they repudiated the agreement that had been made in April?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Does that in your view hold out any hopeful prospect of the result of collective bargaining so far as these men are concerned?—(A.) I think it is quite useless to expect that you can lay down centrally the conditions under which men are to work locally. Neither this Court, with all respect, nor the employers, nor the officials of the Union, can do it. It is perfectly natural; you cannot take the men one step beyond the point to which they are prepared to go themselves, and up to which you have educated them.

Q.—I think at Liverpool that is not the only experience you have had of agreements being broken and the Union being unable to make the men conform to them?—(A.) No. Of course, one must make all allowances in these matters. The Union has to deal with a very large number of men of all kinds, and the officials are not able to control all the men, and do not pretend to be able to do so. They tell us frankly in certain circumstances that they cannot control all the men. That is why it is so important not to make any agreement with the Union that they say there is the least doubt about being able to carry out, because it will only lead to trouble. In the ordinary course of events, of course, we have frequent cases of particular sets of men disobeying the orders of the Joint Committee, and disobeying the orders of their own Union officials. At the same time it is only fair to say that we have a very much larger number of cases of men who accept the decisions and obey the decisions of the Union. The commonest case we have is where the men stop work without waiting first to submit the case in dispute to the Joint Committee. It is laid down in the agreement that work shall go on pending a settlement with the Joint Committee, and we have had very frequent cases of men stopping work in spite of that. On the other hand, we have had, I venture to say, very many cases also of men observing that and going on pending a settlement. But the point I wanted to make was that you are bound to have a certain number of men who will not obey the Union, and the Union does not, and so far as I can see cannot, have complete control, and therefore any agreements arrived at centrally without the most careful examination and discussion on the spot as to what can and cannot be done are valueless; and even when you take the greatest precaution, as we did last April, to make sure that the men's leaders are really representing the wishes of the men, you make mistakes and find that you are let down.

Q.—The overtime illustration that you gave the Court is not confined to one section of men, but applies to the workers throughout, does it not?—(A.) Yes, throughout.

Q.—I see in the Green Agreement, Clause 6 says:—"The Union pledges itself to give its whole-hearted support to the Joint Committee by seeing that its members loyally carry out the full intentions of this agreement"; and that, as we

have already seen, the Executive appointed one month after this agreement was made stated that they were unable to enforce it.—(A.) The new Executive was definitely elected on the platform that they were not going to enforce it; they did not approve of it.

Q.—I do not know whether you wish to say anything about Clause 5 in the agreement, which provides: "The Union shall not interfere in any way with the method of working cargo on ship or quay," "subject to the right of appeal to the Joint Committee under Clause 8 (c) of the White Book?"—(A.) I should like to say a word about that, because the provision of machinery and approved working methods are one of the ways in which better output can be obtained. In our original 'White Book' agreement, Clause 8 (c), referred to on page 11, says: "The conditions of employment for any particular class of work both as to the number of men to be employed and the method of working, with power to lay down regulations which shall apply to any particular trade or to the entire port, for the purpose of ensuring the safety and the health of the men." That is to say, the control and working of better working conditions is vested in the Joint Committee, and these were the points on which claims could be made. It is laid down there clearly that the ground of claim must be safety or health; but the difficulty we have had on the Joint Committee has been the number of claims for less efficient methods of working, not on the grounds that the existing ones were unsafe or unhealthy, but on the ground that somebody else was working in that way, based on past practice in a particular quarter. The tendency has always been to reduce the more efficient methods of work to less efficient methods. Of course, on the Joint Committee we naturally set our faces against that on both sides. The agreement has been properly interpreted, but the difficulty is that that is the natural tendency that the men themselves try to follow. If they happen to hear of anybody working three bags to a sling instead of four, the men on the ship next door will refuse to work four, because they will say somebody else only works three.

Q.—The Joint Committee consisting of representatives of the Unions and representatives of the employers are agreed that there is not to be this interference, but they cannot impose their authority on the men?—(A.) They sometimes fail, and we often find that some minor official of the Union rather encourages the men to try to get an unfair standard which is set by some firm on their own proposition followed. It is a constant difficulty which we have to cope with as best we can.

Q.—Now, I want you just to say a word about the Clearing House at Liverpool, which was brought into existence on the recommendation of the Joint Committee consisting of representatives of the men and representatives of the employers. Will you tell the Court what the purpose of the Clearing House is?—(A.) The beginning of the whole story was, of course, the White Book Agreement itself of 1911, which has been referred to so often. That was arrived at before the great strike of 1911, and when the strike was stopped it was re-established. The agreement had been arrived at and signed before the strike took place, and then, having got going again and having the Joint Committee established, we felt that the next step was to try to do something to improve the conditions under which dock labourers were working. It was quite useless to increase the

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wages, because that merely brought in fresh floods of casual labour from other parts of the country and from Ireland, and the first step appeared to be to get a system of registration started whereby we should be able to turn off the tap, as it were. That was the first thing to do. At the same time we wanted, if possible, to make a beginning, at any rate, of some system of decasualisation if we possibly could, so that the two things could be running concurrently. In the result we were unable to do anything more than registration and a common basis, or standard, of wages. The first idea with regard to what we would do about decasualisation was to make two separate classes of registered dockers, one set being registered by the companies for whom they were working, and for whom those companies themselves would be responsible as regards seeing that they got proper and regular work; and, secondly, men who were not attached to any particular company, who would be regarded as the men who went from one employer to another according to circumstances. You might call them A men and B men. However, there was so much opposition from the men to this differentiation—an opposition which it was quite easy to understand—that that part of the scheme was abandoned, and we simply went in for straightforward registration of all the men who could prove that they were working in the docks at that time. At the same time we started a system of clearing the wages at a central point, so that, broadly speaking, a man only had to go to one pay office to draw all his money for the week. That was not done without a very considerable struggle; in fact, the dock labourers at Birkenhead were out on strike for a whole month rather than submit to being registered. However, we did get through it, and the men were registered, and from that time to this we have never yet been able to take any further step with regard to decasualisation, because the war came upon us pretty soon and it was impossible to do anything during the war. I am now really at a loss to know what should be the next step. We have tried and we have discussed and drafted various different schemes. I remember at one period we worked out a scheme for paying an additional wage or bonus to men who worked over a certain number of hours, but one can quite see that there are objections to that. At any rate, it did not go through. Then one of the leading employers of the port had made efforts of various kinds, beginning in 1910, to get his men to accept a permanent weekly engagement with a guaranteed minimum wage based on the amount that the men would earn in 5½ days, but although that attempt was renewed on several occasions, the men always refused. The branch of the Union at Birkenhead always refused its consent, and it was quite clear that in doing so they were expressing the opinion of the men themselves.

Q.—Were three separate efforts made by that large firm to take on their casual men as permanent at the full weekly wage?—(A.) Yes, guaranteed.

Q.—And declined by the Union on three occasions?—(A.) Yes, no doubt on the ground that they would not be taking on all the men, and the others would be left possibly in a worse position owing to the fact that a certain proportion had got a guaranteed preference. Then during the war we thought an opportunity had arisen to see whether anything of this kind could be done on a larger scale, and the Port Labour Committee, on which my colleague Mr. Sexton was represented as well as myself, we thought we

would try again in connection with the exemption certificates which had to be held by dock labourers of military age. We asked all the dock labourers of military age in May, 1917, to register again with their age and to register themselves with some employer who would undertake to guarantee them the minimum employment during the week on the basis of the then existing rate of pay for 5½ days; but we were told that some of the older dockers were very much opposed to this, because they thought it would give the younger men, whom, they thought, might be spared to go to the front, an advantage in employment as against the older men, so we agreed that the employers should be ready also to register a man of any age, not, of course, with any idea of military service, but so that they might have exactly the same opportunity of coming in on this guaranteed weekly wage as the younger men. The registration was successfully carried out. We got all the younger men, the men of military age, registered with certain employers, but not one of the older men, as a matter of fact, came in and offered to take this employment. There was one condition, of course, involved, that if the original employer of the man had not got work for him at any particular time, then he must accept work elsewhere, which would be found for him by the Ministry of Labour or the Board of Trade Clearing House. I am sorry to say the thing never caught on, the men obviously did not like it; and while we were able to work it perfectly satisfactorily from the point of view of the exemption certificate by keeping careful watch on the earnings of every one of these men below military age through the Clearing House, and seeing that, in fact, they were working with reasonable regularity, and if we found that they were not, having them before us to see if they had any reason which explained it, it was effective from the point of view of doing what we were told to do by the War Office, but it was no use from the point of view of starting a real weekly system, because the men did not want to take these outside engagements which were offered them, and so far as the older men were concerned, they did not come into the scheme at all.

Q.—Does your experience of that scheme demonstrate to you that the docker does not want a regular binding weekly engagement with a fixed minimum wage.—(A.) He does not want that if it is coupled, as it must be, with the obligation to work where he is sent to if his principal employer has not got work for him, and that is a perfectly natural attitude for the docker to take up. He does not want the work where he is not known; he would rather wait and lose a day or two days' work and pick up the job he understands with his own chosen employer when that job comes on again. Going away to somebody else, he may lose the job that he wants when it becomes available a day or two later.

Q.—It has been stated here by Mr. Bevin that employers have always resisted de-casualisation. Is that true so far as Liverpool is concerned?—(A.) No. We have turned this way and that way to try to find some practical method which would work, and which would meet with the approval of the men, in which they could co-operate, and after nine years' work on the subject I can only say that you will not find a royal road to this, but it has got to be worked out as a hand-in-hand problem in every port, according to the conditions there are, and according to the local circumstances. What might work in Liverpool might be absolutely impossible in London.

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Q.—Do you recommend a registration scheme at every port, worked out in order to fit the local circumstances of each case?—(A.) I think that is a necessary step. You cannot do anything without a registration scheme which will show you what men you are employing, and, if possible, what they are earning. You must have figures to start upon, and also you must prevent the flooding of the labour market at the docks with casual labour from every other employment in times of bad trade.

Q.—Of course, it would be quite hopeless to attempt that without the most hearty co-operation on the part of the unions?—(A.) Quite impossible. Even then you might have a strike, as we had in Liverpool, putting it into operation.

Q.—I want you to say a word about the claim for a standard minimum. What is your view upon that?—(A.) I think it is opposed to all business practice—the standard minimum of the type that is put forward here—and that the minimum must vary in different districts.

Q.—From your experience, do you consider that the docker, say, in Liverpool, would long remain content if he had only the same wages as, say, the docker at King's Lynn?—(A.) I think that he would not remain content if he was not on the same level as the other trades with which he is apt to compare himself in his own district, and as those trades would, I think, necessarily be above the level of those trades at King's Lynn, the docker would have to be, too.

Q.—Do you think that the differentials that now exist as between ports, if they were flattened out at one stroke of the pen, would tend to reassert themselves in the future?—(A.) I am quite sure they would.

Q.—Now, with regard to overtime, what is the principle that you put forward that you consider applicable to overtime?—(A.) I venture to turn again to the green agreement. I think that the principle that we adopted there was the right one so far as the ocean trade in a port like Liverpool is concerned. I cannot say whether it is right for the coasting trade even at Liverpool; I do not think it is—I think it is too rigid; but for the ocean trade I think the scheme is a good one. The idea was that generally speaking the employers can map out their work for the week and arrange to work a certain number of half-nights quite definitely during the week, and that the rate of pay for those half-nights, definitely arranged in that way, should be time and a-half, but that there would be exceptional engagements allowed where a ship has to finish for tide or for going into graving dock or to keep a sailing date, and that in those circumstances working on should be allowed for a limited time. We limited it in this agreement to two hours. They should be allowed to work on for not more than two hours after any of these four-hour engagements, and the rate of pay for working on should be higher than the rate of pay for overtime on the regular four-hour period which we call the half-night: that the first hour of working on is double time, and each hour worked on in that way is paid at double time. It was to be regarded as a special engagement under exceptional circumstances, not to be the regular thing. That gives just the amount of latitude that I think is required for the ocean trade in a port like Liverpool. The work for the week is plotted out, as a rule, so that you can say how many half-nights you are going to work, but there are exceptional cases when you have got to work, and I think

after the second half-day, that is to say, after 5 o'clock, there should be either one or two hours allowed, or even after the first half-night, one or two hours to catch a tide or for those special reasons. That engagement must be possible, but it should be expensive and it should be strictly limited.

Q.—You do not put forward that as a proper scheme for the coasting service. That will be dealt with by another witness hereafter?—(A.) It seems to me in the coasting trade and the short sea trade where they work in and out on tides there ought to be greater latitude. You cannot map out your work on factory lines there such as we can do for ocean work where we do not work on tides but on day.

Q.—I do not know whether you have anything more to say about overtime?—(A.) No, I think that is all.

Q.—There was just one question that I wanted to put to you. What is the position with regard to tonnage now compared with before the war? Is there as much tonnage or more tonnage afloat to-day than before the war?—(A.) There is more, I forget the exact figure, I think 2,000,000 tons more.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you mean British tonnage?—(A.) No, world's tonnage.

Mr. BEN TILLET: What is the British share?—(A.) I am afraid I have not got that.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: But for delays in ports would the supply exceed the demand to-day?—(A.) There is no doubt about it, if the ships were getting the turn round in port that they were getting before the war, the demand for cargo space would not be equal any longer to the supply of tonnage space; it would be less.

Q.—What would that result in?—(A.) A fall in freights.

Q.—That would result in a reduction in prices, would it not?—(A.) I should hope it would, in this way, that if you bring in more commodities you have got more competition on the commodity side, the supply is increased, the demand remains constant and prices must fall.

Q.—This slower turn round is due partly to the reduction of hours?—(A.) Partly, and partly to the less efficiency of work, and partly to the extraordinary vagaries of the Government trading that we have got in the ports, which is blocking the ports.

Mr. BEN TILLET: With regard to trucks, do you mean?—(A.) Trucks and other things.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Will you just explain what you mean by the Government vagaries?—(A.) The Government in trade is not regulated by the ordinary commercial considerations which apply to the private trader. They can bring in wool to London months before anybody wants it and block up the whole port with it. If any commercial trader did what the Government have done in wool they would have been ruined. You see exactly the same thing in meat. They bring in supplies which are not wanted, which they cannot dispose of; and we see it in tea, and we see it in practically every commodity which the Government brings in. It is natural. They have bought it and they bring it in, but they do not know where they are going to put it. There is also

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the inter-play between the different Departments. You cannot blame one Department more than another. There cannot be the co-ordination on this business that the Government does, and there cannot be the result that you get in commercial business from the mere fact that if you did those things you would go out of business, you would be ruined.

Q.—What does the unco-ordinated action of the Government result in?—(A.) It results in congestion of various kinds, sheds being blocked up, or the railroads being overtaxed with supplies that nobody wants, and things being moved about from this side to that side without any good purpose.

Q.—This slower turn round of vessels is due to several causes?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—One, in your view, is the smaller output that is given by labour itself?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—In your view, if labour shares its part in increasing the output, would that be the shortest road to the reduction of the present high prices?—(A.) Yes, provided it is all over the country. Of course, no one section alone can do it; you want increased output in every industry. The point is, of course, that if you start an atmosphere of increased output it will spread, just as the reverse does.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q.—I should like first of all to ask whether the railway facilities at Liverpool have developed to the same extent as the dock facilities; take a period, say, of twenty years.—(A.) Do you mean whether the railway facilities now are the same or more, or less, relatively, than they were twenty years ago?

Q.—Yes.—(A.) I think they are rather more.

Q.—You think they are greater?—(A.) Yes. As you know, they never have been very great in Liverpool.

Q.—Can you explain why the railways cannot absorb the goods inland from Liverpool in the same capacity as they did hitherto?—(A.) I think that is very largely due to this Government trading. It is not done now on a commercial basis. As somebody described it, it is "trading in penny numbers," as far as the ordinary trader is concerned, instead of in larger quantities.

Q.—You said to our friend that a good deal of haulage was done in Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Would haulage and ex-ship deliveries be extended if railways were developed, or could be developed?—(A.) Do you mean, could more be done by rail?

Q.—Yes.—(A.) I think there is room for some development, yes. I think always a great deal will have to be done by road in Liverpool.

Q.—You have fairly good railway facilities at Birkenhead, have you not?—(A.) Yes. Birkenhead is rather the export section of the Port of Liverpool. The Eastern export cargoes are very largely shipped from Birkenhead. There are more exports than imports at Birkenhead.

Q.—But you propose in the further development of Liverpool still to extend the Liverpool side where there is so much haulage to be done as against railways?—(A.) I propose?

Q.—I mean the Dock and Harbour Board, or the Liverpool Authority.—(A.) I do not know

what they are proposing to do. I suppose one consideration is the possible places where development can take place.

Q.—Coming to the wages at Liverpool, the present minimum rate is 11s. 8d., is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—The present minimum rate in London, I think you will agree, is 11s. 8d.—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Is that impracticable?—(A.) No, evidently not.

Q.—Would it be impracticable to make both the minimum rates 16s. in like manner?—(A.) Do you mean to continue the same minimum rate—to continue the minimum rates the same, whatever they might be?

Q.—Yes.—(A.) No.

Q.—It is not impracticable?—(A.) No.

Q.—You gave us some figures this morning showing a wage in Liverpool of £3 11s. 6d. and £3 4s. 6d., including overtime?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—You also said that overtime represented 25 per cent. off that average?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—That would give us, would it not, £2 13s. 7½d. average, and £2 8s. 4½d. average for a normal week?—(A.) I accept that from you, if you have worked it out.

The CHAIRMAN: Give me those figures again, please.

Mr. BEVIN: Taking the 25 per cent. off, as against the £3 11s. 6d. it would give for a normal week, £2 13s. 7½d. on the average for 44 hours, and as against the £3 4s. 6d. it would give £2 8s. 4½d.—(A.) That is taking three-quarters as being earned in ordinary time.

Q.—Quite. Do you agree that the basis of the wages ought to be for ordinary maintenance, the normal week?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And exclude overtime?—(A.) Quite.

Q.—Then the proper basis to consider would be the figures I have just quoted as being the income of a docker in Liverpool to maintain himself and family?—(A.) As far as they affect that question, they should.

Q.—Then if you take the bottom figure, what do you suggest is the pre-war money value of £2 8s. 4½d.?—(A.) You mean my opinion as to what the increased cost of living is now?

Q.—What the purchasing power in the shops is now?—(A.) Of course that can only be a matter of opinion. I think that, roughly speaking, it is about half.

The CHAIRMAN: The pre-war value of £2 8s. 4½d. would be £1 4s. 2d.?

Mr. BEVIN: But your counsel, you remember, yesterday suggested that if you took all the cost of living it was 125 per cent., including rent and other figures?—(A.) No, he gave that as the figure given in the "Labour Gazette."

Q.—Do you suggest that at this period, taking the pre-war value of £1 4s., that is a living wage?—(A.) I am not satisfied with any such wage.

Q.—And you agree that it ought to be increased?—(A.) I should be very glad to see it increased. Remember, we are talking here of an average.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite. I am going to ask you the gradation in a moment.

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The CHAIRMAN: At present you are solely on the minimum point?

Mr. BEVIN: Quite.

Q.—What is the gradation, according to the Liverpool Clearing House Scheme, between the top and the bottom?—(A.) Those figures I have not got. They are confidential figures of the Ministry of Labour. I do not see why they should not be willing to give them to the Court if they were asked to do so.

The CHAIRMAN: What was the question?

Mr. BEVIN: What was the gradation between the highest and the lowest, taking the 11s. 8d. man—that is to say, the man who would be more regularly employed—as against the man with one or two or three days per week? This is an average taken over the man who works, who would probably be a preference man, as against a very casual man.

The CHAIRMAN: The gradation from the minimum?

Mr. BEVIN: No, the minimum man, the man on the 11s. 8d. rate. That is the question I was putting.

The WITNESS: I may tell you that I think the Ministry of Labour could furnish calculations showing what number of men earned over a certain amount and what number of men earned above a certain lower amount; but those figures have been considered confidential, and should be obtained from them.

Q.—Still, you do agree that the Liverpool wages do not provide at the moment on this basis what might be termed a living wage?—(A.) No, I do not.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you say that you do not agree?—(A.) I do not agree.

Mr. BEVIN: May I put the question again? What I meant was this: You agree that these wages are not a living wage, do you?—(A.) No, I do not.

Q.—Do you suggest seriously that £2 8s. 4½d. on the average is a living wage?—(A.) I think you have got to go into the question of what the different rates were earned by different numbers of men; you have to investigate how this average is arrived at, and what it really means in practice. Supposing you found that a certain number of men were earning substantially less than this average, and that those men were single men living in lodgings, you might say that those men were not earning a satisfactory wage, perhaps even that some of them were not earning a living wage, but you could not say broadly that the Liverpool wage was not a living wage.

Q.—But do you suggest seriously that you can adjust wages on the basis of family responsibility?—(A.) No, I do not.

Q.—Then must we not move on averages?—(A.) We must use averages as far as you can get any enlightenment from them.

Q.—Then if you have to use averages, how can you adjust wages except on a collective rate?—(A.) You have got to consider what the man can earn, certainly.

Q.—Each individual man in a dock; do you suggest that?—(A.) I do not quite follow that.

Q.—Is your suggestion the fixing of wages now individually according to individual responsibilities, as to whether a man lives in a lodging-house or has a family—to see what he earns?—(A.) No.

Q.—I misunderstood you, then.—(A.) I am suggesting that the wages have to be fixed on what can be earned by a man who is definitely engaged in this industry and is working at it regularly.

Q.—Then assuming the man worked 44 hours each week, what would he earn in Liverpool now on the minimum rate?—(A.) £3 4s. 2d.

Q.—Do you seriously suggest that that is a living wage for the docker, presuming he worked 44 hours and was paid £3 4s. 2d. per week?—(A.) Yes, I do.

Q.—I put it very straight to you. Could you maintain your family upon it?—(A.) No, I could not.

Q.—Then are you any more to the community than the docker who handles your ship?—(A.) That is a matter of opinion. As an individual, certainly not.

Q.—Do you think it right to ask a man to live and maintain himself on what you would not dream of asking your own family to live upon?—(A.) It is not a question of what I ask him to live upon; it is what the economic conditions render possible.

Q.—You said before the adjournment, in reply to a question, that you agreed that the rich had to spend less.—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Might not the docker have more if the rich spent less?—(A.) I think it is quite possible.

Q.—Is not that the right end to begin?—(A.) I am afraid he will not get very much more that way, though.

Q.—Then are we to assume from your reply that whatever we do for the working class the rich will still spend as they are now?—(A.) I think I must leave you to draw your own conclusions upon that.

Q.—Do you think it is helping the rich to spend less when a company like yours distributes bonus shares out of reserve, and adds to their income by paying extra dividend?—(A.) May I take the points one by one? You have made two points: First of all, you have made the point about distributing shares out of reserve. May I deal with that first?

Q.—Yes.—(A.) The position is this. Before those bonus shares were issued there was just under £1,500,000 ordinary share capital in the Cunard Company; call it £1,500,000. There was a reserve fund which had been built up out of profits made and not divided over a long series of years, amounting also to £1,500,000. As a matter of fact, that reserve fund in 1913 amounted to £1,000,000, and in 1918, when the bonus shares were distributed, to £1,500,000. The whole of that money had been invested in the company's business—spent on ships by which the trade of the company and the trade of the country was developed. In 1918 the directors decided that it would be desirable to recognise the undoubted fact that the whole of that reserve was absolutely tied up and locked up in the business, and could not be distributed as profits; the shareholders could not be given the spending of it. They therefore decided—I am quoting here from the circular which we issued—“to capitalise the reserve fund

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to the extent of issuing to the shareholders one new fully-paid ordinary share for each ordinary share now held. The effect of this will be that the total number of ordinary shares issued will be doubled, but as the total value of the net assets employed in the business will be unaltered, each share will be worth half as much as an ordinary share on the present basis of capitalisation. If the proposal be adopted, then whatever amount the directors may at any time consider it prudent to distribute as dividend or bonus will represent on the new capitalisation a percentage of half what it would have been on the old." That is so far as that bonus is concerned.

Q.—If the profits of the Company go up now, instead of appearing to the public as 20 per cent. on one share, it will be 10 per cent. or more on two shares?—(A.) Yes; instead of being 20 per cent. as we had paid in the previous year, we paid 10 per cent. on double the number of shares.

Q.—What effect did it have on the taxation of the Company by adding large sums to the reserve and then distributing it as bonus shares?—(A.) Instead of the shareholders being able to spend that money on themselves, it was spent on the ships, and the money is therefore invested in earning plant, and not dissipated in personal expenditure.

Q.—But supposing the bonus shares had not been distributed, what effect would that have had in the computation of the amount payable in excess profits?—(A.) None whatever.

Q.—The 10 per cent. as against the 20 per cent. does not affect the Excess Profits Tax?—(A.) The calculation for excess profits is made without regard to capitalisation at all; it is on the earnings of the year. It would not have any effect in that year at all, because we did not make any excess profits.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you forgive me, Mr. Bevin; I feel loath to interrupt your examination, but I do not think that the Witness and you are quite at one. May I interpose?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, quite, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: In each of the years when profit was calculated, I presume that the Revenue officers would consider, in the question of profits to be assessed, the sums of what they might term, if they were anxious to put a name upon it, concealed profits in the shape of reserve?—(A.) Certainly.

Q.—So that so far as the tax upon profits was concerned, it would be put on year by year as the reserve was created?—(A.) Certainly. The reserves as created paid income tax as they were laid by.

The CHAIRMAN: That, I think, was the point which you wanted to elicit, Mr. Bevin.

Mr. BEVIN: You said this morning that this was bound to increase charges to the community. Do you suggest that the shipping industry at this juncture cannot bear this charge without adding to the cost to the community?—(A.) I want to know what you mean by "this charge."

Q.—Assuming the increase to 16s. per day is granted, with its consequential adjustments of other grades, do you suggest that the shipping and merchant portion of the community at this moment cannot stand that without passing it on

to the community—that the present profits will not stand it?—(A.) I have no idea what the total profits of the shipping and merchant community are. I can speak of my own figures, if you are interested in that.

Q.—Take the Cunard Company and your allied Companies.—(A.) I am quite ready to do so.

Q.—Do you suggest that if you paid your employees this advance, it could not come out of the present profits without reducing your shareholders to poverty?—(A.) I can put it in this way, if you like. I think I have a statement here of the total amount of profits distributed to the ordinary shareholders in the Company. The total amount of profits distributed by the Cunard Company over the whole five years of the war, 1914 to 1919, amounted to £1,100,000, or an average of £220,000 per annum. The number of persons whose wages are a direct charge on the Cunard Company at home and abroad I estimate as varying from 19,500 in 1914 to 28,000 in 1919; and the average being the mean of those two, it is 23,750. I find then if we take the divided profits without allowing anything for interest on the original capital contributed, they would have allowed us to pay each employee something less than £10 per annum or less than 1d. per hour. Of course, as a matter of fact the war advances which have had to be given to the employees, not only in this country but abroad, have ranged, as you know, from, we will say, 10d. per hour upwards; so that it seems clear that these war advances which have actually been given could not have been paid out of pre-existing profits; they had to be obtained by passing the charges on. That was the only way in which they could be obtained.

Q.—But the freights on the North Atlantic Lines in December, 1918, under the Ministry of Shipping were 42s. 6d. Will you tell the Court what they are now?—(A.) The freights on the North Atlantic Lines, when the steamers were being run on account of the Ministry of Shipping, were 42s. 6d. on Government cargo, but on commercial cargo they were whatever the market rate was.

Q.—Prior to December, 1918, what proportion was Government cargo?—(A.) It varied; I should think that it ran, at a maximum, to 80 per cent.

Q.—What would be the proportion of Government cargo now—any?—(A.) Throughout last year I think the figure was about 47 per cent. on the North Atlantic.

Q.—Take the last two months?—(A.) That I cannot tell you. I should think 30 per cent.

Q.—And is that still being run at the 42s. 6d.?—(A.) That is still being run at 42s. 6d.

Q.—What is the commercial rate at the moment?—(A.) The commercial rate varies with the market. The British shipowner is not the only shipowner in the North Atlantic trade; there are American and various other foreign flags, and the rate on commercial cargo is the commercial rate. At the present moment it varies from 70s. to 100s. and 110s.

Q.—Would you say that the Government would have been losing money in handling your cargo at 42s. 6d.?—(A.) I do not quite understand what you mean by "losing money."

Q.—Would they be carrying in your ships at a loss at 42s. 6d.?—(A.) They paid the owners hire on the ships, and they took the freights earned—their own cargo at 42s. 6d. and the commercial

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cargo at whatever they could get, ranging right up to very high figures—I am afraid I have not got the figures now, but very much in excess of anything that I have mentioned.

Q.—Did they make a profit?—(A.) I have not seen their accounts. I think, on the whole, they did.

Q.—What would be the pre-war Atlantic freights, taking 1913 and 1914?—(A.) I am afraid I have not got that; but are you not comparing freights in sovereigns with freights in "Bradburys"? Is there not that weakness right through your argument?

Mr. BEVIN: I am afraid you must leave the strength of my argument to myself.

The CHAIRMAN: This last may be rather a vital matter, namely, the general North Atlantic freight before the war. Can you not help us about that?—(A.) I could get it for you, or you could get another witness to give it to you; but it is a market rate, and it varies from month to month.

The CHAIRMAN: I quite understand; but I think, Mr. Bruce Thomas, the point elicited by Mr. Bevin is strictly relevant to what we have to enquire into. You will have observed in my observations during those interesting speeches to which we have listened that I have been always struggling to get light as to the pre-war period.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Quite.

The CHAIRMAN: This is not a very extensive inquiry, but if you could, with the great assistance which you have behind you, give an answer to Mr. Bevin's question in a complete form, that is say, give us five years before the war as well as the five years of the war, it would be a help.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, we will see that that information is obtained.

The CHAIRMAN: It may not turn out to be strictly on the point, and it may turn out to be strictly on the point. At all events, this Court, I think, is entitled to that information.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Very well, my Lord; for whatever it is worth it shall be laid before the Court.

Mr. BEVIN: You gave us some figures of what was actually distributed to the shareholders during the five years of war. Can you give us the actual profits made by the Cunard Company during that period—actual profits?—(A.) I would like to have a definition of "profits."

Q.—Well, excess over expenditure?—(A.) Yes, but what about the provisions one has to make with regard to variations in the value of assets?

Q.—I think we would like to get, if you do not mind, the actual excess over expenditure?—(A.) I cannot give you that, I have not got that.

Q.—Could it be supplied?—(A.) I have told you what I have here: the actual amounts we have distributed. I have also told you that £500,000 was added to the Reserve Fund during that same period.

Q.—I think you must agree it must help the Court if we could get the excess over expenditure in a great company like the Cunard, to enable the

Court to see whether you have ability to pay?—(A.) I do not think it would. Those figures represent what the shareholders actually got, and any other provisions that one has to make for depreciation, and so on, are, of course, provisions with regard to which every business has to judge what must be put aside.

THE CHAIRMAN: Would you mind asking the witness, Mr. Bevin, in your own time, the rate of declared profits in each of the war years?

Mr. BEVIN: That was the next question I was coming to—the per cent.

THE CHAIRMAN: What I mean is, the witness has quite frankly told you that, in addition to the declared profits, they raised their reserve from £1,000,000 to £1,500,000. The £500,000 during the five years of the war went to reserve. The subsequent thing, in order to get out what you are driving at, I think you will agree, is to add that £500,000 to the declared profits in so far as those declared profits were in excess of the anterior period. You get it then.

Mr. BEVIN: I had a note that I wanted to ascertain the actual declared profits, and perhaps Sir Alfred will tell us that now?—(A.) The actual declared dividend?

Q.—Profit, please?—(A.) For the actual declared profits you will have to refer to the balance-sheets year by year. I am quite prepared to put those in. These give, I think, the information I am dealing with, and they give the rate of dividend year by year. I want you to bear in mind that, so far as the earning power of the Ordinary shares is concerned, at the beginning of the war there was this £1,000,000 set aside out of previous profits which was earning for Ordinary shareholders. Shall I put these in, my Lord?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes, please. Have you no means, however, of helping us on Mr. Bevin's point? You know what the trading profits for the year were. Can you give the trading profits for each of those five years? It could be done in a moment. We are very happy to take your statements, but we value your presence so much that we are going to use you as much as we can. Would you mind taking the war years, and just kindly telling us it for those years; we do not bind you to anything under £1,000, but within those limits will you tell us: begin at 1915?—(A.) Well, my Lord, really I have not got those figures. I could tell you what I might do, if this would give you the information you want: I could send you up to the end of 1918 the actual rate on which we paid excess profits tax, or the amount of the excess profits tax.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not know if Mr. Bevin would be satisfied with that; I certainly should not.

Mr. BEVIN: And I should not.

The CHAIRMAN: It is in the books, and could be got. I do not press you for it.—(A.) It is not in the books in that form.

Q.—But still, there is the point, so much profit declared, so much dividend as the trading profits for the year?—(A.) But remember, my Lord, that is not the end of the story. We have to make provision for the losses which we have suffered during the war.

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Q.—Mark you, so much profit for the year, how was that profit for the year disposed of? Naturally, you will have—no sensible Company could carry on business for a season without placing an appropriate sum for depreciation and reserve?—(A.) There is very much more than that in it. We have lost steamers during the war; we were exceptionally badly hit; and those steamers have to be replaced at the prices of to-day. It will be ten years before we know whether the so-called paper profits are right or not.

Q.—You would keep on the safe side, anyhow, with regard to what you did divide to the shareholders?—(A.) I can tell you quite honestly the only sums that I regard as being really made as profits were the sums distributed and the amounts placed to General Reserve Fund.

Q.—That is what I thought it would come to. That is why I ventured to interpose, and say that if we start with £500,000 to reserve, the next item is: How much was divided as profits? I am much obliged to you, but it comes to that.—(A.) It comes to that, we cannot really get any further.

The CHAIRMAN: Now you can get that figure from him; what was the percentage per annum?

Mr. BEVIN: Will you give that?—(A.) I have given you the total figures already; the total dividends on the ordinary shares came to £1,100,000, and the percentages were, for the year 1914, 10 per cent. dividend, and 10 per cent. bonus, with the option of taking the 10 per cent. in ordinary shares instead of in cash.

Q.—That was really 20 per cent.?—(A.) Yes, that was taken in ordinary shares. In 1915 the same; in 1916, 20 per cent.; in 1917, 20 per cent.; in 1918, 10 per cent. on the doubled capital.

Q.—That was really 20 per cent.?—(A.) Just the same.

Q.—That represented a sum of how much?—(A.) £1,100,000 actually distributed in cash.

Q.—Then you add £500,000 set to reserve?—(A.) Quite so.

Q.—So that really gave 30 per cent.?—(A.) That really gave nearly 30 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: 29 per cent.?—(A.) Quite right.

Mr. BEVIN: Do you suggest that a Company which makes 30 per cent. profit ought to be satisfied with employees obtaining a wage on a pre-war value, which I suggest is not more than one guinea per week?—(A.) I think I have shown, or I hope I have, by nine years of work that I am not satisfied.

Q.—You suggested just now it was a living wage?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—If you are not satisfied it cannot be a living wage, can it?—(A.) I should not be satisfied, necessarily, with a living wage. I want the dockers to get better conditions; I do not think your methods will bring that about.

Q.—You do not really oppose the amount of the 16s.?—(A.) Yes, I do, because it will not give it to you.

Q.—You suggest the 16s. will not give sufficient?—(A.) No, I say they will not get it.

Q.—They will not get what?—(A.) They will not get any benefit from it.

Q.—Can you show us any other way they can benefit?—(A.) Yes. by the whole country going in for more output, and getting the value of the £ up again.

Q.—And maintain a 30 per cent. dividend?—(A.) I do not see that the rate of the dividend has anything to do with it.

Q.—Do you seriously suggest that the country will respond (this or any other country) with increased output to maintain a dividend on capital of 20 per cent. or 30 per cent.?—(A.) There is no dividend of 30 per cent.

Q.—The profit is 30 per cent.?—(A.) The profit during those years was 30 per cent.

Q.—The divided cash was 20 per cent.?—(A.) The divided cash?—No, it was not as much as that; it was approaching that.

Q.—Do you seriously suggest that you can establish confidence in the workmen's minds and get greater output to maintain a dividend on material money of 20 per cent.?—(A.) I would like to see what this money represented.

Q.—It represents in internal currency 4s. in the £?—(A.) No, it represents the original capital subscribed, and the amount which has been saved out of profits of previous years when the shareholders have done without a dividend, or with a very small dividend.

Q.—How many years is it since the Cunard did without a dividend?—(A.) I have made a little calculation here as to what this thing really means, beginning with the foundation of the company in 1881, and I find that if I had invested £100 at 5 per cent. interest on that same date, and only drawn out from my yearly 5 per cent. what was paid by the Cunard Company in dividends, and added the rest to capital for the purpose of earning interest, by the end of 1913 that £100 would have grown to £283; showing that the interest on the Cunard shares for the whole of that period was substantially less than 5 per cent.

Q.—What has been the annual dividend over the whole period?—(A.) Shall I run through them?

Q.—It would be interesting.—(A.) I have not averaged it out, but they were as follows: 1881, 3; 1882, 4; 1883, 0; 1884, 0; 1885, 0; 1886, 0; 1887, 2½; 1888, 4; 1889, 6; 1890, 4; 1891, 3; 1892, 2; 1893, 2; 1894, 0; 1895, 0; 1896, 2½; 1897, 2½; 1898, 3½; 1899, 5; 1900, 8; 1901, 4; 1902, 4; 1903, 4; 1904, 0; 1905, 4; 1906, 5; 1907, 5; then there is the American financial crisis, 1908, 0; 1909, 0; 1910, 5; 1911, 6; 1912, 7; 1913, 7. That is the complete history of the Cunard Company as far as dividends are concerned.

Q.—What was allocated to reserve in that period?—(A.) To the end of 1913, £1,000,000.

Q.—In addition to the dividend?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Up to 1913, how many years are covered by what you have been good enough to state?—(A.) 32 years.

Q.—Could you favour me, please, with the average of the years since the creation of the company to the year 1913. I may be wrong in my calculation, but I think it would be about 3½ per cent.?—(A.) I am afraid I have not worked it out, but I do not think it can be more than that. I thought the more graphic way of putting it was to see what £100 would have amounted to at 5 per cent. in the same time.

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Mr. BEVIN: Do you suggest the Cunard Company was founded in 1881?—(A.) That was when it became a public company, There are no records before that date.

Q.—Was it bought over at the actual value of the share capital—that is, the money subscribed?—(A.) I know nothing about that; I was nine years old at the time.

Q.—Still, the records of the company would have it?—(A.) There are no records beyond 1881, when it started as a company.

Q.—Turning to the profits of your company for a moment, I would like to ask, Sir Alfred, in view of the statement made about congestion, exactly how many companies you are director of?—(A.) May I turn to your very convenient statement. The Cunard Company, the Anchor Line, the Brooklebank Line, the Commonwealth and Dominion Line, the Anchor Donaldson Line, and a company called the America-Levant Line, which, somehow or other, you have left out. Those are the companies which are definitely controlled, using the word in its ordinary sense, by the Cunard Company. In addition to that, I am a director of various companies, family companies connected with my own family, the Booth Steamship Company and Alfred Booth and Company.

Q.—To make a business successful it needs some close attention, does not it?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—It would be difficult for you to increase output, would not it, in directorship?—(A.) Of course, these companies are merely regarded as branches of the Cunard Company; it is one job.

Q.—Do the ships of that company run to nearly every port in Great Britain—one or other of them?—(A.) Well, they run to Liverpool, Glasgow, Bristol, Manchester, London, Southampton, and they occasionally call at Plymouth.

Q.—Have your company in the past ever lodged complaints to other ports that the labour charges have been higher than Liverpool?—(A.) I do not know.

Q.—You have never used it as an argument when your ship has been going to another port?—(A.) I certainly never have.

Q.—Nor your agents?—(A.) That I cannot answer for.

Q.—Do you suggest that there is any valid reason why a docker in Liverpool, working on the quay, should be paid less than a docker, say, at Bristol or London, working on the quay?—(A.) I do not know the conditions at Bristol or London well enough to answer that.

Q.—Supposing you were a docker (I admit it is a stretch of imagination), and that you were wheeling a truck on the Bristol quays, or on the Liverpool quays, would not you regard yourself as being of equal value, discharging similar ships?—(A.) I have no doubt I should set my value very high.

Q.—That does not answer the question really. The Cunard ship is going into Bristol; at Bristol you are willing to pay 14s. a day. Can you show any valid reason why 14s. a day should not be paid at Liverpool. That is a comparison of the present conditions?—(A.) It is the whole argument on these differentials; I do not think you wish me to enter into that again.

Q.—I want you to show a reason for your argument. I was waiting for that, if I may say so, during your examination?—(A.) The differentials based on difference in the cost of living, difference

in the occupational trades in various districts, and the many factors of that kind which limit the possible wages in a particular trade such as dock labour in a particular district.

Q.—Supposing we can show you that the cost of living at Liverpool is not less than it is in London or in Bristol?—(A.) There are a number of other conditions that come in as well.

Q.—What are they?—(A.) There is the question of the occupational rates in other trades; there is the question of the regularity of the employment, the possibility of getting a decent week's earnings out of the daily wage, the question of convenience of getting to and from the dock, and so forth.

Q.—You suggested this morning that in your opinion rates may possibly be less in King's Lynn than they would be in Liverpool, having regard to the district rates and local conditions?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Would you be surprised to know that the docker's rate at King's Lynn is higher than it is at Liverpool?—(A.) No, I did not know that. I think King's Lynn was taken at a venture, merely as an illustration.

Q.—Take Glasgow, where the rate at present is 1s. 9d. an hour, as against your 1s. 6½d. Are not they two similar towns, Liverpool and Glasgow?—(A.) You see, I come from Liverpool; I would not live in Glasgow for 3d. an hour more.

Q.—I do not think that answers the question. It is on the value of the work done. A Scotchman might say it was worth a lot more to live in Liverpool. I really want to get at this point: what is the reason that the quay man, who is taking goods from the side of the ship to a stack in the sheds, which are built similarly, similar kinds of trucks used, the same number of hours worked, the same necessities and family responsibilities and cost of living—I want to know the reason for maintaining these differentials of like with like?—(A.) I suggest that it is all these other factors that necessarily come in in the fixing of wages.

Q.—Are you aware that the engineering trade you refer to have been at York for days trying to do what we are doing here—to work out a national scale?—(A.) No.

Q.—Are you aware that other trades are using the same argument that you are; that if they give an advance it will upset dockers and other people?—(A.) I have no doubt, because it is true.

Q.—Then do you agree that it is a good method for Labour to be going round from association to association, finding all the employers using the same argument, and never settling; will that help output?—(A.) No; but surely that is not the problem, is it?

Q.—That is what is happening?—(A.) The problem is, how are these wages to be provided.

Q.—Do you realise that, if this method goes on, of being unable to settle a trade because it is going to upset the engineers, that there is only one alternative? Do you appreciate that alternative?—(A.) I do not follow.

Q.—Do you realise that Labour *en masse* must attack Capital *en masse* if all the associations are going to keep us running round a circle like this?—(A.) That is a matter of opinion, is not it?

Q.—I am anxious the Court shall appreciate that that is the inevitable result, and the only alternative. You said that what you wanted for ocean traffic was 8 to 12, 1 to 5, for five days a week, and a Saturday half-day, making eleven

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half-days; you wanted three half-nights a week, with exceptional overtime!—(A.) No, I do not think I said that. I said that what we found desirable, for coping with the traffic at present, was about three half-nights a week.

Q.—But you wanted the right to order that, and the men to respond?—(A.) No right to order it; the man is free to take or not to take the engagement, of course.

Q.—Do you not agree that it is very unwise for any corporate body or association to enter into an agreement which does, in fact, imply compulsion to work overtime?—(A.) I have never entered into any such agreement.

Q.—You are not asking for it now?—(A.) Never.

Q.—Thank you. Are you aware that in the past, when the Federation have negotiated port by port, that every port has quoted the next lowest port as a reason why they should not give an advance?—(A.) Yes; I think that is very probable.

Q.—Is not the only way, then, to deal with the matter nationally as far as minimum conditions are concerned, which can be applied generally?—(A.) There is the alternative method which was adopted during the war, of applying for a national increase.

Q.—But if the national increase leaves the ports still in competition, does not that leave some of the ports grumbling that they are in a position of disadvantage with other ports from the point of view of competition?—(A.) You will always have a certain amount of grumbling, whatever you do.

Q.—That does not answer my question, with all due deference. Let me put it a little closer: Is it fair to ask a Union to take the responsibility of going from port to port, to send a representative who will find himself told that he must go and raise somebody else; and we have been appealed to, as you probably know, even to strike another port to make them pay. Do you think that is a good method?—(A.) No; I think this method of having a public Inquiry of this kind is very much better.

Q.—But if the public Inquiry is told that the public Inquiry is only to ventilate, and not to settle, go back to your districts, do not you think it would be rather futile?—(A.) No, I do not.

Q.—The result will not be very efficient, will it?—(A.) I think it will be very helpful.

Q.—In what way; would you mind telling us?—(A.) I hope that the result of this Inquiry will be that we shall get a good guide as to what action we should take on a very complicated matter, which fills me, as I explained this morning, with misgivings.

Q.—Are you a Member of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—(A.) No.

Q.—Then you can speak impartially?—(A.) Yes.

Do you agree that it is wise that Labour should be directly represented upon dock authorities?—(A.) I think that is a pretty big question. I should doubt very much whether it would be of any advantage on the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

Q.—You think it would be?—(A.) No; I doubt very much whether it would be any advantage on the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

Q.—You do not think Labour could assist in organisation or management at all?—(A.) Not on the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board as it is constituted, and with the functions that it has. The labour of the port is not controlled by the Docks and Harbour Board; that is controlled by the Dock Labour Joint Committee.

Q.—Do you suggest that Labour should be limited to just the matters dealing with labour?—(A.) So far as the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board is concerned?

Q.—Yes.—(A.) No; I certainly would not go as far as that. I think we want Labour to help as much as it will. But you gave the special case of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

Q.—Let me put it in another way. Supposing there are developments and improvements to be effected, from the point of view of maintenance and equipment, by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, do you not think that Labour would be of advantage to the management in giving effect to that?—(A.) I rather doubt it at present.

Q.—On what ground?—(A.) You asked my opinion. I do not think at present it would be of any great advantage to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to have direct Labour representation.

Q.—I would like you to give a little closer reason. Do you think it is unable to assist, or lacks capacity in management, or what?—(A.) I think its function is so far removed from anything they have any experience of, it is largely financial, that that is not the right end to begin at, for Labour to take a greater share in helping in management of that kind.

Q.—Do you not think that where finance is involved, in view of what you have told us about the complication of finance and exchange, the responsibility would be educational?—(A.) I am afraid you would not get that at the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

Q.—Not with the present representation, I am inclined to agree. You spoke a good deal about the reduced output in Liverpool; is the output in Liverpool in exact ratio in each dock?—(A.) I cannot tell you that.

Q.—How did you arrive at your average?—(A.) By getting figures from different employers, which will come up before you, and which you will have an opportunity of cross-examining on.

Mr. BEVIN: I think it is essential, my Lord, that we should know how the figures are arrived at. (*To the witness*): You see that your figure of 25 per cent. reduction must be taken over a certain area, and by a certain method, or it may be on a given ship.—(A.) There were different methods used; there is the method of direct observation of similar classes of cargo and conditions carefully chosen so that other elements should not enter into it. That was one method. Then there is another method of taking particular ships with the same classes of cargo and clear quays; and then there is another method of taking the output of certain gangs. The figures there vary, of course, very much as regards the reduction. I said that the impression that the figures conveyed to my mind was that there seemed to be a reduction of about 25 per cent.

Q.—Were they taken for the purposes of this Inquiry?—(A.) Some were taken for the pur-

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poses of this Inquiry, and some had been taken before.

Q.—Did you consult Labour and indicate to them that you were taking them?—(A.) No.

Q.—There was no means of checking the conditions under which the output was taken?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Would it be possible to check those conditions now that it is all over?—(A.) I think so.

Q.—Could you give us the exact areas over which they were taken—the ships, etc.?—(A.) No, I cannot give you that. I have seen those figures and those statements, but I am not putting them in, because I cannot prove them.

Q.—Then they really should have no weight with the Court?—(A.) I hope they will have weight with the Court when they are put in by the people who took them and can speak to them.

Q.—What would you say as a figure would be attributable to labour?—(A.) Out of the 25 per cent.?

Q.—Yes.—(A.) 11 per cent. is due to the reduction of hours, and the balance is due to the reduction of efficiency.

Q.—You attribute the whole 25 per cent. to the change of hours and to labour?—(A.) The whole of this 25 per cent. that I am speaking of.

Q.—Do you not think it would be wise, if the Court need it, to take another test under conditions which labour knew?—(A.) It is not much use taking a test if the men know what is going to be done, and that there is a test being taken.

Q.—I am talking about the representatives of labour. On the other hand, it is not a very good test, is it, if only one side takes a test?—(A.) That must be for the Court to judge; we can only put the figures in and describe how they were taken, as will be done later on.

Q.—Do you agree that before the war the men were driven right up to the maximum?—(A.) No, I should not agree to that.

Q.—The conditions of labour were not very happy, were they?—(A.) I think we were getting on pretty happily in the beginning of 1914.

Q.—Taking it back over a period?—(A.) I know very little about it before 1911, I am ashamed to say. It was the events of that year that brought me into it, and my experience dates from then. I think the general feeling was good.

Q.—If I may return to the wage again of 21s. and 22s.—the figures can be actually checked on those averages—do you think that is a reasonable figure?—(A.) What is 22s.?

Q.—You gave £2 8s. as the average, and the actual value I suggest of that is 22s.—(A.) I do not accept that.

Q.—Then take your 24s. Do you suggest that a man can get food values for himself sufficient to maintain output and work the hours that he has had to work in Liverpool? What does £2 8s. give per meal for a family of five? Have you tested it?—(A.) I have not a family budget to put in, I am afraid.

Q.—Let me put it in another way. Supposing this man was ordered to work overtime, and he had to go to the ordinary teashop in Liverpool to get his tea, how much would he pay for it?—(A.) I do not know. I got tea here yesterday for 4½d. I do not know what those canteens charge.

Q.—Did you have to work overtime, slinging

cargo, on that tea?—(A.) It was a pretty tiring day yesterday.

Q.—But you had finished just after tea, had you not?—(A.) I had not finished.

Q.—You were not working overtime in a ship's hold.—(A.) I was working all through the evening.

Q.—I am trying to get you to place yourself in the other man's place, as we have to put ourselves in yours, to arrive at a judgment. I submitted in my speech a soldier's ration as taken out during the war: with your experience, do you think a man could run cargo all day long on less food value than it would take to keep a soldier in a labour battalion?—(A.) But it does not follow that he would need that soldier's ration.

Q.—Did you see the items?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Assuming that he substituted something for those, he could not get it cheaper: for instance, he would be bound to have meat, would he not?—(A.) The great trouble about that ration is the quantity of meat: he never ate that meat.

Q.—That may be, but it has had to be paid for.—(A.) It has had to be paid for and then thrown away.

Q.—If a man goes into one of your feeding-houses in Liverpool he has pay, has he not, as if he ate the whole pound of meat, although, in fact, when it is cooked, he does not get a pound? Is not that so in every restaurant or coffee-house?—(A.) Of course.

Q.—Is not that so at home?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Then the net result would be the same, would it not, that a pound of meat has to be bought, but a part of it results in gravy?—(A.) Certainly.

Q.—Then, although the man would not actually eat a pound of meat he would have to buy a pound of meat to get the necessary amount of food himself out of the meat after cooking?—(A.) That was not quite my point. I am not an expert on these rations, but I know, as a matter of fact, that the soldiers did not eat this quantity of meat which was included in their ration.

Q.—Assuming we reduced it; if you take a certain portion off for the meat not needed, there is nothing allowed in the ration for refreshment at all, such as liquid, either beer or tea or anything else, and still you get 3s. 6d. a day. You know that?—(A.) What is your question?

Q.—The point is, did you know that in this ration there is no allowance for refreshment, tobacco, or anything?—(A.) Yes, I think I noticed that.

Q.—And at present prices it is 3s. 6d. per day?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—So that the man would absorb under this ration, even allowing that he did not eat quite as much meat, over 50 per cent. of his wage?—(A.) 3s. 6d. is not 50 per cent. of his wage.

Q.—50 per cent. of his average figure of £2 8s. and something per week?—(A.) That is a different thing.

Q.—No, I submit to you, and I want to put this quite clearly and quite straight to you, I hope: You have submitted that the average wages in Liverpool for 44 hours actually earned are £2 8s. and something per week. Now if the man wants to keep physically efficient he cannot

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do it, can he, under 3s. 6d. per day for himself alone?—(A.) Yes, but the minimum day wage is 11s. 8d., and as you very rightly put it in your opening speech the problem is—how are we to enable the man to get that wage and to be sure he is not unemployed. That is the problem.

Q.—You also said in your evidence this morning that you were at your wits' end to do that, and that we had to go on in the same old way.—(A.) I am at my wits' end, and that is one reason why I welcomed this Inquiry; I hoped that we might get some guidance.

Q.—In any case, assuming maintenance were to be worked out, it would take a long time to do it, would it not?—(A.) Maintenance.

Q.—Assuming decasualisation were made complete it would take a long time to do it, would it not?—(A.) Certainly.

Q.—In the meantime the man has to be fed in order to give output.—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Do you still adhere to it that this wage which you have suggested is sufficient to do that?—(A.) I suggest that the wage the man gets when he is working is sufficient, but whether he has ample opportunity for getting that work or not is a different question.

Q.—Ought not that to determine what amount he should get, to some extent?—(A.) No, not necessarily. It is not so easy to do as all that.

Q.—Referring back to output again, is it not the fact that the Port and Transit Executive Committee have been compelled to urge all dock authorities at Liverpool time and time again during the war and since to impose penalty rents in order to compel the merchants to move their goods?—(A.) Yes; and that was largely in consequence of this non-commercial basis of trading that we got on to. It was nobody's interest to take them away, and you had to make people pay up.

Q.—If no one was interested to take them away, to whom did the authority charge the penalty rents?—(A.) To whoever was responsible for those goods. A great many of them were Government goods and the Government did not take them away.

Q.—Were there not protests from Liverpool merchants because penalty rents were imposed?—(A.) Yes, I think there were, largely on the ground that they came on too soon, I think, and not enough margin was given at the beginning. That is my recollection, but it is a little bit off my book.

Q.—Do you suggest that there is any real analogy between a man working in a shipyard and a man working on a deck?—(A.) An analogy?

Q.—That is to say from the point of view of pay, wages and conditions, and so on.—(A.) I suggest that we have learned by experience that these wages do go up together.

Q.—That was during the war, was it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—What was your experience before the war?—(A.) I think there was a general relation between the wages in a particular district.

Q.—Was there no advance in Liverpool shipyards from 1885 to 1911 similar to what there was at the docks?—(A.) I cannot tell you.

Q.—Did not the wages go up together owing to requests by the Government to deal with them

all together to assist in the prosecution of the war?—(A.) Yes, that had a great deal to do with it.

Q.—Do you think it is fair, after labour agreeing to that policy, to try to saddle us with it for all time?—(A.) Saddle you with what?

Q.—The policy of having to deal with the whole question at once.—(A.) Saddle you? I thought that was what you wanted—to deal with the question at once.

Q.—No: you said this morning you could not settle this nationally, because it would interfere with every other trade in the country.—(A.) I did not say that. I said, as a matter of fact, that if this advance were granted an advance would follow in every other trade in the country.

Q.—Is that a fact?—(A.) I believe that to be a fact.

Q.—Do you know that there have been a good many consolidations of wages already in certain industries?—(A.) Yes, I have heard of that, but that does not prevent further demands being made.

Q.—Have they been quoted to you in your negotiations at all?—(A.) By you?

Q.—By me.—(A.) If you tell me you did quote them I will accept it at once, but I do not remember it at this moment.

Q.—I did not: I never believed that they had any bearing, nor did I ever quote them. Is it not the fact that the whole tendency of industry is to deal with wages on a national basis now?—(A.) Yes, I think it is undoubtedly.

Q.—Can you give me any reason why this trade should be made an exception?—(A.) I do not think it is being made an exception.

Q.—The argument of your counsel and yourself is that we should go back to localities.—(A.) No, that we should not have a national minimum, but district minima.

Q.—Is it not the fact that minima are now being fixed nationally for large towns?—(A.) I was not aware of that.

Q.—Have you seen the Flour Trade Agreement?—(A.) No.

Q.—In which all large ports are classified alike?—(A.) No, I have not seen that.

Q.—You have not studied the various national agreements that have already been fixed for large towns and rural areas?—(A.) No.

Q. If you could see that it had been successful in those trades, would you agree that it was an experiment which was worth trying in this?—(A.) I cannot express any opinion about that without knowing what those areas are.

Q.—May I now turn to differentials in the ports. Is it not a fact that it has been quite clear in your mind from our earlier statement that the differentials between definite grades would remain?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—They have never hit them, have they?—(A.) No, never.

Q.—Then the theory that they were suggesting that there should be a flat standard, as counsel suggested, for every body has never been put by us?—(A.) I do not think counsel suggested that.

Q.—Is it not the fact that your fear in the previous negotiations was between port and port, and not in a port?—(A.) My what?

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Q.—Your fear that that would arise, with the men between port and port, and not in a port?—
(A.) Yes, and I still think so.

Q.—Your fear was, was it not, that if Glasgow had 14s. to-day and Liverpool had 12s., Glasgow would want 18s.?—(A.) I think it is highly probable.

Q.—If we can show the Court that that is not the case, would that satisfy the employers?—(A.) You would find it difficult to prove that, because, after all, that would be settled by the Glasgow dockers themselves, and not necessarily by their delegates.

Q.—In view of your experience of local negotiations on the last agreement, and the failure to get it carried, and the election of the new Executive, would it not be a wise experiment to deal with the parent body on this occasion?—(A.) That would take it still further away from the men themselves.

Q.—Would there not be greater loyalty to a greater body?—(A.) There might, but I doubt it in this case.

Q.—In the recent arbitrations before the Committee on Production, where the Federation has conducted the whole business, and applied it, have you found any breaking away?—(A.) No. In every case that was a flat increase for everybody.

Q.—In the 44-hour agreement, was it not the fact that you declined to sit down and thrash out the national agreement, but just made a recommendation to your own side?—(A.) Yes, we had no power to make an agreement.

Q.—Do you not think that if all those problems had been argued out carefully on a national basis all that difficulty in Liverpool would have been avoided?—(A.) I am afraid it would not: it would have been worse.

Q.—How can you suggest that it would be worse if it did not occur elsewhere—in London, for instance?—(A.) I can only speak for Liverpool. In London you made an agreement which suited London conditions, I take it.

Q.—On the basis of a national settlement.—(A.) That is what we did in Liverpool.

Q.—Do you think it reasonable to ask men to work until 10 o'clock at night after working from 8 until 5 on a ship?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Do you think that that is quite reasonable?—(A.) Undoubtedly, provided it is not done too often.

Q.—Three nights a week would not be too often.—(A.) I think three nights a week would be too often if it went on week after week.

Q.—That would give them from ten o'clock to quarter to eight the next morning for rest.—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Three days a week.—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Do you think that is reasonable?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Working on heavy work?—(A.) Yes, if the only way in which the work can at present be done is to have a certain amount of overtime.

Q.—Do you think it is reasonable and humane to expect men to do that?—(A.) I think it would be very sad and very deplorable, but we cannot get this work done without putting our hands to it.

Q.—Without everybody putting their hands to it.—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Have you tried since the 44-hour agreement to maintain output by increasing the number

in the gangs?—(A.) We have put on as many men as we could to the work we had to do.

Q.—Have you increased the gangs to any extent over the time when you had longer hours?—
(A.) The gangs in the hold, do you mean?

Q.—In the hold and ashore.—(A.) I should say no, because the number of men in a gang is suitable for the amount of work to be done.

Q.—Supposing it can be shown that by increasing the number in the gangs work can be increased, would not that compensate for the reduced output?—(A.) If that can be shown it is certainly a matter that ought to be very carefully gone into, I quite agree.

Q.—Have you considered that?—(A.) It has not been brought before us.

Q.—You have not considered it in connection with the management of the docks?—(A.) It had not occurred to me.

Q.—Has the equipment in Liverpool been maintained in proper ratio during the war with pre-war?—(A.) I think so.

Q.—They have not had to set large sums aside for postponed expenditure?—(A.) I presume that the improvements that they might have carried out have had to be postponed. I do not think it has gone down.

Q.—You said there were 2,000,000 tons more to deal with, a heavier tonnage. Has the progressive capacity of Liverpool expanded pro rata with the progressive tonnage of Liverpool?—(A.) I said there was 2,000,000 more tonnage in the world afloat.

Q.—Has the equipment of Liverpool been maintained in ratio with the development of Liverpool?—(A.) The new work that was on before the war, of course, had to be stopped during the war, but I believe it is going on now.

Q.—If the war had not occurred there would have been a progressive development to a point?—
(A.) Yes, it has been held back.

Q.—It has been arrested?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Would not that interfere with the ordinary handling, the bigger the development? Have you allowed any percentage for that?—(A.) If we had more dock space we could cope with a larger amount of tonnage, of course.

Q.—Then it is not labour entirely: there has been an arrested development?—(A.) I am not saying that the cause of the congestion is labour entirely.

Q.—What provision has there been made with the development of Liverpool in the way of feeding facilities for the men?—(A.) At the docks?

Q.—At the docks.—(A.) The great improvement, I think, is the establishment of the dock canteens. One wishes that more could be done, but the space at the quayside is so valuable that we had to be content with what space could be spared from the work of transit of the cargoes.

Q.—If you had increased the canteens, and the men could have gone and had proper food at their proper times, and so prevented absenteeism, would not that have increased the space in the sheds?—
(A.) That is what we did. We did erect those canteens.

Q.—Suppose you have a big ship working with several hundred men, can they all get in and get served in their time?—(A.) They can all get served with tea because the number is smaller, but for dinner they have to rely not only on these canteens and the British workmen's public house, but also

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on the various public houses along the docks, and the other refreshment houses a little bit further away as well.

Q.—So that when you put on the overtime arrangement, it was rather difficult for the men in the time allowed to go and have a good feed to work on?—(A.) No, because before the war, before these canteens were built, they did it.

Q.—In what time?—(A.) Between 5 and 6.

Q.—I thought you said they used to go off for a turn, and they wanted to extend that?—(A.) Before the war the ordinary thing when working overtime was to work from 6 till 10.30, with an hour off for tea, and it was only during the war, when the public house hours were changed, that the universal practice of working on till 9 o'clock came in.

Mr. BEVIN: I think Mr. Sexton wants to ask one or two questions, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Would it not be better to allow Mr. Bevin to complete it? He is representing the men's case, you see.

Mr. SEXTON: Very well, my Lord.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I should like, if your Lordship agrees, that any questions that the other side desire to put to Sir Alfred, whether by Mr. Bevin or by Mr. Sexton, might be put. I think Sir Alfred desires to meet every criticism that can be directed by any person.

The CHAIRMAN: It is very good of you to say that, and it is very good of Sir Alfred to express his willingness, but, of course, we have a duty to ourselves and to the dignity of our procedure; and what I say is in view of that. You do not mind taking advice from an old friend, Mr. Sexton, do you? If there is any particular point that you would like to put, would you be so kind as to put it through Mr. Bevin, if it is convenient for you.

Mr. SEXTON: I shall be quite pleased to do that, my Lord, but the technicalities on this question are of such a nature and are so particularly and peculiarly local that I am afraid, even if I put my questions through Mr. Bevin, he could not bring out the points that I wish to bring out. However, I will endeavour to follow your advice.

The CHAIRMAN: We might just consider this for a moment. Of course, your point rather is, Mr. Sexton, that you personally have local knowledge on this matter, which it would be better for you to put direct to the witness.

Mr. SEXTON: Yes.

The members of the Court conferred together.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sexton, I hope you will not mistake the attitude of the Court about this. Our desire is that our procedure should be conducted as nearly as possible with all due regularity: you are on the same side as Mr. Bevin, and it would hardly do to start this because there might be more people on the same side cross-examining the witness in the same interest. If you can see your way to communicate your points to Mr. Bevin, he is very sharp at taking a thing up, and he will put them.

Mr. SEXTON: I agree that that would be so,

but if Sir Alfred Booth is to finish to-day I am afraid I cannot convey the information to Mr. Bevin in time to get Sir Alfred Booth off to-day. That is my difficulty.

The CHAIRMAN: Can we make a bargain about it? How long would it be, Mr. Sexton? Have you much to put?

Mr. SEXTON: No. It would take a quarter of an hour at the outside.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a long time.

Mr. SEXTON: A quarter of an hour at the very outside.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid you are hitting me on my weak side, but we are going to treat your case as a very great speciality, but it is not to make a precedent. I intimate to Sir Lynden Macassey and his associates that they must not quote against this Court that we have allowed Mr. Sexton to do this just once. Now please, Mr. Sexton.

Mr. SEXTON: I want to make a suggestion, if I may. I can, perhaps, bring out the same point through a witness as I am going to make, so I will accept your advice and leave the matter in the hands of Mr. Bevin.

The CHAIRMAN: I am extremely indebted to you.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I say just this, that if these are points which ought to be put to Sir Alfred Booth, I submit that they ought to be put, because he will be away in America, and I shall not have an opportunity of dealing with the matter at a later stage. Having regard to the very special circumstances which none of us realised before, I do ask that any point of special local moment may be put by Mr. Sexton to Sir Alfred so that he may deal with them before he goes to America.

The CHAIRMAN: If you think you are safe to leave it for Mr. Sexton, we will take your judgment upon that.

Mr. SEXTON: May I put one point?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, and then you will remember that your turn will come when your witnesses are put in. We will treat you, as it were, as a junior to Mr. Bevin, and then any Liverpool case you will have the duty of examining. Put your point briefly, please.

Mr. SEXTON: There are only two points that I shall deal with, because my learned and eloquent friend has left me little to do, and that will help me.

The CHAIRMAN: Put the points to Sir Alfred.

Cross-examined by MR. SEXTON.

Q.—You dealt with the figures of the Clearing House on a certain period?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—I have here (and your Lordship can have them if you want them) the figures of the Clearing House for a period of eight weeks from September

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22nd to November 10th, representing the payment to 21,653 men.—(A.) On the average?

Q.—I accept your average of £3 4s. All I want to do in that respect is to quote a family budget peculiar to Liverpool of a family of four, consisting of husband and wife and two children. I will put them in. (**The tables were handed in and marked D. 29A and D. 29B.*) That is a typical Liverpool budget. You spoke of the difficulty we had in arriving at an agreement on the 44-hour week on the national settlement?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—But that dispute was merely confined, was it not, to the question of working overtime?—(A.) Not quite. We had a great deal of difficulty, you will remember, about the men turning up at a quarter to eight in the morning. I did not refer to it this morning, but the men were out on strike three or four days before they would come down at a quarter to eight at all.

Q.—But the main difficulty was the question of the half-day?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—We unanimously agreed on the rest hour from five to six?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—That is so far as the Executive was concerned. But we came back, if you remember, and we told you that the men had pointed out to us that under the Defence of the Realm Liquor Control Regulations the hour from five to six was at such a period when the men could not get their food where they used to get it, namely, in the public-house?—(A.) Quite right.

Q.—You know that the accommodation at the docks is very limited?—(A.) It is limited.

Q.—Take, for instance, the area from the Huskisson down to the Hornby Dock; how many men would you say, taking your three nights a week or three half-nights a week, would be employed on the average in that area? Have you any idea?—(A.) No, I am afraid I have not, off-hand.

Q.—Let me give you a figure. Would it be overstating the fact if I were to say that on the average on the three half-nights that you speak of there would be 3,000 or 4,000 men in that area requiring accommodation?—(A.) Area A and Area B, or Area B alone?

Q.—A and B.—(A.) A and B together?

Q.—Yes.—(A.) I should think that was a high estimate.

Q.—You think 3,000 is a high estimate for that area?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—It is a large area; there are two areas.—(A.) It is a large area.

Q.—Is there accommodation inside the dock, apart from the public-houses, for 50 per cent. of 2,000, never mind 3,000?—(A.) What do those two canteens in that area accommodate; about 1,500 all at once.

Q.—Where is that?—(A.) There are two canteens in that area.

Q.—Whereabouts are the canteens?—(A.) There is the canteen at the Huskisson Dock.

Q.—That is on the East side?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—But there are men working on the West side.—(A.) Quite. I agree the accommodation is not satisfactory, and we ought to have more.

Q.—Would it not take a man a quarter of an hour to come from the West side to the canteen?—(A.) Yes, it would.

Q.—Then when he gets there he has only three-quarters of an hour left?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And it is crowded when he gets there?—(A.) I am not quite sure about that.

Q.—My point is this, that the hour from 5 to 6 was at such a time and under such circumstances that the men could not be accommodated and get their tea, and therefore that was the cause of the disruption of the arrangements?—(A.) That was partly the cause, but you must remember there was really as much decent accommodation for tea, even allowing for the fact of the public-houses being closed, as there had been before 1914—I should say more.

Q.—You also said there was the difficulty of differentiation between the wages of a shipman and a quayman. The shortage was largely due to the want of means for delivery from the quay, was it not?—(A.) Which shortage.

Q.—The shortage of men during the war?—(A.) At certain times, yes. There were shortages of shipmen, too.

Q.—If you refresh your memory you will remember we reported to you on the Joint Committee that we could supply you with men to work on the quay if they got the same wages as they got on the ship?—(A.) Yes. That would have involved raising all the porters to the shipmen's wages, and as I felt, and still feel, the increase would have been given to the shipmen afterwards.

Q.—The difficulty is rather a local one than an economic one, that the conditions embodied in the Dock Board Bill or Act or Regulations require notice to be given before any advance can be given to the quay porter—at least that was the argument used. The Board of Trade Regulations prevent the raising of the master porters' rate, and the employers claim that they cannot give any porter advances until that rate is raised. Is not that so?—(A.) Because they are acting as the merchant's agent, and their charges are limited by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

Q.—That was the complaint?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—You complain that the output has been reduced 25 per cent. I took your statement to cover both imports and exports?—(A.) I meant that that was the impression conveyed to my mind by the figures and tables I had seen.

Q.—I want to submit to you, or perhaps it would be better if I put it to Mr. Boase—(A.) I think you had better put it to a bigger expert than I am on cargo handling.

Q.—He is an expert, and if he will go into the box I will ask him. There is only one more point. You spoke about the offer of the employers to create what we call a semi-permanence and a guaranteed wage?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And you truly said (and I think you were perfectly honest about the job and perfectly fair) that the fear was in the minds of the older men that the younger men would get most of the work and they would be left out?—(A.) Quite right.

Q.—But was there not another condition attached to that (and I think you cleared that up, too), that the men who were engaged under that system must be mobile?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—That they must be shifted about as required?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Now with your knowledge—and there is no doubt about it you have some; I never met a gentleman who had greater knowledge of the local technicalities of dock work—with your knowledge of the ship man who works at loading boats, did you expect that man to go down, for instance, into a hold of grain?—(A.) No, that is the point

* See Appendices Nos. 34 and 35.

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that I have been more and more impressed with as years go on. I began by thinking that men could be transferred. It was a question of not having separate marginal pools of labour. I thought that they must be transferred from where they were not wanted to where they were wanted, but I see now the work is so differentiated that the man prefers, from his point of view, to withhold his labour altogether until he gets the particular kind of job that he wants.

Q.—The reason of the breakdown of that was the fear of the men who followed a certain occupation. Take, for instance, the stevedore, the man who gets 2s. more than anybody else because he is responsible for the safe stowing of the cargo. Would you expect a man like that to go to a discharging ship at ordinary dock work simply because he was out of a job, when he would run the risk of losing the run of the next ship on which he gets 7s. a day?—(A.) No, that was exactly the point.

Mr. SEXTON: I do not think I have any more to put at present.

Mr. BEVIN: May I just ask Sir Alfred one question?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Further cross-examined by MR. BEVIN.

Q.—I would like to ask you whether you accept that chart which helped you a moment ago to find out where you were a director as correctly expressing the inter-locking arrangement between your company and others as to investments, etc. ?—(A.) I attribute it to the imagination of the author. It has absolutely no relation to the fact, except so far as regards the companies whose names I gave you earlier, which are part of the Cunard Company itself. Of course, it is very easy to take the list of shareholders in the Cunard Company and find out what other shareholdings they have, and put down each of those companies in a circle, and look up the shareholdings there, and find out what shares those shareholders have in other companies. Therefore, it has a big inter-locking effect, but it has no reference whatever to what does happen in fact. None of those companies have any control or influence over the management of the Cunard Company, nor has the Cunard Company any control or influence over the management of any other company, except those which are actually part of it. I could extend this a great deal for you. I shall always cherish it.

Mr. BEVIN: I shall be calling evidence to support the chart, but I wanted Sir Alfred Booth's comment on it.

Re-examined by MR. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q.—In the evidence you have given about the 25 per cent. reduction of output, 11 per cent. of which you attribute to the reduction in hours in consequence of the 44-hour agreement, that is taken only from data which have been supplied to you of instances where no question of congestion arises?—(A.) That is right.

Q.—And it will be a matter for the Court at a later stage to accept or reject that evidence upon which your statement has been based?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—You were asked a number of questions upon this soldiers' ration, and I wish you would just take that statement in your hand. (*Document handed to the witness*). The first item, I think, is meat (1 lb.), the second item is bread (1½ lbs.), and the third item is bacon (4 ozs.)?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—They give an equal amount of bread and meat and bacon combined?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—I think no potatoes appear on the list, do they?—(A.) No.

Q.—Do you know what, in the report of Lord Sumner, the proportion of bread is to meat?—(A.) I have read that report and I do not remember the proportion; but, of course, the proportion of bread to meat is, as a matter of fact, very large.

Q.—And it certainly is not as one is to one?—(A.) It is certainly not one to one.

Q.—You agree, I take it, with Mr. Sexton, that there are technicalities and difficulties which are peculiarly local to Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—In the recent awards of the Committee on Production was this recognised by the Committee, in that they issued separate awards in respect of Liverpool?—(A.) Yes, they always did that.

Q.—Mr. Bevin suggested that no good would come of this enquiry if you were driven back to local negotiations. You have given anxious consideration to the matters that have been discussed here, I understand, for many years?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And you see there are very great difficulties to be overcome?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—You have not been able to solve them so far?—(A.) No.

Q.—Is it your hope that the result of this public enquiry will point out a method which will assist you in solving those problems locally?—(A.) Yes, it is.

Q.—I am told that the reason for separate awards for Liverpool and other ports was that Liverpool was on a daily basis and the others on an hourly basis?—(A.) Yes, that was one of the peculiarities, and there were also difficulties with regard to overtime; there was a very peculiar method of reckoning overtime.

Q.—That was taken into account and effect given to it by issuing a separate award?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Alfred, we do not desire to detain you, but my colleagues have been good enough to hand up to me various points which they would like to put to you, and one or two have occurred to me, myself. Will you forgive me, therefore, for detaining you a few minutes?—(A.) Certainly, my Lord.

Q.—I want to ask you first with regard to the Joint Committee. That was a joint committee of whom: of the working men on the one and the employers, by which you mean the shippers, on the other?—(A.) The employers on the other, the employers being in Liverpool the ship-owners, and the master porters and master stevedores.

Q.—Was the Port Authority represented on that Joint Committee?—(A.) Not originally.

Q.—Is it now?—(A.) One of the members now is a representative of the Port Authority.

Q.—Appointed by the Port Authority Committee to co-operate with it?—(A.) No. The repre-

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representatives of the employers on the Dock Labour Joint Committee are chosen by the Employers' Association of the Port of Liverpool. The Dock Board is a member of that Association now, and it so happens that one of their representatives is on this Committee.

Q.—I see that that Committee is to settle the interpretation of the agreement, the revision of the rates of pay for hours of work, the conditions of employment, and the methods of working. That is a short way of putting it?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—How long has the Committee been in existence?—(A.) Since 1911.

Q.—And it has existed during this very trying period of the war, ever since?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—How has it worked? Do you work harmoniously?—(A.) We work very harmoniously. Of course the work is heavy, but the principle we adopt is that we have got to agree. The main mass of our business is interpretation in little disputes that arise as to what the agreement means, and with regard to those it means a good deal of time sometimes to thrash these out. Sometimes we are able to settle them at once and get a general agreement about it, and sometimes we have to appoint a little sub-Committee to go and investigate the facts on the spot, but we never vote. I only remember one occasion when we voted, and it was more for fun than anything else at that time. Of course when a real difficulty comes up one has to trust to time to bring about an agreement.

Q.—Now it is in view of that that the Court would like to know why, if this has worked so well over this considerable and confused space of time, when the workmen have had a large representation equal to all the other interests, you seem to have some objection to workmen having a larger representation on the Port Authority.—(A.) Because so far as Liverpool is concerned the Port Authority is quite a different sort of business. This Dock Labour Joint Committee is concerned with the regulation of the conditions of dock labour, of the actual employment. It is not mentioned here, but we regulate the issue and withdrawal of tallies under the registration scheme. That is controlled by the Dock Labour Joint Committee entirely, but it is not a Committee that has anything to do with the conduct of the business or finance.

Q.—Has it not? Just consider this. Part of the duty of the Joint Committee is to consider regulations for ensuring the safety and health of the men?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Do you not think that that is equally a duty of the Port Authority?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Then if it is found that the conditions for ensuring the safety and health of the men are well looked after by a Joint Committee on which the men are largely or equally represented, that suggests at least a very considerable accretion to the workers' representation on the Port Authority?—(A.) Certainly, but of course the Port Authority in Liverpool employs very little labour except for its maintenance staff. I think what one wants in all those cases is, first of all, some constitutional regular method for bringing the representatives of the men and the representatives of the employers in constant contact with one another. That is the first thing. Really I cannot help feeling in my own mind that whether they are members of the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board itself is a very minor matter, but the important thing is whether they are in constant

touch with the employers on matters in which labour is directly concerned. I do not think it is anything like of the same importance.

Q.—I agree, but I will give you an instance that is in my mind. You have answered perfectly fairly. You mentioned in the course of your evidence about the canteen and the difficulty of extending the canteen on account of lack of accommodation?—(A.) Yes, the physical want of room.

Q.—Who settles that. Is it the Port Authority?—(A.) The Port Authority settle what room can be spared, but, as a matter of fact, it was done personally between me and the officials of the Port Authority.

Q.—Assume that to be an important question in the view of the men, I only cite it as one instance of that, that you will agree that the Port Authority which governs that situation should have in its own body representatives of the men whose comfort is in question?—(A.) Yes, but I think that in that particular case, if I had not been able to get what I thought was right through myself, I should have been much stronger if I had enlisted the sympathy of the whole dock labour. I should have been better off than if there had been one or two representatives of Labour on the Port Authority. I think the Dock Labour Committee would have carried very much more weight.

Q.—And probably it would have carried still more influence if the men had been directly represented on the Board. Is not that so?—(A.) I naturally went to the manager; I did not go to the Board at all. I am in complete sympathy with putting greater responsibility on labour, but as a matter of comparative value, I think so far as the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board is concerned, it does not mean much.

Q.—I entirely agree with you, and I think we all agree, but what we are anxious to do is in the interests of peace. Supposing it be seriously presented to us as a proposition that there should be an increase—to put it mildly—of the workers' representation on the Port Authority, you see nothing in principle against that?—(A.) No, nothing at all.

Q.—That is why I want to ask you this question. So far as size is concerned London is the biggest proposition, and we were distressed to hear in the opening speech of Mr. Bevin the reference to the Chairman of the Port of London Authority. Lord Devonport's view was that he would not act upon such a Board if there was increased Labour representation. He seems to put it as a matter of principle, and you have sworn that it is not a matter of principle, and I think that is quite right.—(A.) You are quoting something that I do not know.

Q.—He was asked whether there should be larger representation: "(Q.) You would not view it with equanimity?—(A.) I do not know about viewing it with equanimity. I should not be there, and I should not be a participator in that sort of management." Now Sir Alfred, I know you are not a member of the Port Authority, but is there anything in principle which would lead you to say that you would decline to be a member of the Board, of which, in other respects, you are so eminently fitted to be a member, on the ground that you had a few Labour representatives on that Board.—(A.) No.

Q.—The next point I wish to ask you about is with regard to this difficult question of casuals.

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You can understand our anxiety about it. You have a system of registration, have you not, in Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—It may not have covered the ground, but it is a matter of congratulation to the port, I may say, that they have introduced this system?—(A.) It is a beginning.

Q.—The registration started with the actual state of the men employed at the time?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Some of these, of course, disappear owing to the ordinary vicissitudes of life. How are their numbers replenished?—(A.) Registration was kept open or closed as might be decided from time to time by the Dock Labour Joint Committee.

Q.—That is the Joint Committee to which you have referred?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Once you have got your numbers—put a figure of 5,000 or any figure will do for the purposes of my question—could you give the Court any idea of what, notwithstanding registration, still remains the fringe of unemployment in Liverpool—I mean within the registered number?—(A.) That is a difficult question which we have not got properly from our statistics yet. I think the Court might get something from the official of the Ministry of Labour as to what percentage of men draw below a certain low figure, which might be represented as the fringe of real casual labour, who perhaps are working part of the time elsewhere.

Q.—I am much obliged to you, Sir Alfred, and that view of yours will be communicated to the Ministry so that we may have light on the matter if possible. Has there ever come before the Joint Committee, or before the Port Authority, the question of maintenance allowance for those inside the register but outside actual employment. Has that question ever been discussed?—(A.) No. The difficulty, of course, is to make sure what the man is doing. It would need a tremendous amount of machinery to be sure that a man was not holding back. He must clearly present himself at some place for work, and there must be some check on his drawing maintenance money, when as a matter of fact he may be holding himself off because he knows a good job is coming on for him to-morrow. Otherwise you would be paying out large sums of money, and it would become another case of the unemployment dole. There must be some obligation to present himself and to accept work, within certain limits at any rate, before any such scheme could be started.

Q.—Do you know whether the employers, whom you represent so ably, have any ideas on this subject of getting some scheme whereby, as it were, that fringe of unemployment could be reduced, and where it was clearly ascertained to be an unavoidable fringe, to have some maintenance allowance?—(A.) As a body I think not. I think we are waiting now to see what this Government unemployment insurance extension is going to do, and how that can be applied to dock labour. There may be some way of taking that out and improving it.

Q.—You agree, I suppose, upon the general view that the existence of that casual labour is bad for the port and bad for the men?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And its elimination would be an advantage?—(A.) Certainly. The difficulty, of course, is that the trade is a fluctuating trade, and what I have always hoped was that the differences between the worst times and the best times and

seasonal differences would be covered by the difference in the amount of overtime worked. Of course, if you are not going to have any overtime at all, clearly you must have differences in the number of men engaged.

Q.—The other point I wanted to ask you about was this. I suppose you have read how this case was presented to the Court by Mr. Bevin?—(A.) I had the pleasure of hearing it all, except the first day.

Q.—The foundation of it is what I may call the human or subsistence foundation?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—So far as that is concerned would you not be inclined to agree, with all other things, overtime, local conditions, etc., being reserved for local people. So far as that is concerned, that is a universal thing, founded on human needs, and not applicable to local circumstances?—(A.) So far as bare subsistence is concerned.

Q.—Then in so far as these human needs can be satisfied on a different scale in different places, some allowance would have to be made for that?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—But if it is now established satisfactorily that there are such differences—I mean differences worth taking into account—the principle of a universal minimum seems to have nothing against it in its application?—(A.) No, the principle of having a universal minimum below which no one should go is one which I should find it very hard to dispute, but I should consider it necessary to have latitude to go above that minimum even as the lowest rate in certain cases. That is quite a different thing. That is a real minimum wage.

Q.—In that minimum, of course, you have much more than has been put before us about food; you have conditions as to rent, etc.?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Up to that stage, assuming equality of conditions all over, then the case for a minimum has nothing against it, but when you come to conditions there may be a strong case for applying the local principle?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And in applying those conditions, do you think that it is possible that this minimum standard of pay might be established on the hypothesis I have put to you, and yet alongside all that it might be possible for us to decline to establish universal conditions applicable to every port?—(A.) Above that minimum, taking the minimum as the subsistence minimum.

Q.—As the subsistence minimum, or, rather, I would not like to put it as the subsistence minimum, but as a minimum based upon subsistence, which is a different thing, or, at least, may be to an extent somewhat different?—(A.) Yes. That is a little complicated, but I think such a thing might be possible.

Q.—What we are going to do none of us know yet, but I want to see whether we can have the advantage of your judgment carrying us so far. I gather that your evidence is, however, that when you reach conditions you are in a situation in which you have to take into account and differentiate among localities. Is that so?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—I will pass to another point, and I will now ask you with regard to Liverpool. I gather from your evidence to-day that you think—other witnesses will come no doubt and give us the facts—that there is a reduction of what I call output;

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not output in the ordinary agricultural or manufacturing sense, but a reduction in efficient results of about 25 per cent. ?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—I want to be clear about this. Has that reduction been ascertained apart altogether from port conditions?—(A.) Yes, that has been the effort. In the figures I have seen the effort has been made to take figures in which those conditions have been carefully eliminated.

Q.—The case that is in our mind is, that we should take a liner of, say, 15,000 tons. Formerly she would turn round in a certain space of time, and with a certain expenditure. Now you say the difference on that transaction is what you have stated, 25 per cent. ?—(A.) No, that may be very much more, because the steamer may, first of all, have to wait to get a berth; she may have to wait until the berth is clear: that is congestion. Then the next point is, once the berth is clear and you start working on her, how long does it take to discharge a similar cargo compared with what it did five years ago?

Q.—I have tried and I have not been very successful—and I do not ask you to try it unless you like—to express the hope that with better conditions and better representation and a general sense of being treated more justly than in the past, labour will rise to the measure of its duties?—(A.) That has been the line on which I personally have tried to work for the last ten years.

Q.—It is hoped that as a result of this enquiry the general public conscience of the country will be improved, and that if there is a greater recognition of the rights of labour, labour will respond with a greater recognition of its measure of duty?—(A.) Certainly.

Q.—In that view, do you not think it highly important that the men should be represented in what appears to them at present a situation which presents a sense of grievance to them, in this way: They have certain ideas as to canteens and certain ideas as to rail connection, etc.; they may be wrong or they may be right, but they want to be heard about that inside the Port Authority. Do you not think that, if there is no objection to it in principle, as you agree, that would assist the general sort of pacification?—(A.) That I do not know. I think the disappointment might be that they would find that there was so little that they could really help in.

Q.—Take Liverpool as a case of the things that I have in my mind. You agree, do you not, that during the war there has by the necessity of the case been a retarding of that development which would otherwise have been accomplished? That is one thing that you have had to struggle against?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—Secondly, you have had to struggle against, and the country has had to suffer for it, the confusion and delays caused by Government action in trade?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—That is a serious matter, is it not?—(A.) Very serious.

Q.—Not only for merchants, but for the port as a whole?—(A.) Yes. It is far more important from the point of view of the consumers.

Q.—That itself is a price-raising transaction?—(A.) Exactly.

Q.—It is on account of a thing of that kind that there is the rise in prices?—(A.) That is one of the elements. There is the quantity of paper money, and there is the quantity of goods. In-

crease the goods and leave the quantity of paper money unchanged, and down come the prices.

Q.—With regard to Liverpool, I think it stands conceded that its railway facilities are somewhat imperfect?—(A.) No, I would not say that. It is a port which is not largely organised on the railway basis.

Q.—Supposing all those three conditions, including the last, were eliminated, and that it was better organised on a railway basis, and that there was no congestion, etc. With all those three conditions, which retard and impede business, eliminated, do you think the trade in the Port of Liverpool would very largely increase?—(A.) Yes.

Q.—And, of course, it is not only that the trade would increase in volume, but the handling of goods would be made more expeditious, and therefore more cheap?—(A.) Certainly.

Q.—You have a weekly arrangement at the Clearing House, have you not?—(A.) Yes, for paying wages.

Q.—Have the other ports a weekly arrangement or have they not?—(A.) I am afraid it is very common in the other ports to pay wages every day—an abominable system.

Q.—Your experience of the Clearing House is that it is a good system, and the system of weekly wages fits in with it?—(A.) Yes. Of course, the system of weekly wages existed before the Clearing House came up; we were fortunate in having that already; but the weekly wage was paid by each employer at his own office or his own dock.

Q.—I only want to put one question with regard to those figures about the Cunard Company that we have allowed in. I do not say whether they are relevant or not. What one of my colleagues wants to know—and he is entitled to have your view about it—is this: From 1881 to 1919 was there an expansion of the capital of the Cunard Company?—(A.) Up to 1913 there was none. The only change in the capital up to 1913 was that in 1910 the old ordinary shares, which were £20 ordinary shares, were divided into £12 5 per cent. preference shares and £8 ordinary shares.

Q.—That does not mean that there was an expansion?—(A.) That was no expansion, but it meant automatically that as 6/10ths of the old ordinary share capital was tied down to 5 per cent. dividend, the dividend on the balance appeared to be higher than it otherwise would.

Q.—That is not the point. The point is as to the capital figure. It is as you put it?—(A.) There was no change after 1913.

Q.—Another of my colleagues desires this question to be put: What was the guarantee by the Government to the shipping companies for loss, replacements, new shipping purchased, and allowances under the Excess Profits Tax?—(A.) We have had no claim under that at all. The important point is, of course, that when ships were lost owing to a war peril they were insured under the Government War Risk scheme. You paid a premium, and if the ship was lost you got the money for which you insured the ship, which was a value limited by the Committee which ran the scheme, on which the Government was represented.

Q.—And it is only too true that if you wanted to replace the ship you were let in for a tremendous bill?—(A.) I have an interesting figure on that. A new ship, shortly before the war, cost us £320,000. She was torpedoed, and we received

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£605,000 insurance; that is what she was insured for. We are now replacing her, and it will cost £950,000 to replace her. We are often told that that increase from £320,000 to £605,000 on the insurance money is a profit. It seems to me that we are £345,000 to the bad on the deal. All these questions are so complicated if you do not understand the value.

Q.—That would come out of excess profits, would it not?—(A.) No, that would neither come in nor go out; that is treated as capital.

Q.—That all goes on to capital account?—(A.) That all goes on to capital account.

Q.—It would have to be a transaction with reference to the disposal of reserve.—(A.) For the moment I do not think I quite follow.

Q.—You could draw upon your reserve for the deficit?—(A.) What happens with regard to the accounts in regard to that difference is this: you put the excess that you have received for the insurance over the book value into reserve, and you would have to use that to write down the value of the ship that you had built instead.

Q.—I am asked to ask you a question, and I do not care how you answer it, nor do I see what bearing it has. What are the present quotations of Cunard shares?—(A.) I am afraid I do not follow that day by day. It is somewhere round about 65s., I think.

Q.—Just one question in conclusion. Your desire, as representing the ship owners, would be that whatever we settle now should be settled on such a basis as to be something normal, and let both parties know where they stand?—(A.) It would be highly desirable.

Q.—And supposing trade were to go back to the time when there was no dividend at all, you agree,

do you not, that the minima fixed should be at all events fixed in relation to permanent human conditions such as I have referred to? (A.) Yes, bearing in mind that your present measuring rod is a cube of water—I mean, you do not know what its length is.

Q.—That is exactly what I was going to put to you, that if it is legitimate to look upon the pre-war figure in money, and to compare it with the present pre-war figure by a multiplication of the excess in goods, the moment you get back to the low-priced goods period, if we ever do get back, unless there was some kind of an arrangement of this kind, it would leave the situation, in your opinion, very perilous for trade, would it not?—(A.) What I am afraid of at the moment is this very concrete danger of taking steps to get an increase of wages which would run round the country like the 12½ per cent. ran round, which would lead inevitably to a large increase of paper money. The weekly wage bill cannot be paid on a higher footing without increasing the volume of paper currency, and that of itself means a further rise in prices which will leave the working man no better off than he is now, but worse off, in so far as the whole credit and business stability of the country may be imperilled by a further drop in exchange, just at the very time when the Government are beginning to realise that the currency must be cut down and the exchange saved.

Q.—My concluding question to you is this. Do you not think that if, even in the opinion of the ship owner, the allowance were to be on the generous side, still the working classes themselves who were so treated would make it every year more generous by increasing the output, and therefore lowering the prices?—(A.) I hope they would.

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning at 10.30.)

SIXTH DAY.

Friday, February 13th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair)	
Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK	Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON
Sir LIONEL FLETCHER	Mr. JOHN SMETHURST
Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.	Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.
Mr. A. PUGH	Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON	} Secretaries.
Mr. G. H. INCE	

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I hope to put very briefly the main points which I have to submit to the Court. I was proceeding to make some observations upon Mr. Bevin's £6 budget, and for the purpose of laying the foundation of what I had to say I referred your Lordship to the figures for increase in retail prices, and also the figures for increase in the cost of living given in the "Labour Gazette"; and, secondly, I referred your Lordship to the results of the inquiry by Lord Sumner's Committee on the Cost of Living. My submission was this: that Mr. Bevin's budget was very considerably in advance of the standard fixed by the "Labour Gazette" figures of retail prices, and I pointed out that the standard—I will explain what I mean by the standard in a moment—of those retail prices was largely in excess of what was ascertained by Lord Sumner's Committee. By "standard" I mean that no adjustment had been made for alterations in the necessary nature of the budget during the abnormal period of the war. Your Lordship made certain observations on Lord Sumner's Report as to whether it afforded your Lordship a true guide for the inquiry in this case. What we have done is this: we communicated with Professor Bowley, who was a member of that Committee, and is probably one of the most eminent statisticians in respect of the cost of living and wages in the country, and he tells us that if your Lordship and the Court desire to obtain any information on the nature of the inquiry by Lord Sumner's Committee on the Cost of Living, he would be prepared to attend the Court and give that information.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to that, I desire to make two observations. This Court naturally would desire to enter into the labours of Committees with membership and chairmen so distinguished as Mr. Justice Roche's Committee and Lord Sumner's Committee; but, on the other hand, this is an independent inquiry, and what I think it my duty to do, although the task is somewhat severe, is that I personally shall go over the whole of these Reports, that I shall lay the matter before my colleagues, and that we shall then deliberate and consider at the proper time whether we shall require the assistance of Professor Bowley. We understand that he is good enough to express his willingness to come if we require enlightenment beyond the text of the Report.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord. That is the only thing I have got to say, that some of the observations which were natural observations to make in the circumstances by your Lordship in respect of that Report appear, in fact, not to be borne out—namely, the question of age of the family as compared with the age of the family of a docker. It is on those important points that I suggest further information should be given, because, unless your Lordship has the accurate position put before you, I think there is considerable question of your Lordship being in full possession of the facts. I want very briefly to deal with Mr. Bevin's table, which is C. 7. This budget, although it is a budget which one would like to see wherever it is practically possible that a budget of this sort should be put into operation, is a budget which is very materially over the standard which has operated hitherto, as far as we can ascertain, in any country; and I am going to deal with it at length. Secondly, it is a budget which, I shall venture to submit, is founded on one or two palpable (shall I say?) omissions to have regard to what are absolutely

fundamental facts. May I first of all take the first three items, which are the items giving the total cost for food for the family in question. They are £1 1s. 0d. per week for the man, 14s. 0d. per week for the woman, and £1 11s. 6d. per week for the three children. That makes a total of £3 6s. 6d. You arrive at that sum from Table C. 5, and your Lordship will see that Table C. 5 is a table of soldiers' rations. C. 5 is the foundation upon which C. 7 is built up so far as the cost of food is concerned. If your Lordship will take the first item—meat—in that table, which purports to show soldiers' rations, it puts down the price of meat at the price of 1s. 10d. When one examines the present retail prices, one finds this: that the average of the eight prices given for beef and mutton in the "Labour Gazette" for January, 1920, is 1s. 3½d., and the 1s. 10d. is the price for one special class of meat only—namely, beef-steak. But the average price of the eight kinds of beef and mutton which are given is 1s. 3½d., and that of itself reduces the price of 3s. 6d., which is set out on Table C. 5 as the total cost of a soldier's ration for the day, to the figure of 2s. 11½d.

Mr. BEVIN: It is 3s. 0d. in my figures.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That, as I say, reduces the figure of 3s. 6d. on Table C.5, which is the daily cost of a soldier's ration, to 2s. 11½d.; and then if your Lordship looks at the column in the soldiers' ration table marked "Energy Value," you will see that it gives the energy value in calories.

The CHAIRMAN: Just start at the beginning. You say that C.5 reduces the 1s. 10d. to 1s. 3½d.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am dealing with the sum total at the bottom—3s. 6d.

The CHAIRMAN: It reduces it to what?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship takes the present retail price for meat at the top of the table at 1s. 10d., and you take the average price, which is given in the Board of Trade figures, of 1s. 3½d., then it reduces the 3s. 6d. at the bottom of the table to 2s. 11½d. Then there is a further reduction to be made. If your Lordship looks at the column which is headed "Energy Value," you will see that it gives the energy value of the soldier's ration in calories. A calorie is the amount of energy which is required to raise the temperature of one kilogram of water one degree Centigrade; and as all energy is measurable in terms of heat energy, physiologists measure the fuel value of food in terms of calories. If your Lordship added up—I have done it here—the column which is headed "Energy Value," you would find that it gave a sum total of 4,334 calories. I am proceeding on the exact basis which is adopted by all persons who deal with these questions of budgets. If your Lordship, for example, reduces the budget to give, not the 4,334 calories (because every person knew that the soldier's ration was a ration which was over the needs of the case, and led to considerable waste), but to give the accepted calorific standard for persons who are doing heavy work (and I shall give you the authority in a moment) it will reduce again considerably the figure which I have given you of 2s. 11½d. If you take, not 4,334 calories, but a reduction of the budget to 4,000 calories, the daily cost is reduced from 2s. 11½d., which I have just given, to the figure of 2s. 8½d. As I shall show in a moment, this soldier's ration is defective

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in the respect that it does not provide anything for potatoes or anything of that kind, but only deals with dried vegetables; and if one adopts the recognised practice of properly mixing the meat diet with a potato diet, that is to say, instead of 1 lb. of meat and these dried vegetables putting three-quarters of a lb. of meat and three-quarters of a lb. of potatoes, one will get exactly the same energy value—namely, the 4,000 calories, and will reduce the cost to 2s. 6d.; and that figure for the soldier's ration would be reduced from 3s. 6d. down to 2s. 6d.

Then if your Lordship would look at Table C. where the £6 budget is built up, if you adopted the corrections that I have suggested that would reduce the sum total given for food from £3 6s. 6d. by one-sixth, and still give 4,000 calories as the energy value of the food, which is altogether greater, as I shall show you, than what is accepted by modern investigators in this branch of physiology. That means that you take 11s. 1d. off the total of £6.

The CHAIRMAN: Off the £3 6s. 6d.?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, off the £3 6s. 6d.

The CHAIRMAN: That reduces it to £2 15s. 5d.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, it takes 11s. 1d. off that; or it is the same thing to take it off the total at the bottom of the table; but then there are other items in this budget which we venture to suggest on the basis of investigation by persons who have very great experience in this matter are overstatements. For example, take the question of clothing, which is put down as £1 5s. I think it is only necessary to point to the budget which Mr. Sexton put in yesterday, which differs very considerably from the budget which we are discussing now in Table C.7, to see that there is considerable divergence in respect of that particular item.

Mr. BEVIN: What do you class as clothing?

The CHAIRMAN: Will you point that out?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I was coming to that later if I might; but what we have done is this: We have prepared an alternative budget to that one which Mr. Bevin has put in on Table C.7, and I will hand that in and explain its basis. (**Copies were handed in.*) What we have done in this budget is this: we have taken the standard which was arrived at by actual investigation by Lord Sumner's Committee to be the prevailing standard for skilled men in 1914 and 1918.

The CHAIRMAN: We will call this Table H.1. Is that based upon Lord Sumner's figures?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We have taken Lord Sumner's actual budget for 1918 and for 1914 as a base for consideration; secondly, we have taken the budget which was very carefully prepared by Mr. Rowntree in his book which is called "The Human Needs of Labour."

Mr. BEVIN: Which he does not adopt himself.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We have taken the budget which, after considerable inquiry, is given by Mr. Rowntree in his book entitled "The Human Needs of Labour," and we have improved materially upon both those two budgets. I will explain exactly what the differences are. In the budget which we have just put in, instead of taking 3,000

calories, which is the figure given by Lord Sumner's Committee as an average figure for the budget of the three classes of workers which they have investigated—your Lordship will get that figure from Lord Sumner's Report—

The CHAIRMAN: The statement made in Lord Sumner's Report is: "A man in ordinary work is believed to need food producing from 3,000 to 3,300 calories a day." Do you go upon that basis?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship has read at the bottom of page 17?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Instead of taking that figure we have assumed, not that, but 3,700.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not want to interrupt you, but I want to know why?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will tell your Lordship why. We have not taken the 3,000, but we have taken 3,700 in order to go as far as it is possible to go in the direction in which Mr. Bevin wants us to go; and my submission is that taking 3,700 and not 3,000 is evidence of a very great advance in Mr. Bevin's direction. It cannot be said that it is illiberal, and no physiologist would say on the facts that that is an illiberal budget. That is the reason we have taken 3,700. It is 700 greater than was found in actual experience by Lord Sumner's Committee to be what was the actual fact. We have gone further; instead of taking the preponderance of vegetables which is found in Lord Sumner's budget and is found in Mr. Rowntree's budget we have allowed a meat rather than a vegetable diet, again in our endeavour to recognise as far as we can the heavy class of the work. I am only giving you the information which any physiologist desirous of testing these budgets from the scientific aspect would desire to have. The budget which is put in gives for the man his 3,700 calories; it gives for the woman the exact amount which was indicated by Lord Sumner's Committee to be the right amount, and was indicated by Mr. Rowntree to be the right amount; and it takes all the children—and this is a point which I want to emphasise—as being under the age of 6 years. We have gone as far as we can to present a statement on the lines indicated by your Lordship, of taking a young family growing up. We have taken all the children under the age of 6. Then that budget on the right-hand side of the column where the commodities are given and the calorific value is given amounts in January, 1920, to a cost of 40s. That is only the food cost; we will give you the other items later; and these are present prices, mind. If your Lordship takes the same budget at 1914 prices you get it in the left-hand side of the page, namely, 19s. 2d.; but to this budget other items have got to be added when one passes away from food. I will save your Lordship taking a lot of notes, because we have got these figures in type now. (**Copies were handed in and marked H/2.*) Your Lordship will see the explanation of this budget. As your Lordship will see, upon that document we say that this food budget in 1914 would have cost 19s.—it should be 19s. 2d.—as compared with Mr. Rowntree's minimum estimate of 15s. 1d. His was the result of his investigation in 1918. The difference, as we point out, is due to counting a dock worker as needing 3,700 calories, while Mr. Rowntree takes 3,500 and Lord Sumner takes 3,000 or thereabouts, and to allowing a meat rather than a vegetable diet.

* See Appendix No. 55.

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In 1920 the budget slightly modified costs £2. It provides for the man calories to the extent of 3,700, for his wife calories to the extent of 2,800, and for the three children each 1,750 calories; and that is taking them all under the age of 6. That makes a total calorific value of 11,750. Then comes the question of the other items of expense. We give on the left-hand side what Mr. Rowntree took as being the figure to meet the human needs of labour, as he explains in his book, on a 1914 basis, and we give you the comparison with ours of 1920. Mr. Rowntree gives for food in 1914 15s. 1d.; we give in this budget to-day £2. For rent he gives 6s.; we give 6s. 6d., and then we add later special additions for specially expensive towns. Clothing he gives at 5s.; we assume that clothing has gone up $2\frac{1}{2}$ times—that or thereabouts appears to be the figure which is used in the Board of Trade figures to weigh the cost of clothing when you bring it into the comprehensive average for food, clothing, fuel, rent, etc.—and clothing therefore instead of being put at 5s. we put at 12s. 6d.

The CHAIRMAN: That must be on the assumption, as one of my colleagues reminds me, that clothing is also of the same calorific value—that is to say, it has the same lasting value as previous clothing, otherwise, of course, the figure is disturbed because the replenishment of the clothing is more frequent.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is so, but that circumstance must be covered by the average which the Board of Trade take. Your Lordship can no doubt find out from the Ministry of Labour what weights they used in respect of the increased cost of clothing, and why they used them. I do not know what they are.

The CHAIRMAN: They cannot vary very much.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No. That element is in the weight of $2\frac{1}{2}$ times.

Mr. BEVIN: What was the date of that book?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: 1918.

Mr. BEVIN: Would it be wise if Sir Lynden showed the price of clothing now?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Mr. Bevin is quite right: what I show now is the item of clothing at 12s. 6d., and I show that in 1914, before the war, it was 5s. 0d. The item of clothing has gone up $2\frac{1}{2}$ times.

The CHAIRMAN: What was Mr. Rowntree assuming it to have been in 1918 when the book was issued? What is his figure; or does he only deal with 1914?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Mr. Rowntree, for the purpose of eliminating the abnormal conditions resulting from the war, only deals with 1914, and he gives a figure of 5s. 0d.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite right; you have made that quite clear. Of course, you are only opening the case, as I am reminded by one of my colleagues. Every point of this will be the subject of evidence and cross-examination by the other side, just as Mr. Bevin's speech must be fortified by evidence subject to cross-examination by you.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Certainly. I can only indicate at this stage what I am going to prove,

and I can only indicate that step by step; and I hope no person on the Court will jump to any conclusion until they have heard the whole of my case. Mr. Rowntree took the figure of 1914 as to what he said was a budget reasonably adapted to meet the human needs of labour. I only put that down for the purpose of giving a side-by-side illustration of what I submit is the adequacy of the figure which we now put forward; and I apply to that price of 5s. 0d. a weight of $2\frac{1}{2}$ times (and your Lordship can find out from the Ministry of Labour whether that is not the right weight), and that puts down a sum total of 3s. 6d. In the same way, fuel has increased from 2s. 6d. to 4s. 8d., and sundries (household) from 1s. 8d. to 3s. 4d., and personal expenses from 5s. 0d. to 6s. 6d. My friend on the other side laughs, but this is an attempt on a scientific basis to put before the Court for their consideration what we venture to say are the facts of the position. My friend will see that in all these things there must be two views, and truth would never be ascertained if there were not two views.

Mr. BEVIN: I cannot help laughing at the ridiculous, can I?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That gives in respect of our suggested budget a sum total of £3 13s. 6d., and only comparing for the purpose of illustration Mr. Rowntree's budget of 1914, it, for a less generous budget, amounted to 35s. 3d.; but we suggest, for the purpose of comparison, that 4s. 1d. ought to be added to that to bring it up to what we suggest is the proper calorific value—namely, 3,700, so that would give a figure of 39s. 4d., as ascertained on Mr. Rowntree's enquiry; and it is a very important enquiry conducted by him, and one which would, I think, command the respect of the Court. That brings the budget for 1914 up to 39s. 4d. as compared with what we say now ought to be £3 13s. 6d. This 1920 budget of £3 13s. 6d. corresponds to an expenditure of 39s. 5d. weekly in 1914 by a skilled man in London, as ascertained by Lord Sumner's Committee as a fact.

The CHAIRMAN: When your witnesses come they will have to be asked what is the meaning of introducing a distinction between a skilled man and an unskilled man, when you investigate what are the human needs required by labour.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will tell your Lordship at once—we assume, and all investigations show one would be right in assuming, that the standard of life of a skilled man is higher than the standard of life of an unskilled man. Therefore, for the purpose of taking the highest standard of life, we have taken the standard of life of the skilled man.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not questioning your exposition of it, but only indicating that that is one of the points to which attention will no doubt be directed when your witnesses come.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Certainly. We thought that was going a long way in the direction of meeting Mr. Bevin. In addition to that, the budget is increased to allow the extra calorific value for a man doing hard work. So that the budget does a double thing: it gives the skilled man's, and not the unskilled man's, standard of life, and it adds to that the additional calorific value for a man doing as hard work as a man engaged in dock labour. There is a budget which we suggest is based first of all on the most modern

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physiological investigations, and based on facts as ascertained by Lord Sumner's Committee, but not adopting the standard of that Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: The result being, instead of £6, which was given as the figure, assuming it to be applicable to London or Liverpool, or a large place like that, it is £3 17s. 0d. according to you.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord. We say £3 17s. is a fair comparison on all the grounds with the budget which Mr. Bevin has put in at £6. We put it forward confidently expecting it would receive, and anxious that it should receive, criticism.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a perfectly fair and above-board exposition, and it shows us what the position between you now is.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I thought from what your Lordship said that your Lordship desired information on these grounds.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: And, therefore, with the desire in no way of depreciating Mr. Bevin's budget, and in no way saying that it is not a budget which one would like to see in actual operation, we put this forward, and suggest that if you have regard to the realities of the case, to what has been ascertained to be the real facts in industrial life, to what is regarded now by physiologists as the most desirable standard, we think this budget of ours fairly fills the bill. We shall prove that later, and I have no doubt Mr. Bevin will criticise it.

Mr. BEVIN: Undoubtedly.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There is complete reciprocity in that respect. Now, my Lord, so much for that. I am desirous of taking this matter very shortly, leaving it to be amplified by the evidence afterwards.

The CHAIRMAN: You are not occupying too much time; it is extremely valuable to have the parallel claims made up before the battle commences.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I only emphasise again that that goes a long way beyond the standard of Lord Sumner's Committee in the direction I have indicated.

Now, my Lord, I pass to one further point. I have to approach this case from the point of view that many things that are eminently desirable are not economically practicable, and I have to submit this proposition to the Court: that nothing that is economically unsound can be ethically just in any organised community. I say that in approaching the question: What ought to be the standard of remuneration for persons engaged in dock labour, one has on the one hand to have regard to what we have just considered and passed away from, the cost of living, and on the other hand to what are the economic conditions of the case. One of the economic circumstances to which the Court must have regard is the question of the comparison of the wages which are claimed with the wages which obtain in industry generally. Mr. Bevin objects to that comparison because he says: "If I have proved that we are entitled to certain wages, we should not be called upon to take less because they are in advance of the wages in other industries." That, with very great re-

spect, begs the case. It assumes that wages must, and must only, be based upon a standard of life without respect to the economic conditions making it practicable or otherwise to pay wages on that level. I do not know if I make my point clear. What I want to show is this: that if you do compare the wage claimed in this case with what are the wages paid in many classes of comparable labour, it does suggest to my mind (the Court, of course, will have to pass their decision upon it) that the claim does transcend all economic practicability. I want to put this case forward. Sir Alfred Booth yesterday gave the Court in evidence what the facts were in regard to Liverpool in Table "G," which was then put in. Table "G" gives, about half-way down the page in the fourth column from the left-hand side, the present hourly rates in the Mersey district; and similar tables will be put in for the Court's information in the case of all the ports. The claim is a claim for 2s. an hour. Now to-day that would compare with an hourly wage for fitters of 1s. 10½d., as shown on that page, and for shipwrights and joiners of 1s. 11½d. Those are skilled trades involving a considerable length of apprenticeship, five or six years; and the point I want to submit to the Court as being a point not of merely incidental importance in this case, but one of national importance, and certainly one of great importance, I should have thought, to Trade Unions as much as to anybody else interested in the economic advance of the country, is that you cannot give a trade where no apprenticeship is necessary the same rate of wage as is given to a trade where a man has to serve five or six years before he is competent to undertake the work. If you do, my Lord, you remove all incentive to men to enter those skilled trades. It is a vital point for the Court to consider in this case that the effect of the claim, using this merely as an illustration, would be to give the men who are working on the quays or on the ships at Liverpool 2s. 0d. an hour, while men who are working, possibly not in that ship, but a ship in the same dock undergoing repairs, doing the skilled craftsman's work connected with those repairs, would be receiving, not 2s. 0d. an hour, but something substantially less: 1s. 10½d. if a fitter, and 1s. 11½d. if a shipwright. I do think that is a serious matter. I do not want to press the case further than to say that this is a matter which has received the very careful attention of all Industrial Courts adjudicating upon wages in this country, and certainly abroad; and I would only just read half-a-dozen words from the judgment of Mr. Justice Higgins, the President of the Australian Commonwealth Court, on this very matter, because he puts what I should probably take 10 minutes in saying in probably 10 seconds. It is on page 261 of the Harvard Law Review, Volume 32: "It has been found inadvisable, except in extreme circumstances, to diminish the margin between the man of skill and the man without skill. One of the chief drawbacks of industry in Australia is that lads do not learn their trades thoroughly—do not take the trouble to become perfect craftsmen. There is the tendency to be content with imperfect workmanship, to put up with the 'handy man' and his rule of thumb, to put up with what is 'good enough,' and nothing should be done by the Court to lessen the inducement to learn a trade, and to learn it properly." That is the basic proposition on which that important Report proceeds: regularity of wages to skilled workmen and sections of industry; and that principle, which I would submit on all grounds of common sense, is a sound principle, would be entirely violated by the claim

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in this case. I put it forward as one of the economic circumstances to which the Court must have regard that that would be the effect of the claim.

Then I want to make just one further comparison, because I am desirous of keeping my observations as concise as possible, and that is as to the position with the railwaymen. There is the closest possible conjunction of interest between them, because they are working traffic alongside the docks where the men who are subject to this claim are working traffic; and the railwaymen have the honour to be, I suppose, the junior partner in Mr. Bevin's great Triple Alliance. I have the wages here, and I will make my point in a moment. I have them tabulated, and they will be of assistance to the Court, perhaps, in that form. (*Table H.3 handed in.) H.3 is the statement of railway wages dated December 19, 1919, and represents the wages now definitely fixed on and after September 20, 1920. If your Lordship will look at the second page, I will make my observation on that. In the first grade—namely, that marked 1, porters—your Lordship gets the wages for the three classes of porters, according as they live in London, or in large provincial towns or in rural districts. There are two rates: there is rate A, and your Lordship will see from the note at the top of the page that rate A is the rate applicable so long as the cost of living remains at 125 per cent. above pre-war cost of living, and to be subject to the sliding scale; and B is the standard rate below which, no matter how much the cost of living falls, the wage is not to decrease. Therefore, if I take porters, your Lordship will see the rates for porters vary from 57s. 0d. in the class 2 stations, up to 61s. 0d. in London—for goods porters. Now the claim in this case is for 88s. 0d., and therefore the claim is that all persons engaged in dock labour should receive 88s. 0d., while by this national settlement the railway porters working the goods traffic on the sidings connected with the docks receive at the outside, 61s. 0d.

The CHAIRMAN: What number of hours do the railway porters work?

SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY: The railway hours are 48, as against the 44 in this case. I would submit this: that if your Lordship is looking for a test, amongst others, as to what is the indication of the reasonable level of wages, your Lordship cannot overlook the fact that the goods porters who are working the goods traffic on the railway sidings on the wharves are in receipt under this national agreement, which is to operate from September 20 of this year, of 57s. 0d. to 61s. 0d., while the claim in this case is for a wage of 88s. 0d.

The CHAIRMAN: It is suggested to me that the railwaymen, working alongside of the dock, will get transport conditions; is that so?

SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is true to a certain extent; but there are many of these railway docks, and other docks, which are not railway docks pure and simple, where the traffic bound to the port is worked under these railway conditions.

The CHAIRMAN: Probably you would say that if that be so, it strengthens your view: that if a certain section of the railwaymen were to get the higher rates claimed, that would at once provoke an awkward comparison with their confrères on the railway system.

SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is one point I make, my Lord. My point is twofold on this: firstly, I say you cannot give this claim of 88s. 0d. a week to all the persons engaged in working in dock labour, while men who are members of the same great Triple Alliance, and are working the railway traffic up to where the railway traffic meets the dock traffic, and certainly, if my information is correct, and the facts can be proved, when the two intermingle, without disturbing entirely this great arrangement; and, secondly, I use it for the test that if these rates of wages are the appropriate rates of wages for men also doing very heavy work, except to the extent that the work is irregular (and I admit the difference introduced by the casual nature of the work) that is some indication (a very strong indication to my mind, and I submit it ought to be to the Court) as to what can only be the economic wage which is payable under these particular circumstances. It is a strong economic consideration for the Court to have regard to that there is this level of wages of 57s. 0d. to 61s. 0d. for goods porters, and that is the national arrangement to come into operation on September 20, 1920—that this is the national arrangement, and, on the other hand, you have this claim of 88s. 0d. per week. I use that illustration for those two purposes.

The CHAIRMAN: When does it come into operation?

SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY: I cannot give your Lordship the precise date. I am wrong in saying it comes into operation on September 20th of this year. I am told that no date has yet been officially announced, but what has been officially announced is that this is the agreement. Just one further observation on this point, and then I pass from it. As your Lordship knows, it has been for a number of years past customary to insert what is known as the fair wage clause in all Government contracts. That fair wage clause is a clause which is exceedingly illuminating as far as the submission is concerned which I am now presenting to the Court. The fair wages clause runs in these terms.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you cite me the statute?

SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is not a statute, my Lord, it is a clause inserted in all Government contracts under a resolution of the House of Commons. I think the resolution has been varied from time to time, but this is the standing practice. It says: The contractor shall pay rates of wages and observe hours of labour not less favourable than those commonly recognised by employers and the trade societies, or, in the absence of such recognised conditions, they shall be the hours and wages prevailing in the district where the work is carried out. Where there are no such wages and hours recognised or prevailing in the district, those recognised or prevailing in the nearest district in which the industrial circumstances are similar shall be adopted. Further, the conditions of employment generally accepted in the district in the trade concerned shall be taken into account in determining how far the terms of the fair wage clause are being observed. Then it goes on to deal with other matters, sub-letting contracts, and things of that sort. I can pass that in. I have no doubt your Lordship can obtain a print, because I think it is printed as one of the Government's documents. Then I pass to another important economic circumstance, that is the question of the cost of the claim. Mr. Bevin has given a cost of roughly about

* See Appendix No. 56.

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4 million sterling. Sir Alfred Booth has given you a figure much in excess of that. You will have the actual calculations, but I think it is pretty clear that the cost will not be less than certainly—I want to put a completely conservative figure upon it—something substantially over 12 million sterling. Sir Alfred Booth gave 20 millions as the maximum and 15 millions as the limit.

The CHAIRMAN: That would be the addition to the wage bill of this industry on the basis of the claim?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord. It has been suggested that the whole of this cost can be paid out of the profits of the shipowners. I only want to say this publicly, that, when your Lordship has all the facts before you, you will find that the shipowners as such are not responsible for probably (there is a little variation both ways) much more than 25 per cent. of the labour involved. So far as the rest of the port employers are concerned, it is perfectly obvious—and any other course would be quite economically impracticable—that the cost must be passed on to the consumer. Take the case of those great Port Authorities the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, the Port of London, the Clyde Navigation Trustees, the Tyne Conservancy Commissioners, and many other of these large public trusts, they are non-profit earning undertakings. They have to manage and carry on the business of the ports, and are entitled in respect of their expenses to levy rates and dues on goods and on vessels. In all their cases the cost must be passed on; they have no other alternative. You will hear when the facts are given that in a considerable number of cases they could not meet this claim within the limits of their existing charging powers, and that an application to Parliament would be necessary to enable them to increase their dues, and to increase their rates, and to add to their other charges in order to enable them to meet the cost. It has been suggested, and quite properly suggested, by Mr. Bevin that the cost could be met if the organisation of the different ports was improved. I must deal with that later, but, unfortunately, for the purposes of his argument he selected the Port of London case as an illustration, and producing the accounts suggested that the ratio of working expenses, taken as a whole, to revenue, taken as a whole, was on the down grade, but that entirely overlooked this fact mentioned, as it happens, upon the document which I think was used—anyhow, it is a document I saw at the moment—the quinquennial statement of the Port of London.

The CHAIRMAN: I put certain questions to Mr. Bevin upon that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You did, my Lord. Upon the bottom of that document it makes it clear that the result which Mr. Bevin relies upon is, in the case of the Port of London, only arrived at by carrying all the necessary expenditure in respect of repairs, which were deferred during the war, to a suspense account, or by not effecting them at all—in other words, that that is excluding all provision for making what are most essential items of working expenditure—repairs—either not effecting those repairs at all, or else carrying them to a suspense account. In the case of the Port of London, I believe they had not been effected; in the case of some other authorities, to a certain extent they have been effected but carried to a suspense account. If provision were made in respect of those deferred repairs, the position is entirely in-

verted; instead of the ratio of working expenses to gross revenue being on a down grade, it is on a very heavy uphill climb. I shall prove that to the Court later.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you give me the page to which you are referring?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am referring to page 8 of the document entitled "Comparative Departmental Working Results of the Port of London Authority for the years ending March, 1919, and 1914," and it says at the bottom of page 3: "It should be noted that the surplus revenue for the year ended March 31, 1919, is arrived at before providing for expenditure on maintenance, dredging, etc., postponed in consequence of the war." That is the almost universal position, that in some cases repairs have been done, and the cost of so doing carried to a suspense account, and the expenses not included in the revenue expenditure for that particular year.

The CHAIRMAN: That is D. 2; I think you have a copy of this, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I use that merely as an illustration, and my point is this, that, except in respect of 25 per cent. of it, the whole of the claim will fall to be paid for by the port labour employers other than the ship owners, and must inevitably be passed on to the consumer. The third matter I want to refer to was dealt with by Sir Alfred Booth yesterday, who stole my thunder, and therefore it relieves me from the necessity of occupying your Lordship at any great length. That is the question of this vicious circle. The great vice of the circle is that the fact that there is a circle is not appreciated. Sir Alfred has put it much more forcibly than I should have been able to put it, but the point is presented to the Court that an increase of wage unfortunately not accompanied by any increase of output results in one of two things; either in that increase of wage being put on the rest of the community, which does not receive the increase of wage, or, if it results in a general increase of wage, being paid by the whole of the community through the inflation of currency and increase of capital resulting from it. The port employers are most anxious, if they possibly can by any means, to improve the efficiency of the ports, and anything that can be suggested by Mr. Bevin, or by his great Transport Workers' Federation, has always received, and will receive, anxious consideration; but, my Lord, there is this depressing factor about the whole position.

The CHAIRMAN: How do you put that now about the vicious circle? Your first proposition is, it is either met by the rest of the community, who do not receive the increase, or—?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will put it more accurately: it is either met by the rest of the workers, who do not receive the increase, or, if there is a general increase, it is met by the whole community through the inflation of currency, and the general increase of prices. I think those are two indisputable propositions. Sir Alfred Booth has explained it, therefore I am not going to deal further with it. That, of course, is subject to what I said: assuming the increase of wages is not accompanied by an increase of production. That, of course, is the ruling condition. I was

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saying that one of the most depressing features of a case such as this is the inappreciation of many people to understand how vitally the payment of higher wages and the improvement of standards of life depend fundamentally upon output. Therefore it was with considerable regret that I listened to Mr. Bevin putting his case in this way, because I think, from other portions of his speech, he realises the urgency of greater expedition and greater output. I am quoting from page 21 of the Third Day's Proceedings. He said: "The reason I want to answer this is because I have seen it in the Press that we are going to promise to give output provided the employers give us our 16s. I am not going to do it, my Lord. What I will pledge is that if labour is given its proper place in the governance of industry, we will assist in getting such reorganisation, we will assist with what organising capacity we have—and we are egotistical enough to believe that we have some." You will hear evidence later that, time after time, when efforts are made to introduce appliances that will result in the more expeditious handling of goods at the docks, all sorts of objections are made, and they are made because it is felt that it will result in the displacement of labour. A distinction was drawn by Mr. Bevin between what he calls a labour assisting appliance and a labour displacing appliance, and the analogy really illustrates my point. He suggested that much could be done by putting on a few electric trolleys to convey the workmen coming from the dock gates down to the ship's side. That he would call a labour-assisting appliance. But just think, with large numbers of men coming into work at particular places, the number of electric trolleys that would be required, and which would stand idle during the whole of the day, except during the four periods when they would be wanted to bring the men backwards and forwards from the gate to the ship's side. Where the difficulty comes is this: it is down at the ship's side, in respect of the introduction of appliances which will result in the quicker loading or unloading of vessels there, that we are met with an uncompromising negative on the part of the men. It is most regrettable, for this reason, that in no trade so much as in the casual trade does the use of efficient appliances go so far to produce regularity of employment. It operates in two ways: it not merely expedites the passage of goods through the ports, and there enables our export and import traffic to be carried at these times of present national urgency with much more celerity and efficiency, but it operates so as to reduce to a very material extent the regrettable results of any casual employment. Therefore, if anything will result from this inquiry, under your Lordship's direction, to ensure that, so far as is humanly possible, everything is done both by the Trade Unions on the one side and by the employers on the other to introduce these time and labour-saving appliances, it will operate not merely to the advantage of the country, but to the material welfare of the men, and very substantially to the benefit of the whole industry. I am not going to give instances. A large number of instances have come before my notice, which will be spoken to by witnesses later on. I feel certain that the representatives of the National Transport Workers' Federation are just as much in favour of improving the efficiency with which traffic is handled in these ports as the port employers are, but the difficulty is, of course, with many of the men who do not appreciate the position. If anything can be done to bring home to them the urgent necessity for the introduction

of these time and labour-saving appliances, it will be of the greatest possible help. In his most legitimate desire to assist the organisation of the ports Mr. Bevin dealt with one or two other matters to which I must make reference. The first point was the question of the representation on the Port and Dock Authorities. I am in a difficulty about that, for this reason. It is not a matter which is specifically mentioned in the reference to this Court, it is therefore not a matter on which the National Council of Port Labour Employers have had an opportunity of consulting those people who are immediately affected by the proposition, and it is therefore not a matter on which I am in a position to make any definite proposition to your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: It is quite right that you should say so. On the other hand, it is due to the tribunal that I should say this. The case presented—and those instructing you will please note—with regard to what I consider the topic of the deepest interest to the workman, to the port, and to the people at large, namely, the subject of increased production, according to the argument presented by Mr. Bevin, is involved in the question of better organisation. He made, if I may say so, a most enlightening statement, that the desire was to assist labour-saving appliances, and one was glad to hear that, but, representing as he did certain classes of opinion, I suppose he felt bound to give no promise with regard to output so far as personal labour was concerned. One may very, very deeply regret that in the interests of the workman, but it is only fair to say that Mr. Bevin's case is largely bound up with the question of representation upon the governing bodies. It arises in this way, Sir Lynden, if you will excuse me putting it, because I think it is necessary to let those who instruct you understand what our position is. You are prepared with evidence, I presume from your statement, that labour-saving machinery has been introduced with difficulty, and has been obstructed in the ports. That is where the case against you comes in on the point of representation on the Port Authority. If the workmen were largely and powerfully represented on the Port Authority, the introduction of all these appliances for facilitating labour would be a matter of joint arrangement practically between the workmen and the Port Authority and the other employers. One's hope is that in that way there would be a sense of co-operation in general which would facilitate the work. It is in that sense that at present we are confronted with the question of conditions of employment, and there is a question put to us as to conditions of employment expressly. At present I fear that you must take the case as it is presented against you, and you must ask instructions from those instructing you to deal with and give evidence upon that point. The Court is in a very difficult position.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I appreciate that.

The CHAIRMAN: Because we have the evidence of Lord Devonport sworn before another Commission, to which I alluded yesterday. We have now the evidence of Sir Alfred Booth, which I elicited in my few questions to him at the end. I felt bound, in justice to Lord Devonport, to put that to Sir Alfred Booth, and we have his answer. Now these are contradictory opinions, it is quite clear, and those instructing you must make up their minds on this subject of representation. It is before us, and we shall have to make the best of it.

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Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is quite true, and I may tell your Lordship that already, in anticipation of what your Lordship has said, a communication has been sent by the National Council of Port Labour Employers to the Port Authorities concerned to tell them the question is raised, and to ask them their views upon it. In order that the Court may appreciate the difficulty I am in in respect of this matter I ought to say this, that this point specifically was included by the National Transport Workers' Federation in the terms of reference to this Court, and the point was discussed before the Minister of Labour, and as a result of that discussion the Minister of Labour formally eliminated that topic from the terms of reference, stating—I will not say what he stated, but the fact is that he eliminated that particular item. So that when we found it had been eliminated by the Minister of Labour from the terms of reference we were a little surprised that Mr Bevin should open the matter here; but, having opened it, and your Lordship having intimated your determination to go into it, of course it puts us back considerably.

The CHAIRMAN: I follow that. Have you any explanation about that, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord. What happened was this: I think the notes can be got of that Conference when the terms of reference were agreed. We submitted as a definite item in the proposals—I believe the words, from memory, used were: "Re-organisation of dock and equipment," or something of that kind. There was a definite paragraph about it. We were then told that the thing could be argued, but the employers objected to having the whole question of dock organisation, provision of cranes and appliances and a hundred and one other things, introduced into a Court of Enquiry. Sir Alfred Booth has intimated to us at a previous Conference that the question of output would be dealt with by Counsel for the other side in his argument. Therefore it became a question of argument and suggestion rather than a definite item in the terms of reference. I think the Notes of that Conference at the Ministry of Labour will indicate that quite clearly.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I was not there. All I can say is that the suggested terms of reference before the meeting with the Minister were in such a form as would have enabled Mr. Bevin to have raised the matter here; that enabling power was cut out, and naturally we came here assuming that particular question would not be dealt with before your Lordship. I do not complain.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, you do not mean us, and Mr. Bevin does not mean us, to go into details as to whether in certain ports certain cranes would be wanted or certain railway connections would be wanted. The question is one of principle, and it is whether the workers at the ports shall have a representation on a much more adequate scale than at present in the governing bodies of the ports.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am not complaining about your Lordship going into it.

The CHAIRMAN: No, but I thought it fair to your clients, because they are a very composite body, to let you know what the opinion of the Court was about it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The only comment I make is this—that now that the matter is reopened, notwithstanding the decision of the Minister, of course I have got to communicate with the people concerned.

The CHAIRMAN: One has, of course, especially in a time of crush like the present, to consider the situation in which the head of a department like the Minister of Labour is placed. He may make statements which go beyond the ambit of his authority altogether; he is therefore very much conditioned with regard to any pledges which he can give, or any promises on the subject; but I agree with Sir Robert Horne that it would make this inquiry last interminably if we had to go into details of organisation. But while he made that statement, I understand that he was quite alive to the fact that a general question, such, for instance, as the present, might be brought forward before this Court of Inquiry on the question of applying, we will say, a general principle of full representation of all involved instead of a single representation. Please understand that we are not going to be conditioned in our inquiry by any question of jealousy between Departments. We are charged with the matter. On the other hand, we are not going to be involved with details which will wreck the inquiry. But this is not a detail, this is a matter of principle, and has been so presented.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not complain at all. I do not know what Sir Robert Horne said, I only know what I mentioned, that this item, which was in the Terms of Reference, was cut out; but so long as we, the Port and Harbour Authorities, are not left between the upper and nether millstones comprising two jealous Government Departments, I do not mind.

Mr. BEVIN: May I say that you will find this on the Note. It was a mutual conversation across the table, and Lord Devonport said, so far as I remember, "Of course, this question of output arises, and you are entitled to ask about it; what we object to is referring to the Court of Inquiry whether we have got a crane in the right place in the London Docks or something of that kind."

The CHAIRMAN: That is pretty much what I was saying.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is quite clear. I now have your Lordship's direction to proceed upon this line of inquiry, and we shall proceed upon this line of inquiry, and any person who objects to our so doing we shall refer to your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. I wish all my responsibilities could be as easily borne as that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I was going to say, before this slight discursion, what in my view is the issue your Lordship has to consider on this point. It is not enough to say it is a representation of labour on these different Port Authorities. The claim, as I understand it, is this. It is a claim for direct nomination by the Transport Workers' Federation of representatives on the different Port and Dock Authorities. That is the claim. Now let me put one or two circumstances connected with that claim. You find in the case of some Port Authorities, for example, like the Port of London—there are representatives who are nominated to sit on the Authority who shall be representative of labour, but selected by a Government Department or the County Council after consultation with labour. That is one principle. The other principle is that one particular Union shall be entitled to put representatives of its own upon these public authorities. The National Transport Workers' Federation, without desiring to throw the slightest slight upon it, is, of course, not the only Union, and amongst the staff of all these great public undertakings

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you have the Unions; you have the Unions who represent many of the semi-skilled and skilled men engaged upon maintenance, and you have other sections of labour of very great importance represented. What your Lordship has got to decide is this—whether there is any case for giving the National Transport Workers' Federation an exclusive right to nominate representatives (Mr. Bevin said equal to all the other representatives) on these public Authorities. The second point is this: There are many of these public Authorities—for example, as in Bristol and in other places—which are managed by Committees of Municipal Corporations, who are elected by the municipal franchise through the medium of the ballot-box. Therefore, what you have to decide in that case is this—whether, that being so, there is any case for giving one Union an exclusive right to nominate on the Committee of a Municipal Corporation representatives, in place of putting them on through the ordinary medium of the ballot-box.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, when you come to it you will give us what light is possible with regard to the constitution of Joint Committees.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, your Lordship will have all that. I do not want to say anything about it now, because I have not got the instructions; I will get them shortly.

The CHAIRMAN: That will perhaps help us.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: So that it is a much further reaching claim than I think is apparent probably on the first blush. What I understand Lord Devonport to have said is that he did not object to the existing condition of things where representatives of labour were selected by a Government Department.

The CHAIRMAN: I think I can hardly take that from you, Sir Lynden, because, unfortunately, he says this—and perhaps you will deal with it—at question 1116 in the second volume: "I think the labour representation has not been detrimental to us; it has its advantages." And then he adds this, unfortunately: "I do not know whether I shall offend anyone if I say they are always looking out for themselves and the interests they represent." If I may say so, I regret that, because he must have had in view the labour representatives, of whom we have an honoured specimen in our present Court. One of my colleagues is a representative of the London County Council appointed by the Board of Trade, a man holding the very highest position in the Labour world, and in the esteem of the country, and this is what is said with regard to a man of that kind: "They are always looking out for themselves and the interests they represent." That is not a very hopeful view.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I have not had the advantage of reading the whole passage and its context, but if the sense of the passage is as your Lordship puts it—

The CHAIRMAN: I will tell you quite frankly (you will excuse my saying so) that I feel it is my duty as chairman of this tribunal to uphold the honour and integrity of the personality to the very best of my power, and I will not let slip any observations of a public character made of that kind. Lord Devonport's subsequent experience, I hope, will enable him to cast aside a reflection of that kind. Anyhow, my colleague sits by my side. We all desire to work together, and we will not have any depreciation of that in our proceedings.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I should be the last person to associate myself with anything of that sort.

The CHAIRMAN: I know you would.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If that had been said before this Inquiry I should, of course, have felt myself in a position to deal with it, but I understand it is a passage from the proceedings of the Coal Commission.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is from the Coal Industry Commission.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: With great respect, may I say this, that my burden in conducting these proceedings is sufficiently great without undertaking to deal with any legacy from the Coal Commission.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a perfectly just remark.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I should be the last person in the world to associate myself with that, and I hope from the tenor of the observations I have made I may be accepted to be one who would welcome the co-operation of labour in every possible respect. What I am doing is this: In respect of this claim I am only pointing out to the Court one or two fundamental issues connected with this application.

The CHAIRMAN: Might I go further and suggest to you, after the evidence of Sir Alfred Booth, in answer to the questions which I put to him, is it beyond hope that the parties may come to some arrangement with regard to a fuller and more adequate representation of labour? I hope both parties will consider that in the spirit in which the suggestion is made.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is being considered. I may say that I myself took steps yesterday afternoon to procure its speedy consideration.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the good of conducting things as they are being conducted, that is to say, there may be a measure of agreement arrived at, and you can see yourselves, if you agree to any of those things, it will have a more healing influence on their action than if it were to be a hard and fast ruling from us.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I have the advantage of your Lordship's protection while I am before your Lordship, but there are other times when I have not the advantage of your Lordship's protection, and I must content myself with putting the point before my clients and asking them for their speedy consideration.

The CHAIRMAN: Absolutely.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Of course, your Lordship understands it would involve legislation.

The CHAIRMAN: That does not frighten me.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I appreciate that with your Lordship's experience it will not deter you, but I have got to point out that these are things which I have got to tell my clients, who are considering the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will say nothing further about the question of representation, except

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to indicate the two issues which are involved in the claim. On that matter your Lordship will hear evidence later. May I pass now to one or two other matters? With regard to the question of registration, I am not going to argue that. I have indicated earlier, in regard to the question of decasualising labour, that the employers are heartily in support of the introduction of a system of registration.

The CHAIRMAN: By employers you mean the Port Authorities also?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The Port Labour Employers. It must not go forward to the world that that is, as it were, a concession which has been wrung out of the employers under stress of these proceedings; it has been the object of many of the Port employers for a considerable number of years. Your Lordship has heard the experience of Liverpool. A similar system of registration was put into operation in Hull, and a somewhat similar system in Bristol, and also Mr. Justice Roche's Committee has dealt with the matter in London, as your Lordship has heard. If therefore the Port can assist in the introduction of an effective registration scheme, in my submission it will operate most beneficially for all concerned, and you will have the co-operation of the Port labour employers in that respect. But your Lordship must not think it is quite an easy matter to introduce a system of registration; it is met by very great difficulties.

The CHAIRMAN: I am alive to that, notably the question of daily payment.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, there are many difficulties. May I just tell you, for example, the effect in Glasgow. In Glasgow an attempt was made to introduce a system of registration. There I am afraid the position has not been so happy as one would have hoped it might be. In 1912, my Lord, the Glasgow Ship Owners' and the Dock Labour Employers' organisation put forward a scheme for registration of port labour generally on the lines of the Liverpool scheme. That scheme was agreed to by the Glasgow Port Labour Employers and the Scottish Union of Dock Labour, but it was rejected by the men, and as a result that most eminently desirable scheme for minimising the effects of casual employment—a scheme accepted by both sides, the employers' organisation and the trade union organisation—was turned down on a ballot by the men of the district. That was in 1912. Later, in 1919, a second attempt was made. A registration scheme was drawn up by the Port Labour Committee, which is an organisation representing the men and the employers and the Minister of Labour, and again submitted to the men. Once more it was turned down and rejected. So, my Lord, it is not an easy matter to put a system of registration into force. Your Lordship may take it from me that with regard to the introduction of a system of registration there will be the most cordial co-operation by the port labour employers and the trade unions, and with the tribunal in effecting a scheme.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you give the Court any indication of what was at the bottom of the men's attitude?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think the explanation is the innate conservatism of—I will not say the Glasgow dock workers, but of dock workers in general. The scheme provided, as did the Liver-

pool scheme, for the payment being weekly instead of daily—that is the essence of the Liverpool scheme—and that was strongly resisted and objected to by the men; but, of course, that weekly payment is one of the fundamental conditions of any effective registration scheme. That was the rock on which the scheme was wrecked. While the employers are most anxious to assist the Court in establishing effective registration, it must be understood that in their view a system of registration ought not to take place on the lines indicated by Mr. Bevin. Mr. Bevin desired that the whole control of the scheme should be vested in the hands of the Transport Workers' Federation, and that we venture to submit would be a mistake. If the scheme is to be a success it requires co-operation on the part of the unions and co-operation on the part of the employers. There must therefore be a joint committee controlling and operating the scheme as in Liverpool. Mr. Bevin tells me he only said registration in the hands of the unions.

Mr. BEVIN: As at Liverpool?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not think it is quite that. In Liverpool, as I understand it, the position is that the card of the worker has to be signed by both sides before the men can get a character.

The CHAIRMAN: It would also lead to a rather curious result if you allowed the workers to put as many men as they liked on the register and at the same time agreed to a demand that the industry should pay them a guaranteed wage. But there again I suppose a spirit of adjustment would be reached.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, I sincerely hope so. But, my Lord, my broad point is this—that if the scheme is to be successful as a scheme it must be a scheme operated under joint control, and there must be joint co-operation; and the employers will heartily support a scheme of registration on those lines.

Now, to deal with the next point made by Mr. Bevin, that is, the question of port labour maintenance. Mr. Bevin outlined the scheme (I do not think it is the first time that Mr. Bevin has outlined it) with which he has been associated for many years. That is a scheme of levying a general charge upon all shipping using the port, forming in connection with those local schemes a central fund controlled by a central committee, so that the dock labour industry should be in a position of maintaining its own unemployed.

The CHAIRMAN: Upon that I repeat here, as I said to Mr. Bevin that we shall expect as clear evidence as we can have upon the quantum of that unemployed fund; because, mark you, unless we have evidence with regard to that, we cannot tell the financial effects which will result from the adoption of the scheme. Both parties see that perfectly well. The hope is that by registration you will so far reduce the unemployed fringe, but if the unemployed fringe remains, so long as it remains and to the extent to which it remains, it becomes a financial consideration with regard to the shipping of the port, the port itself, and the general public. It may reflect upon the industry itself. Anyhow, we are entitled to have that figure.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The two schemes are, to use Mr. Bevin's phrase, interlocked.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I think that is so; they are interlocked.

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Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: In that connection, may I draw your Lordship's attention to the Government's Unemployment Insurance Bill. That Bill is a Bill which was introduced into the House of Commons in December last. It is Bill No. 261 of 1919. The purpose of the Bill, as explained by the prefatory memorandum, is this: "The Bill extends the contributory scheme of unemployment insurance to substantially all the persons falling within the Health Insurance scheme, with the following exceptions," agriculture and domestic service, and, in Ireland, the Bill applies only to workmen in trades now insured against unemployment. Then it says: "An opportunity will be afforded for industries to contract out of the general scheme by setting up special schemes of their own, giving equal or superior advantages, such as may be approved by the Minister of Labour under special order. Power is also reserved to the Minister, if he thinks fit, to set up a special scheme on his own initiative, for any particular industry." Then Clause 6 is: "In cases where special schemes are set up, a State grant will be paid not exceeding one-tenth of the estimated amount of the contributions which would have been payable by the employers and employed if they had remained under the general scheme." Then, my Lord, there are these somewhat parallel proposals at the present moment in this public Bill; and if your Lordship looks at Clause 16 of the Bill you will see that provision is made "to provide for insurance against unemployment in any industry by means of special schemes. Under the Bill, there will be full facilities when registration has been effected, and the actual margin of unemployment ascertained for establishing under its machinery special schemes for dealing with unemployment in the port and dock industry.

So far as the actual fringe, as your Lordship puts it, of unemployment is concerned, we shall endeavour to give such figures as we can get; but, of course, it is extraordinarily difficult, because until you have registration you really are unable to say what is the exact position. There is such an influx of labour and such a going out of labour that the precise position of the industry cannot be ascertained. But, my Lord, we are endeavouring to get figures for your Lordship, and at a later stage we hope to put them before the Court. Your Lordship will get the official figures from the local Clearing House, I hope. We cannot get those figures: it is a Government organisation, and it would be improper for me to go there for them.

The CHAIRMAN: I am informed by Mr. Macpherson that those have been applied for and are now being obtained.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am much obliged, my Lord. Then we shall know where we are so far as Liverpool is concerned. At the present moment we do not know what the position is.

I have now come to the conclusion of my observations which I desired to address to the Court, and although perhaps it would be useful to recapitulate shortly my argument with respect to each item of the claim, I think I can avoid doing that and leave the shorthand notes to speak for themselves. Therefore, my Lord, in concluding I have only to say this, that the attitude of the employers, as I think the attitude of Sir Alfred Booth yesterday and the attitude of other employers who will be called before you will satisfy the Court is the attitude of people who are really anxious to go as far as they possibly can to meet the claim of the Transport Workers' Federation; but they do find themselves limited by the stern constraint of economic circumstances, and those

circumstances in their view must be put before the Court and seriously considered by them.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you make any suggestion from your side of the Bar as to whether the remuneration in future should be on a sliding scale?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We have considered that, and that is a principle which we should be prepared to fall in with. It has been adopted in the railway case.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, it was in the railway case.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: And it is in my view an admirable principle for avoiding constant friction and disputes as to increases of wages when the cost of living goes up or goes down.

The CHAIRMAN: It is fair to Mr. Bevin to say that he has adopted no negative attitude with regard to it.

Mr. BEVIN: I have, my Lord, and I want to make my position perfectly clear and brutal, if I may so put it, that if your Court of Inquiry recommended that, I would not go, on behalf of the Transport Workers' Federation, into any conference room in this country even to discuss it. It places the whole of the workmen as one distinct class on the basis of an animal, basing their livelihood on food alone; and that I would never discuss. I would rather go out of my position as a trade union leader than even consider the basis of the railway settlement. I wanted to make that clear to your Lordship without discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: You have made it unfortunately very clear. The position that you found upon is that you are entitled to treat the cost of living as a ground for the increase.

Mr. BEVIN: As one ground, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: As one ground, and the main ground, and as some of us think the true and sensible ground for the increase; but if that ground disappeared and living were reduced to one-half of its present cost, you would still maintain the same reason, although the ground for it, one ground and an essential ground, had disappeared. In another industry it has been seen that a sliding scale has been adopted in fact, and wages are being paid in respect of economic values or necessity values on that scale, not grounded on the principle that the men are mere animals, but grounded on the principle that a living scale is an essential and helpful item. I understand your case to be that you want it fixed at the highest scale now (or we hope it is the highest scale) and never to go back when the items making up that scale disappear.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite, because the moment you fix a scale or a standard it is just a business for the joint control then, but if the capitalists claim that they are the sole people who have capacity to manage and govern, then it is their duty to proceed to organise industry and give effect to that claim, and it does not at all follow, I submit, that if food goes down the profits of the industry will go down—not at all—because we are assuming that if the workpeople are going to give bigger output, then to whom is that bigger output going unless consumption increases pro rata with the output? That is our theory. Therefore we hold that we should change from consideration of this wretched budget which has been sub-

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mitted, which, to me at any rate, is just like calculating the cost of keeping an animal, and from that animal basis of calculation we transfer it over to another industry basis as things become normal, and instead of going for advances of wages still on top of what we have asked for now, the increase of value of what we have obtained will increase our standard of life. That is the basis that we adopt.

The CHAIRMAN: We have two conflicting views, but in the meantime it is only fair to say that the criticism made upon your budget is a criticism which is perfectly legitimate.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not object to it, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: You yourself put forward those figures, and they have put forward other figures. It will not assist us in any way to call either your figures or theirs unworkable.

Mr. BEVIN: I will be quite frank with your Lordship. I used that in the sense that the whole calculations to me as a workman who has sat in Courts of Arbitration for five years have made me resent with all the best that is in me having my life calculated the whole time on the basis of what I can just subsist upon in the way of food in a miserable three or four-roomed house. I cannot help resenting it. I will resent it in public as much as I have in private. Therefore, the reason why the Federation will not consider this sliding scale, is because we believe that industry, with all the inventions that the war has brought about, bigger ships and improvements that are bound to follow all the inventive genius that there has been, ought to give us, even on the basis we are asking now by reason of the growing output and the settlement of the world, a higher standard of life.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I just say this in conclusion: I am sorry Mr. Bevin should have used the language he did with regard to the budget.

Mr. BEVIN: I mean it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Unless Mr. Bevin's budget is not to be criticised at all (and that, I understand, is hardly to be the attitude before this Court) the budget has been prepared on the basis which I have mentioned, and is a long way in excess of any progressive and enlightened budgets, such, for example, as Mr. Rowntree's. It is put forward, and it will stand criticism, and it wants criticism; but it will not be destroyed by mere vituperation.

Now, my Lord, may I say this with respect to the sliding scale: We, the employers, are prepared to consider any such system as that. A sliding scale is not a novel system of machinery in industry; it has been in operation in other industries.

Mr. BEVIN: Which other industries?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: In the iron and steel industry.

Mr. BEVIN: That is on prices.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am talking about a sliding scale.

Mr. BEVIN: That is not on food.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Mr. Bevin's salient criticism is a criticism of his own partner in the Triple Alliance, the National Union of Railwaymen.

Mr. BEVIN: I quite agree.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: So you have this position, that that great and important section of industry, the National Union of Railwaymen, who are actual partners with Mr. Bevin in the Triple Alliance, agree that this is a good thing, while Mr. Bevin, on the other hand, turns it down as a thing which is derogatory to any section of industry.

I have now concluded the observations which I had to make to the Court, and I desire to thank the Court for the indulgence with which they have listened to me and to express my regret for having occupied such a large measure of their time.

The CHAIRMAN: The thanks are due from our side. You have presented your side of the case. If I may say so, exceptionally admirably, and that the Court greatly appreciates.

Mr. BEVIN: Before I adduce evidence I should like to ask whether or not the proceedings may not be shortened if the Court would be good enough to instance the kind of evidence they would like. What I want to avoid is adopting the usual legal formula of putting people in the box to ask them a lot of legal questions which will cause exasperation to my own people outside. It is a human machine which we are expected to control, and it is very difficult; and if they find that it becomes merely a question of asking somebody to say what I have already said, and which is not denied by either side, and which a lot of my witnesses are prepared to substantiate, if necessary, the effect will not be good. I think if your Court could indicate the particular line upon which you want evidence from me it would materially assist in limiting the case, and would enable you—I hope, at any rate—to consider an interim report on the wages portion of our claim. I thought I would submit that to you before I called my witnesses.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you say to that, Sir Lynden?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not quite know what it means. I do not know whether it means that the case is to be decided on Mr. Bevin's statement, and not on the evidence. If that is the proposition, for our part, I do not want to dictate at all to Mr. Bevin or to the Court what course should be adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we will intimate our decision as to our procedure when we come back after lunch.

Mr. BEVIN: When we entered this Court of Inquiry I put the question to Sir Alfred Booth, who was acting as chairman for the employers, when I think three members of the Court were present, whether it was to be an inquiry in which counsel would be employed, and we were to be detained by going through all the formulae of Court procedure, and I was assured by the employers that there was no intention to do that at all; and when we induced our General Council meeting to adopt these novel proceedings, acting on

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behalf of our Executive Council, I gave that pledge. Now, my Lord, I want to avoid going back on my word to my own people, and that is very important so far as the Federation is concerned.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite fair, and we shall consider it very carefully. I may tell you that the moment there is any kind of duplication or anything like that perhaps both parties will excuse my saying, "the Court is satisfied on this particular point." We would not have a drowning out of the case by hearing witnesses after witness on one point; and the moment we get to the point when we are satisfied we will just say so. On the other point, I should like to consider whether we could give any indication as to what particular points of the case we should like attacked first. Naturally, the claim for wages comes first, and naturally your budget comes first, and, subject to what my colleagues will say, we shall expect you to give your evidence with regard to the foundation of the claim for wages, and to confine your evidence in the meantime to that, in the hope that we may be able to assist you by issuing some interim report on that subject.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: But on that we shall definitely announce our procedure. Anyhow, it is not disorganising anything, because it so happens that that is the first item in the claim.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Before your Lordship rises may I say this: I do not want it to be thought by the public that there is any desire or intention on the part of the employers to protract this case by calling evidence indefinitely—not at all. We shall call our evidence I hope concisely and to the point. But Mr. Bevin's proposition is that the case should be decided so far as he is concerned on no evidence at all, but on his general statement.

The CHAIRMAN: No, I do not think he goes so far as that. All he wants to avoid (and I think we are all agreed as to that) is surplussage and delay.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Quite so, that is our desire.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

The CHAIRMAN: The Court has met and carefully considered the observations made before we retired with regard to the order of procedure in this case. We think it will be in the interests of both parties that the question of the demand for a minimum wage shall be considered first and separately from all the other questions in the case, with one exception, to which I shall allude. In treating the wages case first we are not dislocating the order of the claim, because by good fortune it happens to be in the forefront, and number one of the items which are demanded. We think, however, that the question of the demand for a minimum wage cannot be dissociated from another question, which might appear under the later category of conditions of labour; I refer to the question of casualization, including the demand for maintenance of non-employed labour. Therefore, in giving a restriction to the area of the primary inquiry we give it on those fixed conditions: the question to be determined is the minimum demand, and the point of casualization, coupled with the demand for maintenance. It will, therefore, be seen that those points or either of them might

be the subject of a special report. I may say that we are animated by the desire to issue at the earliest date some report, which may be in the nature of a settlement of the minimum wage question; and if the parties on both sides would accept that ruling in the spirit in which it is intended we shall meantime restrict the proof to that issue, and thereafter proceed to the other issues in the case.

Mr. BEVIN: I should just like to be clear. Do I understand you to say that the adjustment of the minimum wage upon which all the grade wages in other sections depend is dependent on the settlement of the casual labour question at the same time?

The CHAIRMAN: No, but we think when the casual labour question has been raised—and we do not blame anyone for raising it; we think it is quite within the terms and the conditions—that before we come to a definite conclusion upon the minimum wage question we should have the light of any evidence you can give on the casual question. We do not say whether it will bear upon it or not. At present it seems to us safer to take these two points together.

Mr. BEVIN: Then, my Lord, the first witness I want to call is Mr. J. T. Walton Newbold.

MR. J. T. WALTON NEWBOLD *Sworn.*
Examined by MR. BEVIN.

Q. Will you tell the Court exactly what your occupation is?—(A.) I am Lecturer in Economic History to the Central Labour College allocated to Lancashire.

Q. Have you been employed during the period of this Inquiry making investigations in the associated companies and profits relative to the shipping and other industries?—(A.) I have.

Q. Did you draft the two charts which have been handed in to the Court?—(A.) My wife and I drafted the first chart, and I drafted the second chart, *No. 14, the one which is there.

Mr. MACPHERSON: The second is 13A.

Mr. BEVIN: Did you in your investigation find that railway, shipping, and other companies were closely interlocked?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will you describe to the Court what you found in that direction?—(A.) In the limited time which I have at my disposal I had better endeavour to give a few illustrations. I found, for instance, in the case of the Elder Dempster interests, that there were present Directors of the London and South-Western Railway; Lord Pirrie and Sir Owen Philipps are on the board of that Railway Company, and on the boards of several shipping companies; I found again the presence of E. H. Cunard on the Board of the Great Western Railway and on the Board of the Cunard Company, which, as you know, Mr. Bevin, runs normally into Fishguard, just as some of the other boats run into Southampton; then I found Sir A. Garrett Anderson, of Anderson, Green and Co., managers of the Orient Line, to be a Director of the Midland Railway; and I found another Director of that concern, I think I am right in saying, Sir F. Green, to be a Director of the Great Eastern Railway. I could give similar illustrations from the boards in Scotland, and probably, if it were relevant, in Ireland too.

The CHAIRMAN: We will take it that the inter-

* See Appendix No. 29.

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locking is very great, and that that chart, generally speaking, is correct. Will that suit your purpose, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: I do not know, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well, please take your own course.

Mr. BEVIN: Sir Alfred Booth denied the chart yesterday. He raised a very serious question.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I think you are entitled to say that he treated it as an imaginative document, and now you establish its correctness.

Mr. BEVIN: Counsel has already stated that the actual employers of our labour are dock authorities which are under statutory regulations.

Sir LYNDEN MACANSEY: Only one. I enumerated a large number of others.

The CHAIRMAN: I am only giving you a hint.

Mr. BEVIN: I think it has a great bearing upon the ability to pay.

The CHAIRMAN: Do not let me interfere with you if you think it is relevant.

Mr. BEVIN (to the Witness): Did you find difficulty in really ascertaining the actual profits from the reports which you examined—(A.) Yes. After I was instructed by you I instructed through the customary business channels, stockbrokers, to ask for the reports of some 300 companies. I got the returns of quite a number, and then I discovered that there were such peculiarities in making up returns—in some cases stating that excess profits tax had been taken off, in some cases saying that it had not yet been taken off, and various arrangements regarding what was to be the reserve, and so forth, in so many different forms—that it was often extremely difficult to arrive at anything more than a very approximate estimate; and then the difficulty comes of finding out what are the exact trading profits. For instance, I find in the case of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company that it is a very, very extensive owner in the Elder Dempster, and that the Elder Dempster is a very extensive owner in the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company; and I could take line after line, backwards and forwards. I would say, my Lord, that I have searched the latest returns available in Somerset House and in Edinburgh, and so far as the directorships are concerned, I have relied upon the same authority as I should conclude the Cunard Company will, the Directory of Directors of 1919, the Stock Exchange Year Book, Stock Exchange Official Intelligence, and other papers known on the Stock Exchange. I never use any others.

Q. You heard it stated yesterday in the Court that if the advance of wages were given to dockers it would interfere with other trades. Did you find in your investigation that shipowners who employ our men were largely employers in shipbuilding, ship-repairing, marine engineering, coal and oil supplies?—(A.) Yes. For instance, I might take the name of the Chairman of the Ellerman Lines, Limited, Sir J. R. Ellerman. I found him to be a very extensive owner—I must say that I have not at present his holdings beside me—in John Brown and Co., Limited, who are coalowners in South Yorkshire, who are shipbuilders upon the Clyde, who are marine engineers in various parts of the country, and who have iron

mines in this country and abroad, and whom I find also to be very extensive owners in Messrs. Harland and Wolff, as Messrs. Harland and Wolff are very extensive owners in Messrs. John Brown. I find that Sir Owen Philipps and Lord Pirrie have something like 750,000 shares in Harland and Wolff; I find Messrs. Workman Clark and Co. to have a small holding in the Houlder Line and a fairly considerable holding in the Cunard Line; and I might point out that Messrs. Workman Clark and Co. are now the Northumberland Shipbuilding Company, and that they are very largely associated with Sperling's, the bankers, and also Furness, Withy and Co. Then if you come to shipbuilding you will find such a firm as R. H. Green and Silley Weir, and there you will find connections with Messrs. Clover Clayton and Messrs. Eltringham and with the North of Ireland Shipbuilding Company; and you will find connections with Furness Withy and connections also with the Peninsular and Oriental Company.

Q. So that there would be a financial interest to the employers to keep down wages in this industry because of its effect on their own holdings in other industries?—(A.) I should imagine so. If I might be allowed to do so, I would like to take an illustration of three concerns, two of which are in connection with the Cunard. I will take them, if you prefer it, on the lines of shipbuilding, but I would rather like to take them on the line of the clerical staff. For instance, I find a director of the Bank of Liverpool to be a director of the Cunard Steamship Company; I find again a director, I think it is, of the Liverpool, London and Globe Insurance Company to be a director of the Cunard Steam Ship Company; and I can imagine three clerks, one of them a member of a shipping guild, sympathetic perhaps to the refusal to work overtime of the British and Irish Steam Navigation Company, pointing out that he has got an advance in wages from the Cunard; and then I can imagine a clerk in the pay of the Bank of Liverpool thinking that if the clerk in the shipping industry got an advance he might as well have an advance; and then it will go round to the Insurance Company, and so on, in an unending circle of the worker getting the full product of his toil.

Q. I would like to ask you this question from the public point of view: Whether in this investigation, and especially in view of the statement made of the international effect of our advance, you in fact discovered that these interests are interlocking, not only nationally, but internationally?—(A.) Yes, though I have not found anything quite so sensational as I did at the time of the submarine blockade, when I found Messrs. Vickers, Limited, to be interested in the ownership of submarine works in Austria-Hungary. Nevertheless I have found connections into America and connections into various other countries as well. Of course, the conspicuous illustrations are those for America.

Q. You heard Sir Alfred Booth's statement re the Cunard rate of profit?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And that he found it difficult to give the actual trading profits?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Can you help in that direction?—(A.) I again have the same difficulty as Sir Alfred Booth in that I find it extremely difficult to separate his trading profits from his profits of investment, because I can never get to the end of the investments of the Cunard Company, just as I can never get fully to the end of the investments of the Anchor Line. I find these companies owning each other backwards and forwards, until one loses oneself completely in a maze of interlocking ownerships as well as of interlocking directorships.

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Then, of course, it would be quite impossible, I should imagine—I have consulted a chartered accountant on this matter—it would be extremely difficult if not impossible to discover what were the actual trading profits, unless an impartial chartered accountant could be put on the books of the company.

Q. Do you think it would be of service to the country if the proposition which I made the other day, in view of the charge that this was to be passed on to the community, were adopted—that is to say, do you think it would be of service to the country in its very difficult time if there were a public commission to investigate and examine the whole of those investments and to discover the exactions from labour?—(A.) I think it would and I think it would only be fair to the landed interest and to the royalty owner. These people were called in question during the Coal Commission, but very little was said about the actual profits of the capitalist, and I think it would be fair not only to the workers, but also to the landlords in so far as they are landlords and not capitalists.

Q. In so far as you have traced the profits associated with shipowning up to date, would £80,000,000 per year, in your judgment, be an over-estimate or an under-estimate of the actual profits of shipowners at this moment?—(A.) I could not say precisely, owing to the fact that there are public companies presenting returns more or less easy to decipher; there are public companies, again, which do not present any public returns, and there, of course, I had extreme difficulty in ever getting access to them; and then there are partnerships again, and these own and interown each other until it is almost impossible to disentangle the one from the other. But I should say that that would probably be an under-estimate. I cannot say with any exactitude, of course.

Q. Any more than Sir Alfred could yesterday?—(A.) Perhaps not quite so easily as he might have done.

Q. Did you find in your investigation that these interlocking arrangements entered down into the Press?—(A.) I did.

Q. Will you give one or two instances?—(A.) For instance, I could give the instance of Sir A. Brocklebank, I think it is, who is a director of the Liverpool Daily Post, Mercury, and Echo, Limited, the publishers of the "Liverpool Post," and "Mercury," and also of the "Echo"; and then Sir J. R. Ellerman, who is the most influential owner of that charming illustrated paper the "Sphere," which is very keen, as you know, on increased output; and then he is also a very considerable owner of that champion friend of the coalowners and also of the dockers, the "Daily Mail."

Q. Do you in your judgment as an investigator think, as a result of your investigation, that assuming Sir Alfred Booth's estimate was correct (which I do not admit) of the cost of this increase, that can be paid out of the present shipowning profits without adding to the cost to the community?—(A.) I think so. Of course, one has to take into consideration many of the very heavy expenses incurred by a line like the Cunard Company. Some people no doubt know their very beautiful offices on the pierhead at Liverpool, which certainly display more pomp and circumstance than the average trade union office, and probably cost a very great deal in capital expenditure.

The CHAIRMAN: Witness, you are in a Court, you know, and those observations do not strengthen your evidence, if I may say so. If you will confine yourself to your facts and to opinions upon them without if possible entering upon con-

troversial subjects it will be better, if I may give you that hint.—(A.) Certainly, my Lord. It is my first experience. Then there is, of course, the case of the subsidy made by His Majesty's Government to the Cunard Steamship Company some years ago, which is practically paid out now, and the Government practically have no shares left. I conclude that that also must have been paid out of undivided profits.

Mr. BEVIN: That is all I have to ask.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I have no questions to ask, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: While you are there, Mr. Newbold, could you help us, please, on one of the points that have arisen? You know from Sir Alfred Booth's evidence about the declared rate of profits of the Cunard Line: you remember it was 20 per cent. since the war began. Then, from 1881, I think it was until 1913, what was the percentage: do you remember?—(A.) I do not remember. I have not gone back over the Cunard returns for that period.

Q. I thought perhaps you had added them up and had struck the average?—(A.) I intended to get at it as far back as 1840.

Q. Accept the evidence that was given: that is from 1881. I suggested that it was 3 per cent.; I think I may have been over the mark. There were many years in which there were no profits at all?—(A.) I would not like to say that, because I have not looked myself.

Q. Bearing upon your observation about the increase being paid out of the profits, supposing the present profits disappeared and a time of straitened trade came to the country, you would be putting the claim, would you not, on a very shifty foundation if you put it on that footing?—(A.) I think the Cunard Company is one of those companies which have pursued a very conservative policy.

Q. That is true?—(A.) And they have built up an extremely strong financial position over the period of years, just as such firms as John Brown and Co. have, which has pursued that policy year after year, and, I believe, from a capitalist point of view, quite correctly.

Q. I think you would assent to the view I am putting to you, that it would be desirable, if possible, to get the workmen's claim placed upon a less precarious condition than being dependent upon being borne out of profits. You agree to that?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Of course, it is very plain, if you take a war period, and take a high rate of profit, and say you can pay it out of that; but we are looking to the future, and, passing to the future, I think you would agree that if we can get a basis which will compel the employers of labour to pay a certain reasonable fair and proper amount for the human labour employed, irrespective of whether they earned large or small profits, or no profits at all, that then you would stand in a very much better position?—(A.) I am not prepared to make any comment upon that on the theoretical side. All I would say is there is now no further German competition.

Q. That anticipates, and I do hope you are correct, rather a prolonged period of good trade?—(A.) I do.

Q. I think that is a fair observation, no doubt. In expressing that view, have you considered that our friends on the other side of the Atlantic may run us pretty hard?—(A.) We are much more likely to find a continuance of that process of inter-

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ownership which is so general on both sides; I can give you many illustrations of that.

(*The witness withdrew.*)

MR. MICHAEL REID, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are connected with the Liverpool Dockers' Union?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Which is affiliated to the Transport Workers' Federation?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Yesterday you heard Sir Alfred Booth suggest that £2 8s. 4½d. was a satisfactory wage?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is your experience of the needs of the Liverpool docker. Do you think he could live upon a wage of that character, and give output?—(A.) I do not.

Q. What is your experience of the actual advance of prices in Liverpool?—(A.) Shall I read them out, or will you?

Mr. BEVIN: There is a very long list, my Lord, which may as well be handed in. (**Document D 30 handed in.*)

Q. For instance, bread was rather on the low level in Liverpool in 1914?—(A.) That is so.

Q. 2½d. for the 2 lb. loaf. With regard to the common necessities, the things that go to make up what I will call the odd bits of the home, that make up the family meal, have you found in those cases the heaviest imposition?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is there general complaint from the workmen's wives as to the lack of income right through-out Liverpool?—(A.) There is.

Q. You heard counsel this morning read out a figure of 3s. 4d. for household necessities per week. Would that correctly represent the expenditure for the purchase of bed linen, crockery ware, hard ware, and all the other utensils that make up a home?—(A.) No, it would not.

Q. Do you think that 3s. 4d. is a satisfactory allowance?—(A.) No.

Q. How much do you think you could get of domestic articles in the course of one week for 3s. 4d.? What is the price you could get a cup for now, do you know?—(A.) If a child breaks a cup from the table, and it is very often that they do, it often accumulates odd saucers. My information from the Missis is that when she goes to buy an odd cup now what used to be pre-war ½d. is now 4d.

Q. In the budget counsel read out this morning as making very liberal allowances, he allows a figure of 2s. for margarine and no butter. Do you think the Liverpool docker will be content to unload butter from the ship that it might go to the rich, and the docker never have any to eat?—(A.) It is very seldom that they do, according to the control.

Q. We know that at the moment, but I am talking of the future allowance. Do you think that the workmen will be content to see the available butter supply in total go to rich people and live entirely on margarine all the year round?—(A.) No, they would not.

Q. There would be a danger that dockers would hold the ship up if there were not some distribution of that butter, would there not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Counsel also in his budget this morning allowed that there were to be no eggs, only egg substitutes. Do you think that all the year round, from January to December, your members in Liverpool would be content never to taste an egg?—(A.) No, they would not be content.

Q. There would be a danger of getting some

from the ship's hold, would not there?—(A.) There would, without a doubt.

Q. Do you think that with a family of five, with growing children needing nutrition, that eight pints of milk for seven days is a satisfactory allowance?—(A.) From my own experience, we have one child which takes milk, and that is a quart a day, for one child.

Q. Counsel has allowed eight pints a week for five people, three children under six years of age who need nourishment?—(A.) Well, I would not be responsible for those children to come to work at the dock.

Q. Do you think, as a father, that you could rear a healthy child on an allowance of that character?—(A.) You could not.

Q. And if it was read out to the Liverpool members, do you not think they would think it a gross insult to them to be allowed a budget in this way?—(A.) I should not like to be the person who would read it out to them, or expect them to live on it.

Q. Do you think it possible for a family of five to maintain themselves in physical efficiency on 3 lbs. of fat of all kinds per week, that is lard, dripping and margarine. Counsel allows 3 lbs. for a family of five?—(A.) I have seen two 3's, that is 6 lbs., for a family of five, of margarine alone.

Q. Take cheese. Counsel allows 7 ounces of cheese for a family of five. Do you think it is satisfactory, with one of those five being a workman having often to take food to work?—(A.) I know in my time as a docker it was not uncommon to see a man with a lb. of cheese, never mind about ounces. He would eat that as a salad.

The CHAIRMAN: That comes to 1 ounce a day, does it?

Mr. BEVIN: It is 1 ounce a day for five people, allowed in the budget which counsel read out this morning.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: In point of fact, that is a mistake; it should be seven-tenths, not 7 ounces; it is a typing mistake.

Mr. BEVIN: Seven-tenths of what?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Seven-tenths of a lb.

Mr. BEVIN: That is not much better. One of my friends says you must have been considering a mousetrap, not a man.

Q. Counsel allows, also—I know you will pardon me, my Lord, but I feel a very keen resentment on this, and I cannot help it because I am a workman—

The CHAIRMAN: I was rather interposing that you might, without being sensational, make clear that what you were referring to was a daily allowance.

Mr. BEVIN: Now with regard to vegetables, exclusive of potatoes, with present prices 1s. per week is allowed to buy vegetables, or less than 2d. per day, to buy vegetables for five people. What do you think of that?—(A.) My opinion of that is, and I have a very vast experience, that it will take that for the one day alone—Sunday.

Q. In order to give the family a decent feed?—(A.) Yes, for the dinner on Sunday. One head of cabbage is no use.

* See Appendix No. 36.

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Q. Let me turn to clothing. In the budget I submitted I allowed £1 5s. per week for clothing, which included bedding and clothing of all kinds, boots, etc. Do you think that is putting it too high?—(A.) No. I do not.

Q. For a family of five?—(A.) I do not.

Q. Take a docker who is working ashore in Liverpool running a truck all day, how many pairs of boots per annum do you think he would wear out?—(A.) With boots as they go now, at the very least he would wear three pairs.

Q. What would he pay for the heavy workman's boots to be well shod now in Liverpool?—(A.) In my time on the docks I used to be able to leave my measure for a pair of hand-stitched boots for 10s. 6d., that is a working boot—a Blucher.

Q. You used to buy a pair of boots hand-stitched for what?—(A.) For 10s. 6d.

Q. That is a pair of heavy boots?—(A.) A heavy, docker's Blucher boots. To-day you cannot get that. The only boot nearest to that is 30s. a pair—£1 10s.—and not the same quality whatever.

Q. And they are machine stitched? You say it would take three pairs, that would be £4 10s. a year, to keep the man decently shod to run the trucks on Liverpool docks?—(A.) It would. If you will allow me, my Lord, there are classes of cargo which a man works at which are very detrimental to boots and trousers. If a man is working with bleaching powder or soda ash it is chemical, and it eats away, it gets into it, and burns the whole fabric of the piece. If you go into the Phosphate Rock, where they deal with materials with acid in it, it burns the boots and turns them brown. When it will do that to their boots, what will it do to their clothes?

Sir JOSEPH BROODBANK: It does that in a week?—(A.) Under a week. Then take a coal-heaver, with his heavy work, and driving his spade.

Mr. BEVIN: Assuming he bought the three pairs of boots, how many times would he try to get another sole put on them—to get them re-soled to make them last?—(A.) If you get a pair of boots and go down to the class of cargo which I have mentioned, it would be a good sole, and a good boot, that would last a fortnight.

Q. Assuming you had them soled, what is the cost of soleing a workman's pair of boots?—(A.) I know a case where a pair of young man's boots (my own son's) were soled and heeled in a fortnight, and it cost him 7s. 3d., and that used to be done for 2s. 6d. at the outside.

Q. Coming to clothing, can the men buy the same kind of heavy fustian, or cord, clothing to the same extent that they could before the war?—(A.) No, they cannot. I very often pass a shop that I was in the habit of buying clothes at—or, rather, that the majority of dockers used to buy their clothing at years ago, for a great number of years, and at that particular time they used to wear those mole-skins, and they used to cost an average amount of 4s. 11d.; that is what the dockers generally used to have; they wear overalls now. I generally, as I am passing the shop, look at the prices, and they now run from 13s. 6d. up to 17s. 6d. for the same cloth—and I question whether it is the same cloth or not.

Q. If you go into a cargo, such as you have mentioned, with new trousers, as you say, very often holes are burnt in them and they are gone?—(A.) When you go to work on bleaching powder, or soda-ash, or anything of that kind at all, when it gets into the mole-skin, or anything like that, it burns and leaves a stain like mould

in the trousers, the same as if it was burnt. It destroys the trousers, it burns them up, and it does the same with the boots. For instance, if you take it that a man has to carry bag ash, that is a thing very often done—

The CHAIRMAN: Do you mean soda-ash?—(A.) Yes, soda-ash in bags, which run close on 2½ cwt., if not quite. Now that is burning hot on the man's back. He has to stand that; he has to work through it. I have known many a man working alongside of me, happening to work, perhaps, a little longer than me, and they went to their grave with a hole as big as the palm of your hand on the back of their neck. It burns right through. It will go through clothes, or anything. When it goes through clothes, you can have an idea that it will go through human flesh. Down at the Phosphate Rock I have seen men where they were sweating, where it worked in all round where they sweated, and blistered, and as to their clothes, and their boots, when they came up you would not know they were black at all—just the raw hide; all the substance taken out of the leather.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to ask you one further question on that: would three suits a year, if a docker wanted to dress just comfortably to work in and to be respectable, with one suit for what he calls his best, be an unreasonable calculation?—(A.) No, it would not; that is, you mean to say, an evening suit?

Q. That is so?—(A.) To change into when he comes home, and that evening suit happens to be a Sunday suit. It would be as much as it would; I doubt whether the other two suits would stand the twelve months—they would not.

Q. Do you find that, as a result of education, there is a growing desire for the second suit and a better living amongst dockers than there was, say, ten years ago?—(A.) I do, and it is necessary. Take a case of my own, where there is a man, a son-in-law of mine, who has served his country. He has come home wounded, and he is maimed for life. They have applied to the health authorities for a better housing; the family is a mixed family, with six children besides the father and mother, which makes eight. They have practically got to sleep in one room, because the top room is untenable; they cannot live in it, the ceiling has fallen in. There is no such thing as repair whatever, so that leaves the family of eight practically to sleep in the one room. They are doing the best they can.

Q. Do you find a steadily growing revolt against those conditions?—(A.) I do, and it is nearly about time, too. I would revolt myself.

Q. You heard Sir Alfred Booth say yesterday that there had been a reduction of output in Liverpool of 25 per cent. Do you admit, or do you not, that the men are slacking in Liverpool, or that they are giving forth the same amount of work that they have hitherto done?—(A.) They are.

Q. Is there a difference in the stowing of ships now since this rush method has been on, compared to pre-war?—(A.) None whatever. In fact, the body of men are working hard. What may account for the small output, in many instances, is that the sheds are so congested that they cannot get the same number of gangs into a ship's hold to give that ship a round turn. They have every facility at Liverpool, that is on the quay-side, but when the shed is congested, they say this ship has hung so long. They very often complain to me about it, they say the men won't work overtime, but if they cannot work the men in the day, how do they expect, if they have not the accommodation for

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the men to work and discharge that ship in the day, that they can do it at night? Take the man who works to-day; we will say there are four gangs of men in a ship, it takes them all their time to make space in the sheds for those four gangs to work. Now, if those men worked, we will say, half a night, right on to 9 o'clock, they might as well stay at home the following day, because there would be no room whatever, because all traffic in Liverpool is practically at a standstill after 5 o'clock.

Q. Do you think it is possible in Liverpool to have made a test at any shed during the last six months under exactly similar conditions to those that obtained pre war. You heard Sir Alfred say that somebody had taken a test, that they had arranged for the ship to be alike, the shed to be alike, I presume the weather to be alike, the cargo to be alike; do you think that it has been possible in Liverpool to have a test made under exactly similar conditions to those that existed pre war?—(A.) I am not aware.

Q. You do not think it is possible?—(A.) No. If my Lord does not object, the information I received after his visit to Liverpool was that everything was put right on that occasion, so that everything would look—

The CHAIRMAN: You are very shrewd, I see, and you had some doubt whether that was evidence—well, it is not; but if it will relieve your mind, we do not mind letting it go down on the note. But do not let us have too much of a good thing. We will compromise on that, you know what I mean, just confine yourself to what you yourself can testify.

Mr. BEVIN: Can we say that the Liverpool dockers have rather made up their minds that this 16s. is a reasonable claim?—(A.) Well, as far as I know, and I have got a good idea of the feeling in Liverpool with regard to that, it takes us all our time to keep them at work; and it is only because we have been driving into them to keep at work until such time as they see what the findings of this Court will be; that there was a possibility of getting it—and they expect it. Some of them go further and say it is not sufficient.

Q. They contend it is not sufficient?—(A.) They do.

Q. With reference to the Joint Committee mentioned yesterday, has there ever been, other than the war increases, a single advance of wages through that Committee—any general advance?—(A.) Not on the flat rate.

Q. The only advance there has been through that Joint Committee has been on different classes of cargo which have been detrimental to the health of the men, not on the flat rate?—(A.) The flat rate has stood out on its own since 1879, when I was in that strike; I was a boy at the time.

Q. It actually goes back further than I stated the other day?—(A.) That was in my time; it was my first strike; I was a boy, and my father was with me in the same strike.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Might I ask you just one or two short questions? Could you tell me in what capacity you are working at the docks at Liverpool now?—(A.) Not at the docks exactly; I have been an official of the Dockers' Union for the past 21 years.

Q. You are an official of the Dockers' Union?—(A.) For the past 21 years.

Q. Could you tell me this: This Table that you put in gives the prices of articles in 1914 and the prices of the same articles in 1920. Could you tell me, have you got the prices in 1914 from some record or other?—(A.) From experience.

Q. You have not taken them from any of the official records that exist?—(A.) No, I have not.

Q. Did you just trust to your memory, or how did you get them?—(A.) Well, I have a vast experience, which I have stated, although I just want to say this: that I have been a housekeeper for close on eleven years myself; I was left with a family of five. I have got that much experience to show me what I had to pay for it.

Q. I can only congratulate you on your memory and the extreme accuracy with which even farthings are computed there; but in regard to present prices, how did you get those? Did you take those from the present list of controlled prices?—(A.) No, I got the present prices from my missis, who has got the laying out of my money.

Q. All this list here?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have been referring to the question of injury to clothes. Does your White Book not provide special rates for the working of cargo in connection with which clothing may be damaged?—(A.) No.

Q. For example, cargoes like bleaching powder, soda ash, loose bricks, slag, loose tiles, wet hides, and all that sort of thing, there is a special rate for those?—(A.) That is which is detrimental to the men.

Q. Whatever it may be, there are special rates provided for those exceptional cargoes?—(A.) Yes, that has been long before ever that White Book was printed. Those rates have been in existence now close on thirty years.

Q. I only want to know if I am right in saying a provision of that sort is contained in the White Book?—(A.) It is a copy, as Sir Alfred Booth said here yesterday, of the previous Blue Book.

Q. Let me come to another thing. You know the present conditions in regard to everything, prices and all the rest, are abnormal.—(A.) They are, without doubt.

Q. And we are trying to-day to settle rates not in exceptional and not merely the present abnormal times, but for the future?—(A.) I think we would be doing something good if we could settle for the present.

Q. If rates are settled on the basis of the present conditions, which we all admit are abnormal, when conditions improve and prices go down, would you be prepared to give a sliding scale?—(A.) No, I would not. I work for a better living, a better land, a better system of living altogether for the working classes. I work to up-lift myself and my fellow-men; that is my contention.

Q. You think that they ought to be fixed on the present abnormal condition of things?—(A.) I say at present.

Q. If the present abnormal condition of things grows worse you would ask for an increase on the rates of wages fixed to-day?—(A.) I would.

Q. If in the future the present abnormal state of things grows better do you think there should be a corresponding slide in the other direction?—(A.) So far as I am concerned—and I am a man who has had a share of both working and representing the men—I do not think it is their intention, nor is it my intention, to go back to the old condition of things any more.

Q. I am sure I do not, and nobody would suggest that you should. What I am suggesting is this. You are asking for an increase of rates to-day: if in the future prices go up still more you

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would ask for a further increase: do you not think that if in the same way prices go down there is a case for regulating wages with a drop in prices?—(A.) If we accept the Board of Trade figures, they are always down. The working man can never base anything on that. As far as I am concerned I take the same stand as Mr. Bevin, I do not believe in going down one peg.

Q. If prices go up you would ask for an increase?—(A.) I would.

Q. But if prices go down you would refuse anything in the nature of a reduction.—(A.) I would.

Q. Now, with regard to the question of output. You have said that the sheds are congested in Liverpool.—(A.) Yes.

Q. And that that in your view prevents a test being made of the speed with which a ship is turned round to-day as compared with pre-war days?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The trouble in making the test is the congestion in the sheds?—(A.) Yes, you must have the space.

Q. If you could have the sheds cleared you could make a test?—(A.) Yes, by fully manning the gangs in the hatches.

Q. If the sheds were cleared and the hatches were fully manned you could get a fair test?—(A.) You could. You would be able to turn a ship round quicker, because you can always do more work with 8 gangs than you can with 4.

Q. If in those circumstances a ship is brought into a clear shed, and it is found that turning the ship round to-day takes longer than turning the same ship round with the same cargo in 1914, that would show that the cause was not in the congestion of the sheds?—(A.) It just depends on the number of gangs on the ship. If they want a ship quickly they strengthen the gang and put more whips on and more cranes.

Q. Taking the same ship and the same cargo, with the cleared sheds to-day you could have a test?—(A.) Yes, but I do not think the men are so foolish, as they have been in the past, as to allow themselves to be driven with a whip.

Q. Is not the best way of testing the output per gang, as you say, and not per man?—(A.) Yes, per gang.

Re-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I just want to ask one question with regard to the extras. How much have those extras been increased during the war. Supposing you used to have for instance a penny or twopence an hour, as the case may be, or 1s. a day, what we call dirty money, or clean money for a dirty job, or something of that kind, how much have they increased that amount during the war?—(A.) There has been a shilling per day paid for different classes of cargo, and it has never increased from that. It has only kept up with the ordinary rate, with the 7s. 2d. war bonus; no further increase.

Q. Let me test that in this way, to be quite clear. Supposing you were allowed a shilling a day before the war to buy new trousers when you spoilt them, you are still allowed a shilling a day?—(A.) It is not for the trousers at all, it is for the class of cargo. Trousers are not in the question.

Q. I know, but my point is that you were allowed a shilling a day extra for the nature of the work?—(A.) Quite.

Q. That shilling a day would only be worth about 4d. now in money value?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you had anything added on to the shilling to make up for its depletion in value?—(A.) Nothing whatever.

Q. This shilling a day for extras was fixed some

twenty years ago?—(A.) Close on thirty years ago.

Q. So although the value of the shilling has gone down, you have had nothing to make it up?—(A.) A man working on ordinary cargo gets 12s. 2d. a day; if he is working on this special cargo, bleaching powder or anything like that, he gets 13s. 2d. a day. That is only bringing it up a shilling a day.

Q. He has not been proportionally increased with regard to his extras with the advance in the cost of living?—(A.) No.

The CHAIRMAN: What is your age?—(A.) My age is 56 next July; I was born in 1864.

Q. How long do you say you have been an official?—(A.) Twenty-one years; since 1889.

Q. Up to 35 what was your business in life?—(A.) Up to the time I took office I was a dock labourer, from a boy.

Q. You have told us the distressing circumstances of your house, and how you have had to be not only the bread-winner but the bread-distributor for this family?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. That has been a daily experience of yours for years, has it?—(A.) It has.

Q. You referred to the evidence of your missus?—(A.) For the present figures.

Q. Prior to having the good fortune to get her you had to bring up these children yourself?—(A.) Yes.

Q. For how many years did that last?—(A.) For about eleven years.

Q. So that you are able, are you, from your personal experience to testify to those prices that you have referred to?—(A.) Yes.

Q. We have not had the pleasure of seeing your wife, but we are quite willing in this Court to take it from you that your joint experience and hers confirms the present-day figures also?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I am rather anxious to get your view upon this question of the sliding scale. Please wait till I put my question before you answer. You have said to Sir Lynden Macassey that you are quite willing to have it slide up, but you would not be willing to have it slide down?—(A.) That is right.

Q. That does not look very well to begin with, but let me put this point to you. We have had evidence from the previous witness, Mr. Newbold, that he expects the present figures, although we call them abnormal, to be at least well sustained during a considerable period of time. We have also had evidence from Sir Alfred Booth that with an increased output prices would go down. Now I put this point to you quite clearly: Suppose you got your will—that is to say, that you could get the line of the wages drawn at the crest of the wave and kept there—if it is an economic fact that increased output would reduce prices, you see, do you not, that that would at once be a motive supplied to all the working classes of this country to work for their own betterment in that respect. Now have you any doubt, human nature being as it is, that the working classes would very soon come to see that their own interests were in the direction of increased output for their own benefit? Do not answer unless you feel sure about it. I have a certain opinion of my own, but it is not for me to impress it upon you. I just want to point out to you that, assuming that you get your own way, assuming you persuade this Court to draw a line at a high rate, and assuming this Court to be satisfied that it be the fact that increased output will certainly tend to reduce prices, do you not think it would be a motive for increased output if the workmen are guaranteed their high figure, and get more out of it by reduced

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prices?—(A.) Do I take it that for the increased output the man must work hard and receive less pay?

Q. No; I am putting it the other way about?—(A.) That is my case.

Q. But it is not the case I am putting to you; it is just the opposite. I am supposing that he will not receive less money, but by the increased output he will get more for it, because there will be lower prices?—(A.) That is what I want for myself.

Q. Are we not agreed, then, that one argument in favour of keeping the figure generous and high and steady would be that the whole working classes themselves would be instruments in making their own wages purchase more?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I am glad you assent to that, because it is so eminently reasonable, and I believe, even if we had professors of economics here, they would agree with it.

(The Witness withdrew.)

PATRICK MCKIBBIN Sworn.

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are also an official of the Liverpool Dockers' Union?—(A.) Only for the last three months.

Q. What office do you hold?—(A.) Organiser for Great Britain.

Q. You have had considerable experience at the Liverpool Docks with regard to output?—(A.) Yes, I have worked for all the principal firms, practically, in the north end of Liverpool, in the Western Ocean trade, and the Colony trades.

Q. Will you give us your experience of pre-war dealing with the cargoes and now?—(A.) On the output do you mean?

Q. Yes?—(A.) In taking a comparison of the men working at the dock now with what we have in pre-war days, you could not take any test whatever, because the same type of man is not there.

Q. They went to the war?—(A.) The good type of man, the healthy and strong type of man, were all called up to go to the war. It left the docks with old men and, I might say respectfully, cripples.

Q. The men who have come back from the war have been considerably impaired in health, wounded, and so forth?—(A.) The big majority of them.

Q. So that the war has had some effect on the class of labour in the Liverpool docks?—(A.) A very great effect.

Q. Have the employers tried to meet that by suggesting increasing the gangs or increasing the number of men in the run, etc.?—(A.) On the contrary, the employers seem to adopt the position of employing a foreman who tries to get as much out of the men as he can possibly get with the least number of men working in the gang. That man becomes a very prominent official in the firm; they pay him on results.

Q. He is what we would describe in the dock vernacular as a forcer?—(A.) Yes. I give it another term.

Q. You heard Sir Alfred Booth refer yesterday to the difficulty of getting men to put an extra number of bags in the set. Is it the practice in Liverpool to try and put up heavier sets, so as to make the men work harder ashore and aboard without increasing the gang correspondingly?—(A.) The system that prevails at the present time is this. We have a discharging gang on the ship; perhaps we have as many as sixteen men on the quay. If they are working well, the foreman arranges to strengthen the quay gang considerably without telling the men on the ship that he is

doing it. This procedure goes on until the men in the ship find out that the job is double-manned on the quay and only single-manned on the ship.

Q. The double-manning on the quay is used to force the men aboard to work harder?—(A.) The foreman on the ship will say, "Come on, they are waiting for you." It is a continual rush then for the men down below; they get no reinforcements; it is eight men to two falls and six men to one fall.

Q. Will you describe to his Lordship exactly what you mean by eight men to two falls?—(A.) Down below the ship is divided into two sections; four men work on the starboard side and four men work on the port side. On the deck we have a hydraulic crane working to the deck from the roof of the shed. That crane can pick up as quickly as those two fours bring it up from the hold of the ship. On the quay there only ought to be eighteen men in the average gang. We find out that during the morning's work—and I say this seriously—although the gang starts with eighteen men, when we knock off at dinner-time we find the ship's men have been working against twenty-seven men. Many a time that is the case. We do not know; they keep slipping an odd man into the gang to keep up with the men on the ship.

Q. And that causes a dispute?—(A.) That causes a dispute amongst the men.

Q. And that causes delay?—(A.) It causes great delay, because when the men down below get to know they stop, and they will not do it any longer until they get reinforced—and they cannot get men always.

Q. That breeds suspicion right throughout the dock?—(A.) Very great.

Q. In other words, the men, owing to this kind of treatment, develop an attitude of mind that they are always being had. Is that so?—(A.) There is a general suspicion throughout Liverpool in the dock labouring class that they cannot trust anybody. They have been sold so often by them that they always say—I can say it without exception—that they are never quite sure of what they are going to get, and they have to come to other people to get it for them by force.

Q. What staff have your union to employ to watch the interests of the dock labourer in Liverpool?—(A.) In No. 12 Branch, in Bankhall—that is where the western ocean liners come—we have to employ 6 delegates in the one branch to attend to the dock and look after the men's interests on the dock alone.

Q. Watching that that kind of thing does not happen, and that the men are not had?—(A.) Yes, watching the position of the gang and the method of working.

Q. That does not produce good feeling?—(A.) It does not.

Q. While that system lasts it is impossible to hope to develop any sort of regularity in the conditions of dock life?—(A.) The reason of that condition is, that whenever the Joint Board in Liverpool comes to an agreement, and it has been passed at the Joint Board, when it comes down to the head clerk or foreman timekeeper he reads it in another way, which is always detrimental to the working men.

Q. That is to say, the sub-officials do not carry out the spirit of the interpretation?—(A.) In many cases.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, you will bear in mind that it was in answer to an appeal by yourself that we specially considered confining this portion of the inquiry to wages. If it is coming to

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that, well and good; but even although this witness were to go out of the box on the conditions he could come back to the box when the conditions question arises. Bear in mind, we are not against you, but the question is to keep it in the order in which you invited us to take it.

Mr. BEVIN: The only point is that I thought from Counsel's statement this morning that he was bringing the economic inability to pay to bear on the question of output.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I can see how it works, but it is a little remote.

Mr. BEVIN: I will not pursue that subject further. If it has to come up again I will recall the witness.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. You say the type of man now engaged in dock labour in Liverpool is not, unfortunately, the same as it was before the war?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That applies, I suppose, to all the classes of dock labour in the port?—(A.) The dock labour that I represent is the shipmen and porters. I do not represent the warehouse workers or the canteen staff or anything else.

Q. That applies, I suppose, to piece workers as much as to time workers?—(A.) The only piece workers we have in Liverpool are the coal-heavers.

Q. It applies to them just as much as to anybody else?—(A.) Not to coal-heavers.

Q. Why does it not apply to coal-heavers?—(A.) At the time when the war was on there was a bigger exemption granted to the coal-heavers for not being called up for service than to the other men.

Q. But that was not until the later days of the war, when all the recruiting came under what is called the Port Labour Committee?—(A.) No, it was previous to that.

Q. Let me just put this to you to get your opinion upon it. Do you know that in Liverpool, if you take the coal-heaver, and take the average number of tons which are worked on piece-work by each man in the day, although the hours have been shorter, the output is actually more in January, 1920, than it was in 1914?—(A.) I might point out to you that the coal-heaving in Liverpool is about one of the only things that has been modernised with regard to the working of the men with mechanical appliances.

Q. There has been no difference between 1920 and 1914 in that respect?—(A.) Previous to 1914 they used to work the coal-heaving with hand baskets; then after that came the spinners, and then they had these patent towers, and they have appliances of all sorts for putting it in.

Q. But since 1914 no big coaling appliances have been put into service; they are just the same to-day as they were in 1914?—(A.) No, there are more mechanical appliances on the dock than there were in 1914.

Q. Take the mechanical appliances which were in existence in 1914; they are in existence to-day. They may have been increased and more of them put along the dock?—(A.) Yes, there are more of them put along the dock.

Q. I want you to tell me how it is that the output per man per day has increased in respect of coal-heaving done on piece-work?—(A.) There is no output in Liverpool of coal; we only bunker coal in Liverpool.

Q. We are talking about the number of tons

handled?—(A.) We are talking about the general cargo as well.

Q. I am talking about coal for the moment. I am asking you whether you can explain to me why the output in respect of bunker coal on piece-work, although the hours have been reduced, as they were in 1919, is actually greater to-day than it was in 1914?—(A.) I was not aware of it.

Q. It is a significant fact?—(A.) I was not aware of it. I do not know of any coal-heavers (and I know quite a considerable number in Liverpool) who have ever told me that they are earning more money now than they were in 1914, corresponding with the rise.

Mr. WILLIAMS: They are doing more work?—(A.) They are doing more work.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Just a word with regard to the other matter you referred to—slipping in men. The thing that checks expedition is congestion on the quays?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is the neck of the bottle?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Therefore it is the right thing, is it not, to put on more men on the quays to get on top of the extra congestion which exists there, so as to keep the quay free for the ship?—(A.) No, they do not do it with that idea; they get more work out of the men on the ship.

Q. If the quays are congested the men on the ship cannot get out their normal amount of work?—(A.) Naturally, they cannot.

Q. Therefore, if they are to get the normal amount of work out of the men on the ship they have got to keep the quays clear?—(A.) Yes, and vice versa, when the quay is clear we never get any help to the men on the ship to keep the porters on the quay going.

Q. Then it is right to increase the number of men on the quays to try and keep things clear for the unloading of the ship?—(A.) Yes, if they increase the number of men on the ship the same.

Q. If the output of the men on the ship is dropping down because the quays are congested, and you cannot get the stuff away, then it is right to put more men on the quays to clear away the congestion to get the normal amount of work done by the men on the ship?—(A.) You want the same number of men to lift the weight on the ship, but you want to get more men on the quay to do it. That is not right.

Q. What is the matter with that?—(A.) Everything the matter; there is nothing fair about it.

Q. Is your point this: that as the rate of progress drops on the quay, because of congestion, you should bring down the rate of progress of unloading the ship in the same way.—(A.) No, we claim this: that when they put more men to work on the quay they must equally put more men to work on the ship.

Q. Therefore, if the rate on the quay is slow because of congestion the rate on the ship must be equally slow?—(A.) It does not follow. I would like to point out this, that if a quay gang is trucking through the shed on to the street from the quay-side, and they only have two trucks on, and then they put on two more trucks, some time of the day the gang will be waiting for the stuff coming off the ship, and it cannot come any quicker off the ship, because the same number of men are working there.

Q. Is not there a limit to the number of men you can put in the hold?—(A.) No. I have worked in ships where they only put six men down

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below, and at the same time when a firm wants a ship turned round quickly I have seen 16 men put in.

Q. For the same class of cargo?—(A.) Yes.

Q. We are agreed on this, that it is the congestion on the quays, which is largely the source of delay?—(A.) Not in all cases.

Q. What is the cause of the delay?—(A.) Many a time, if they want a ship turned round quickly, the system that they have of working brings out a good return very often.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There are normal times in every case.

Re-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I have only one question to ask you: Assume a shed is congested, and you put on a large crowd of men to clear the shed to make room for the men to come from the ship, you do not ask for more men than?—(A.) No, we do not.

Q. You only ask for more men when the men are taken away from the stages?—(A.) That is quite correct.

The CHAIRMAN: You have referred to the habit of what you call forcing?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What employers use that?—(A.) I may say that it was general in Liverpool until a little after 1911. The system that prevailed in Liverpool was, I am sorry to say, that a man who was handiest with his fists got the most work done.

Q. That system has fortunately been moderated?—(A.) That system has been greatly moderated.

Q. Are there any lines which you could name as black lines? Be quite frank about it—(A.) I could not say that there are any lines at present where they carry out that kind of thing, but there is a system going in Liverpool which we call the offer system, which Sir Alfred Booth spoke of, which induces men to do what they would not do by the offer of some extra that they should not get.

Q. The point I am on is this forcing system. I want you to help the Court if you can with regard to it. You have a Joint Committee in Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Can you tell me whether this is not to your mind just the thing that the Joint Committee should take stock of?—(A.) I should like to explain to your Lordship that the Joint Committee does all it possibly can do in this respect, but the Joint Committee when we go there to lay a complaint of this sort is immediately referred back to the dock, and we have very great difficulty in getting our men to come forward with a case like this if it is a case of victimisation, because they know that they are not going to be employed there. I will take the case of a man who takes a prominent part in looking after the men's welfare; directly that man shows himself prominent in that way in Liverpool he does not immediately get the sack, but they have a habit of leaving him standing on the stand the next morning, and he is not employed.

Q. That is related to the casual system into which we are going to inquire, but what was rather occurring to me was this: Do you not think that the instance which you have given, of which you complain, is rather a case for fortifying the representation direct from the men on the Joint Committee so as to let the Committee's representatives bear the burden of complaint rather than put it on the individual man?—(A.) I may explain to your Lordship that I have been on the Joint Committee, where I was working all the time. I was one of the men who represented the men from 1912.

Q. Tell us about that.—(A.) The men nominated me from among themselves to go on the Joint Committee. The only fault the men had to complain of with regard to the Joint Committee was that if ever they wanted a hearing the only way we could get it was by having a stoppage.

Q. Is that notwithstanding having your representation on the Joint Committee?—(A.) Our representation on the Joint Committee is equal, or as nearly as possible equal, with the employers.

Q. You must help us about that, because we are anxious about it. How does it not help?—(A.) For this reason: They pass a resolution or they send out an order from the Joint Board to the dock to pay the men something, about which there has been a complaint given in, and when it gets to the dock it is read in another manner altogether: they construe it differently. Then they ring up Mr. Awstun Jones, the Secretary of the Joint Board, and ask him to define it. We tell the men how we have had it given to us by the Joint Board, and when they go to draw the money they are told: "No, it did not read like that, it read so-and-so."

Q. We are trying to do for the whole country something which will be helpful. What you have said rather points to this, does it not, that the case of the men is not completely satisfied even by representation; and may I add that it would be still less satisfied if there were no representation of the men at all?—(A.) Yes, greatly.

Q. That applies to London and other places?—(A.) We had great difficulty in Liverpool in 1912 in getting the Joint Board established—very great difficulty.

Q. I know you had. Now just answer me this: How long did you serve on that Joint Board?—(A.) I have been serving on it since 1912 until now.

Q. All the time?—(A.) No; it was in existence in 1911.

Q. We have had it said that they have got on very well?—(A.) They have got on very well together.

Q. Have you any reason to doubt, from your seven years' experience of the Joint Committee in Liverpool, that a strong representation of the men added to the port authorities' in any port would work amicably and to the advantage of the port and of all concerned?—(A.) I think it would be very beneficial to the port and to all concerned.

Q. Do you realise any sense of grievance on the part of the men that with regard to the organisation of labour they have no voice?—(A.) I do.

Q. I will only detain you with one other question: When the output is in question, I gather from you that the output may be rather down at present on account of there having been many efficient men killed in the war and many others who have returned back wounded from the war?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Therefore that increases relatively the proportion of aged and unfit men.—(A.) Yes.

Q. That may be one cause of a certain decrease. I want to ask you plainly, do you think the decrease of output has been added to by reason of the congestion at the Port of Liverpool?—(A.) Yes, it has.

Q. But one agrees that in the course of nature, if politicians are right, and we do not have any further embroilment in war, that will remedy itself—that is to say, efficiency in the sense of fitness and normal age will return; and if to that natural cause you add an extra exertion in clearing congestion assisted by the Government doing things in a businesslike way instead of in a fumbling way, do you not think that the ratio of output we may hopefully expect will be resumed?—(A.) Except in this respect, if I may say so, that we have good mechanical appliances applied to every part of the dock

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but to the ship's hold, which is the most vital part of the industry.

Q. From your experience, are you conscious that there are such appliances in existence which might be but are not there?—(A.) No, I do not know of any. I am only saying that up to now we have never seen anything invented to assist the men working in the hold of the ship handling general cargo, but it has been, as we term it on the dock, "Man all everything."

Q. I would gather that so far as your influence, which must be very great, is concerned you would not countenance for a moment standing out against better organisation and better appliances?—(A.) No, if it is not going to be detrimental to the men.

Q. If it increases the output, then the whole population of this country, and notably the working-class population, would benefit in that way?—(A.) I think, although a good many people might not agree, that the docker as a whole recognises that he must advance with the times.

Q. I follow that, and I will not press you further upon it: I know your position quite well. I am asked by one of my colleagues to put this pointed question to you: will you give us the name of one firm which still up to date continues the system of forcing?—(A.) When I used the word forcing I meant individual men, not the firms. I mean the foreman who is employed. When we report these cases to the town office they do not countenance it at all.

Q. The companies do not countenance it?—(A.) No. They say they do not stand for that under any consideration; but nevertheless the man is not got rid of.

Q. I do not think I will press you further upon that. I have given you an opportunity of naming a firm?—(A.) I want to point out that it is not the firm: representatives of the firm whom we meet would not under any consideration stand for it, but nevertheless it has been in operation until the date I told you about.

Mr. BEN TILLET: And strikes have been caused.

The CHAIRMAN: That is one of the causes of dissatisfaction?—(A.) It is one of the causes of dissatisfaction throughout the docks.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I say, my Lord, that if the name of the firm whose servant is responsible can be given I would produce the firm. We do not want to burke inquiry, and if your Lordship gets from the witness the name of the firm who do not approve of it, although their servants approve of it, I will produce them before your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN (to the witness): Do you hear that?—(A.) If this gentleman wants me to state the time and the place when a man was struck for not carrying out the work he wanted—

Q. No; let me ask you this: it has been suggested through the Court that you might kindly assist us in this respect: will you name the firm which at the present date has a foreman or manager who indulges in the practice of forcing?—(A.) I should like to point out to you that I told you that from after the great strike in 1911 it has become a deteriorated practice, and we have got the better of it now.

The CHAIRMAN: Then that brings it to a point. I am glad to have cleared it up. Thank you.

The witness withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: Now some of us have to go, so we will meet again at half-past ten on Wednesday, and take the solid block of three days together again next week.

Adjourned to Wednesday next at 10.30 o'clock.

SEVENTH DAY.

Wednesday, February 18th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Mr. L. BRAMMALL, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are a working docker at Birkenhead docks?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How many years have you been a docker?—(A.) 14½ years.

Q. Exactly what occupation are you engaged in now at the docks?—(A.) Generally a holdsman stevedore.

Q. Will you explain to his Lordship what a stevedore is?—(A.) A stevedore has to see to the correct and safe stowage of all cargo.

Q. Could you give us your earnings for 1914 and 1920?—(A.) £2 in 1914.

Q. What would they be in 1919?—(A.) £3 10s. a week.

Q. Would you be regarded as one of the sort of preference men who would get the work?—(A.) In a sense, yes.

Q. That is to say, the foremen take good care to look after their stevedores so as to retain them?—(A.) Yes.

Q. As against the extremely casual men on the quay?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You are in fairly close touch with the whole of the Mersey area, are you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you have made investigation into the actual cost of household commodities?—(A.) I have.

Mr. BEVIN: That will be found on Tables D.31 and D.32, your Lordship. (**Tables handed in.*)

The CHAIRMAN: What is D.32?

Mr. BEVIN: D.31 deals with the prices of commodities for 1914-20 and D.32 deals with articles of clothing, etc., for 1914-20, and other information is also given. (*To the Witness*): Should I be correct in saying that a docker cannot get the whole of his food at home in his own house?—(A.) If he is working a considerable distance from his home he has to resort to the refreshment rooms in the dock area.

Q. Supposing you went in for a dinner to a refreshment room where they cooked for thousands under the most economical circumstances, what would they charge you for a dinner which would be necessary for you to give you sustenance for the whole of the afternoon, say?—(A.) That is a very difficult question to answer. What they charge 1s. for is not half what you require.

Q. What you have to pay 1s. for cooked in great quantities to supply a big batch of men is not sufficient to sustain you for the afternoon?—(A.) No, I should want two dinners, and then I should not be full.

Q. You were in the Court the other day when Counsel for the other side submitted a budget, and I want to show you, in order that you may say whether or not you think it is sufficient for a day, the actual amount of vegetables cooked. I have not cooked the meat, but I am willing to cook the whole budget if necessary. Here you will see what Counsel proposes to sustain a docker on for a day.

(*Five plates of cabbage and potatoes and five plates of cheese produced.*)

That food is cooked in an ordinary workman's home. Your Lordship will notice in the budget that Counsel allowed 1s. per day for vegetables plus potatoes. That is divided into daily portions for five days. (*To the Witness*): You will see the amount of cabbage that you get: do you think it would add to domestic happiness if you went

home from the dock to a meal like that, and you were told by your wife that Counsel said there was sufficient calorific value in it to sustain you? What would be the result?—(A.) I think the dockers would emigrate in a body.

Q. Do you not think that would in any way sustain a docker? Do you think there are more vegetables, potatoes, and cabbage than would last him for one day, not for one week?—(A.) There is no question of thinking: I am positively sure that I would not sit down to it. There would be a row at our house, that is a certainty.

Q. Do you think there would be a strike at the dock if they attempted to enforce it?—(A.) There would be a row in the house first, and a strike at the dock afterwards.

Q. Sometimes you have to take cheese with you, do you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There is the amount allowed by Counsel correctly weighed for five people: do you think it is enough for five?—(A.) If I was there first I should have the lot myself; one would not be enough.

Mr. BEVIN: If I may interpose, my Lord, I should like to say that if you will take each weight in the budget if requisite I can give an ocular demonstration of the exact proportion of weight per man of each item in the budget, and it will work out in exactly the same proportion as these two items here.

The CHAIRMAN: I quite follow.

Mr. BEVIN (*to the witness*): You think the employers' request that you should give bigger output and their desire that there should be happiness and contentment cannot be achieved on a budget of this character?—(A.) Certainly it cannot.

Q. In your household experience is it a fact that just to keep going, without saving, you have to exhaust not only your wages, but every penny of extras or overtime and everything else—your whole income?—(A.) Yes. I have income from other work which I do in my spare time which brings me in a little in the week, and that assists in keeping the household together.

Q. That is to say, you have to get other sources of income in addition to your income as a docker in order to keep your home together?—(A.) I have.

Q. That you regard as very unsatisfactory?—(A.) Certainly, in so far as my brain is overtaxed by doing night work, such as being secretary to a very large Tontine Society in Birkenhead. I am working with my brain at nights and working with my muscles during the day, and one must bleed the other.

Mr. BEVIN: The other question I had to put was with regard to output, my Lord, but as that was ruled out the other day, I will not deal with that.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think it was ruled out.

Mr. BEVIN: Your Lordship said we should confine ourselves to the budget and wages.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not want to rule it out of the case.

Mr. BEVIN: No, I meant postponed.

The CHAIRMAN: I will not quite say that it is ruled out in that restricted sense. Just let me

* See Appendix No. 37.

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see what kind of question you were going to put, please.

Mr. BEVIN: I was going to ask the Witness this question: The Witness has been a member of various committees, and I was going to ask him whether, by virtue of his experience of those committees, he thought the conditions under which the men worked in Birkenhead should be improved.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, you are quite right; that will come later, and you can reserve your Witness for that. I thought you were dealing with the question of output as the result of this.

Mr. BEVIN: I will put a question to the Witness on that; I thought that was ruled out as well.

The CHAIRMAN: No, it is interlinked in this way, that, once you get established a certain datum of efficiency, you might expect a greater output. Do you follow that?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: The conditions for efficiency are not relevant, I think, until later.

Mr. BEVIN (to the Witness): Will you describe the class of work done in Birkenhead?—(A.) The class of work done in Birkenhead is principally export cargo.

The CHAIRMAN: What is your view of the employers' contention that the dockers do not handle the tonnage now that was handled in 1914?—(A.) If the employers make that contention, they themselves are to blame for a portion of it. In Birkenhead, which is principally an export port, ships have gone to sea half-loaded, leaving the sheds very much congested. Not being able to understand this, I looked about and enquired for a reason, and I came to the conclusion that the enormously increased freightage for the homeward cargoes might be part of the cause. The homeward cargoes pay best—

The CHAIRMAN: I think perhaps you are right, after all, Mr. Bevin; I think it will come in on the general question.

Mr. BEVIN: If your Lordship pleases.

The CHAIRMAN: I thought your question had reference to the efficiency produced in the work. In so far as it refers to the efficiency produced in the work it is relevant now, but if it is on general conditions, I think you had better postpone it.

Mr. BEVIN: Then I have only one more question to put to the Witness. (To the Witness): Do you find difficulty arises in the docks generally owing to the very general discontent that is alleged amongst the men with regard to their actual economic conditions?—(A.) Yes, I do believe that the discontent at the unsatisfactory conditions under which the dockers work generally has an effect on the output; and I also make this contention, that the employers themselves could assist materially in removing this unsatisfactory condition of affairs.

Q. Do you think that if the standard of life is increased, or at least the wherewithal to get more food is provided, it will help to produce contentment?—(A.) There is no question about it.

The CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Macassey.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I want just to know what the position is with regard to output, my Lord. From our standpoint, the question of output affects the economic ability to pay, and therefore we should be going into that question under this particular head of the Court's Inquiry. I take it we are both agreed, and your Lordship accepts the view that the question of output is material to this particular head, apart from conditions.

The CHAIRMAN: I am willing to have it either way. The only difficulty, I may tell you, from the point of view of the Court is this: there is a question still before us as to whether we should make an interim report upon wages or not, and it is quite clear, as you indicate in your inquiry, that we could not make that report unless we had this question of the ability of the trade to pay depending upon output also before us. Will you allow us to consider this for one moment?

(The members of the Court conferred together.)

The CHAIRMAN: The Court does not see its way at present to abandon the ruling which was given. It desires as much as possible to confine the inquiry at this stage to what I might call the budget inquiry; but that will have reference from your point of view to whether, whatever the budget be, the economic position must be looked at from the point of view of output, and you will have to consider that. However, when you tender evidence upon this part of the case, if you decide to tender it upon this part of the case, the Court will determine the point. At present you are entitled to take the Witness so far as he has gone, which is to this effect quite distinctly, that discontent with conditions, including notably the conditions as to receiving enough to go round in the home, has a detrimental effect upon output. You are entitled to test that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Now that your Lordship has given a ruling I think I had better tell the Court quite frankly what is in my mind. It is this, that if output remain at its present level, little or no increase of wages is possible. If it can be increased, as I think we can show it can be increased, substantial increases of wages are possible. Therefore, my Lord, in our view it was material for the Court to know in what way we suggest output can be increased so as to enable additional wages to be paid in respect of additional output. It is a most vital consideration in our view.

The CHAIRMAN: Meantime we will go on, and we shall determine your point when it is presented.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship pleases. Do I understand that I am entitled to put questions, bearing on this latter point for example, to the Witness?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. For instance, you are entitled to cross-examine on what he really means by discontent having an effect upon output; but, of course, your primary point, and all primary points with regard to this Witness, are the budget points.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: And I am to ask no questions, my Lord, at this stage with regard to overtime? It is difficult to separate that, of course.

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The CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is the punishment of the Court trying to accommodate itself to the convenience of all parties. It was thought that for the convenience of parties, and in view of a possible interim report, we might, as it were, split up the inquiry and put it into compartments, but we are finding difficulties at every stage on account of having endeavoured to accommodate the parties in that way. It may come to this after a day or two's enquiry, that we shall find we had better let the whole thing go on together and not consider the question of an interim report, though we have not given up hope of being able to assist the public by an interim report. Please keep that in your mind. The Witness has made a particular statement as to his view, which seems a very enlightened view, namely, that by removing discontent you can improve output at the ports. You can cross-examine on that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship pleases.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. At the Birkenhead side of the Liverpool docks the work to-day is entirely timework, is it not?—(A.) Day work.

Q. If piecework were introduced there you would expect greater earnings, would you not, than on a time basis?—(A.) Not necessarily.

Q. If piece prices were fixed at a fair level to give a piece worker more earnings in respect of his extra exertion than a time worker working with time exertion there would be an increase of wages, would there not?—(A.) That point is affected in rather a peculiar manner.

Q. You would expect that ordinarily?—(A.) No, I cannot say as to that. For instance, if you get the Birkenhead dockers or any other dockers to work piecework I have seen this happen occasionally, where a pieceworker has not been enjoying the best of health and has got in a gang, the other men all being physically fit men, that this man who happens to be not physically fit has got to keep pace with the others who are physically fit, and hence has not quite as long a life as the others. We, therefore, do not encourage it in Birkenhead at all.

Q. I agree that in the particular case you take of a man who is not physically fit working with other men who are physically fit it has that effect; but taking men who are ordinarily fit working on piecework they would expect higher earnings than if they worked on timework?—(A.) Yes, with that possible exception.

Q. Do you agree, therefore, that it would be a good thing for the port, for the men, and for the country, that piecework should be introduced in every possible case?—(A.) No, I cannot agree.

Q. What is your objection?—(A.) My objection is that I really hold a mandate for the opinion of the Birkenhead men, knowing them as I do, and they are bitterly opposed to piecework. They prefer daywork. They contend that if the employers treat them fairly they will get an improved result from their labour.

Q. Birkenhead does almost entirely export traffic, does it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And when you find export traffic being handled on a piecework basis elsewhere, does not that suggest to you that it is practicable at Birkenhead?—(A.) I still cannot give an answer: I have had very little experience of piecework, but I do know that on daywork if the dissatisfaction were removed they would give a fair and reasonable return as dayworkers.

Q. What are the reasons of the men on the Birkenhead side for working on timework, and so depriving themselves of the additional earnings that they would get if it were done on piecework?—(A.) Their reasons are, as I have stated; they contend that they can give a fair return a good return, on daywork, and they do not want to consider piecework?—(A.) Yes, it is physically punishing to them; it is unduly punishing.

Q. With respect to the figure which you gave for your earnings in 1920, for how many days a week is that?—(A.) I base my average on six months' earnings, and if I divide the six months' earnings by twenty-six I get the average weekly earnings.

Q. Does it include or exclude overtime?—(A.) That £3 10s. a week in 1920 includes extra earnings as holdsman stevedore; a holdsman stevedore gets 2s. a day more than the other hold men. There are two down in each hold.

Q. Let me put it in this way: When you took your total earnings for six months did you divide by the total number of working days in those six months, or the actual number of days that you worked?—(A.) I get fairly regular work. It is very seldom I am off work if there is work to be got. On the daywork alone I would not get that. That £3 10s. includes overtime.

Q. Are the men on the Birkenhead side agreeable to go to work on the other side?—(A.) In Liverpool?

Q. Yes.—(A.) The difficulty has of late been removed, but previous to 1918 there was very great difficulty. For instance, the Birkenhead men work until half-past ten for the half night: they would finish at five o'clock for the day, take an hour for tea, be back again at six, and work until half-past ten; but on the Liverpool side it had been customary for years, and the custom still prevails to-day, to work until nine o'clock without going to tea. Now with a Liverpool man going over to Birkenhead and working on the Birkenhead shifts very possibly there would be one or two Liverpool gangs working on a ship where there were five or six Birkenhead gangs, and those Liverpool gangs instead of going to tea would work right on and finish the half night at nine o'clock, while the Birkenhead men had to work for an hour and a-half after, having to cover up the hatches and do various little things that the Liverpool men did not have to do—

Q. Or would not do?—(A.) It caused a certain amount of feeling. Moreover, we have had two working books, one for each side of the river, principally as a result of Birkenhead being essentially an export port and Liverpool more of an import port and less of an export port. That had an effect on it.

Q. I am much obliged for your answer. It comes to this, that the men on the Birkenhead side insist upon different working conditions from the men on the Liverpool side?—(A.) No, that bone of contention is removed now, we are working under similar conditions to Liverpool, and working in complete harmony, and have been for two years.

Q. Do the men on the Birkenhead side now work on the White Book?—(A.) No.

Q. That is it.—The White Book contains a statement of the working conditions on the Liverpool side?—(A.) It differs, but I believe the majority of those points of difference between the White Book and the Birkenhead book have been removed since the National Award of the 44-hour week came in.

Q. We will put the two books in later. The Birkenhead book of working conditions differs sub-

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stantially from the Liverpool White Book; it does, does it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that you have the men who work on the two sides of the same port insisting on working on different sets of working conditions. That is so, is not it?—(A.) Yes, as I stated, the points of difference are very, very small now, and have been very, very small the last eighteen months.

Q. And there is this further difference that the White Book on the Liverpool side is agreed between the Unions and the Port Labour Employers, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But the Birkenhead Book is the Union Book, which is not agreed?—(A.) Oh, it is agreed.

Q. Is it agreed?—(A.) I was a member of the Joint Board in 1918, representing Birkenhead on the Joint Labour Committee, and with regard to any grievance that I brought to the notice of the Joint Board Sir Alfred always gave a ruling according to our Birkenhead Book as distinct from Liverpool.

Q. The two books are distinct. I only just want to ask you one question to make it quite clear: these samples that have been put in before the Court represent, do they, the total amount of the commodities included in the budget which the employers have put in divided by one-seventh; that is to say, you take one-seventh of the total amount for each day.

Mr. BEVIN: I should like to point out that Mr. Brammall has not arranged these, it was my doing, and I simply asked him if in his opinion it was enough.

The WITNESS: I had never seen them before.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am not going to ask you about anything you do not know.

Re-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I would like to ask you what is the wage for a quay man in Birkenhead?—(A.) 12s. 2d. per day.

Q. A man on the quay?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is 6d. more than Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Assuming that the Court gives 16s. 0d. for a quay man, as apart from a man aboard a ship, now will those men make common cause and base the 16s. 0d. right through Liverpool and Birkenhead?—(A.) I do not quite follow you.

Q. With regard to the present quay rate, take the porters?—(A.) There are no porters at Birkenhead; the ship men and the quay men at Birkenhead are on the same basis—12s. 2d. a day.

Q. That is owing to its being an export port?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is the ship rate in Liverpool, 12s. 2d., is not it?—(A.) 12s. 2d.

Q. It is 12s. 2d. in Birkenhead now?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that on the daily rate there will be common cause?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And the different conditions are only based on the overtime?—(A.) There is a difference in the overtime with regard to stevedores.

Q. But only on the overtime?—(A.) Yes, and only with regard to the stevedores.

Q. When they ask you to go to Liverpool to work, owing to the congestion, do they pay travelling time, and do they pay you your fares, and all the rest of it?—(A.) They have done.

Q. How much an hour do they pay for travelling time to go across?—(A.) They give you half an hour what we call walking time. For instance, if you are supposed now to get on a stand at 7.45, you are allowed half an hour; that makes it a quarter past eight; that is walking time.

Q. So you are only paid your daily pay, but you are allowed to start on a ship at a quarter past eight, instead of a quarter to eight. There is no extra money really?—(A.) That is so.

Q. With regard to the men working at Birkenhead, a good many of those men would go home to meals?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If you are working at Liverpool, you would have to buy your meal?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That would be an added expense?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is there anything extra to help you with that, if you go across?—(A.) Nothing whatever.

Q. They ask you to go across and bear the extra expense without making any allowance?—(A.) Yes, with a few exceptions; sometimes certain master-stevedores gave us a copper—a penny or twopence—to cross the river.

Q. To cross the ferry?—(A.) Yes, but not always.

Q. Assuming that the value of this meal came to so much—9d. I have allowed in the budget, as you noticed, for a meal—and you had to go to a coffee house and spend a shilling for half a meal, there would be no allowance because of the extra expense of having the food away from home?—(A.) No allowance at all, none whatever.

Q. Have the employers ever suggested there should be?—(A.) No, not to my knowledge.

Q. They have not put down any proposals to the men to try and help out the congestion on the other side by making some arrangement which would help the men if they obliged them by going across?—(A.) Not to my knowledge.

Q. So that they want the congestion dealt with, and they want the labour without any extra expense of any kind to themselves?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is not the proposition at all.

Mr. BEVIN: I am asking the witness a question; I did not interrupt you, Sir Lynden Macassey.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: But we want to have the facts accurately.

Mr. BEVIN: We want to get the facts.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: And I want to have the facts, too.

Mr. BEVIN: Very good.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Then we are both agreed.

Mr. BEVIN: Then you can put your employers in the box and ascertain them. I want to know whether the men have been paid anything by the employers for the added expense to assist the commerce of Liverpool when he has been asked to go from his home to an added distance, and the witness says: No, he has never received it, and does not know of it having been made. That is the fact I want to elicit.

Q. Reference to piecework has been made. Is the export trade at Birkenhead of a general cargo character?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Were the employers, the merchants I refer to, before the war pretty jealous of the method of stowing?—(A.) Particularly jealous.

Q. Was the opposition to piecework by merchants before the war because of possible damage to cargo?—(A.) I believe that was one of the principal objections.

Q. They were very anxious about their stowage, were not they?—(A.) Yes, they always were.

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Q. Do you think it will add to the safety of the ship and to this variety of cargo if there are rush methods in stowage?—(A.) It does not act at all; they would not get safe stowage, nor would they get correct stowage in this way: that certain classes of cargo have got to be stowed in different ways. We will take one instance, if you are stowing cases of glass, if they were being paid piecework, and there was no one to watch them, they would tumble that glass in any way. Now, there is only one recognised method, so far as Liverpool is concerned, of stowing glass: it must be stowed on its edge athwart the ship, not fore and aft. It is very difficult to stow glass; a narrow case of glass will be put athwart the ship, and someone may have to stand by that case of glass after you have stowed it for fear it might tilt; it is only narrow, and it might possibly stand four or five feet high. If they were paid piece rates rather than paid day rates, that cargo would not be handled as it ought to be; the stowage would not be safe.

Q. And, in fact, there has been considerable opposition to piecework on those conditions in the past?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And if the employers saved a little on output, but lost it in damage, there would be no gain, would there?—(A.) There would be a loss, I should say.

Q. Did you find the rush methods during the war cause a lot of waste?—(A.) Yes, a lot of waste—waste of time.

Q. And waste in the commodities?—(A.) And waste of the commodities by damage.

Q. During the war, when shipowners and everybody else were anxious to turn round their ships, there was a good deal of commodities wasted as a result of the rush methods?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In your judgment that is not a good thing to keep down prices in the future?—(A.) No, it is not.

Q. Counsel has asked you a question with regard to piecework, and you have referred to the physically unfit who would not get a chance?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You have been a member of the Joint Board of Liverpool, have not you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have the employers ever asked you to adopt piecework?—(A.) No.

Q. Never?—(A.) Never.

Q. This is the first you have heard of it?—(A.) The first I have heard of it.

Q. They have never come forward with any concrete scheme that, if you adopt piecework, they would make provision for the physically unfit they were about to discard, have they?—(A.) No; they have always barred that. On piecework, I might mention, my Lord, there are some yards that will send you very large slings, slings that are really too large for a gang of four men to handle. For instance, I might quote numbers of instances where they have sent a ton down in a sling; there are two stevedores, each with three men, on each side of the ship; that is, there are eight men below, and they have sent a sling down with perhaps a ton, and we have not got a third of that sling away before the other stevedore on the other side of the ship has also got a sling of one ton. Now the result of that is that the job is entirely stopped. The suggestion of our Union, and our Branch Committee in particular, is that you would get a greater amount of cargo in a ship's hold in a given time by sending reasonable slings, slings that could be handled and stowed quickly and got rid of.

The CHAIRMAN: That is conditions.

Mr. BEVIN: That is going a little bit beyond what I asked. That is all I want to ask this witness.

The CHAIRMAN: Tell me, please, just one thing: you yourself have not had experience of piecework, have you?—(A.) No.

Q. Of course, piecework requires a good deal of knowledge in its application?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I gather from you that piecework would not be suitable when you are dealing with cases requiring special handling?—(A.) It would not be practicable.

Q. On the other hand, that being granted, you would not be surprised to find that people who have been accustomed to it in other ports rather prefer piecework in the hope of making a little more out of it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Piecework is a question requiring the application of proper conditions to certain sets of men?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You would not lay down any hard-and-fast rule for it?—(A.) No.

Q. Tell me about Birkenhead and Liverpool. I do not want to provoke any jealousy, but you can get across for a penny or twopence, cannot you?—(A.) I think it is 1½d. now, my Lord.

Q. How long does this little voyage take you?—(A.) Seven or eight minutes; but they generally use the Underground, it is quicker.

Q. I had forgotten that.—(A.) It is a half-penny more, I believe, but it is quicker.

Q. The arrangement made, in fact, is, you may come if you like, but you get half an hour off, so to speak, for that?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You would be far away from your dinner, as Mr. Bevin pointed out?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do the Birkenhead men go home for dinner?—(A.) Anyone residing within a distance of ten minutes' walk from their work would go.

Q. What do the others do?—(A.) They go to the refreshment rooms found in various parts of the dock area.

Q. Have they any canteen on the dock?—(A.) Yes, we have various canteens.

Q. Are they pretty well done?—(A.) No, I do not admire them myself personally.

Q. You think there is room for improvement in that particular?—(A.) Yes; and there is also an air of mystery in other matters connected with them.

Q. These will come in under conditions. Just one word about this wage. You told us about the £2, your earnings in 1914. How many hours a day did you work in those days?—(A.) We worked from 7 a.m. until 5—that is nine hours.

Q. Turn it into the week, how many hours?—(A.) You could not regulate that. The average number of men would also get an average of two half-nights per week in 1914, instead of three.

Q. Can you put a figure on it?—(A.) I have arrived at my earnings. I keep a full record of my wages. I may work during the week for three master stevedores or shipowners. I keep a record of what I earn with each shipowner, and the number of my tally, and total those up when I am looking for statistics, and that is how I arrived at my figures.

Q. Cannot you help the Court on this one particular? When you are comparing wages in the port of Birkenhead in 1914, are you also able to compare the hours? What were the regulation hours for a workman in full employment in Birkenhead in 1914? We know it is 44 hours now. What was it then?—(A.) He was working nine hours a day.

Q. That is 54?—(A.) At 5s. a day.

Q. Now he is working eight hours a day?—(A.)

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I have always maintained that we are working more than eight hours. We have to be on the stand.

Q. I know; apart from that?—(A.) Eight hours actual work.

Q. For how much a day?—(A.) 12s. 2d. per day.

Q. When you speak of these sums that you draw, you are taking what you actually draw and putting it all in, overtime and all?—(A.) Yes; that includes, of course, the extra for stevedores.

Q. Coming back for a moment to this crossing the river, there is no crossing of the river required if there is work at Birkenhead?—(A.) No.

Q. And if there is no work at Birkenhead, all you want to carry it is to get a better arrangement, then you will get the work transferred without grumbling?—(A.) Exactly, my Lord.

Q. Can you now finally answer this question: In the £3 10s. of 1919 and the £2 of 1914, how much overtime have you put into that on the average?—(A.) I should say about three half-nights per week; but then it does not follow that we get every day.

Q. That is just it. I want to see how the relative figures apply, supposing you had been without overtime but always fully employed?—(A.) For daywork?

Q. Yes.—(A.) It would be rather less than that.

Q. Then help us about that, because we value your evidence as being direct. Assume in 1914 you had your daily employment full and regular, what would you have made?—(A.) Six days at 5s., that would be 30s. Now, I have allowed 10s. for the overtime; we used to get in those days 4s. per half-night.

Q. Now?—(A.) No, in 1914.

Q. And now what do you get?—(A.) In 1919 and the present time £3 10s. is my average wage; but I must point out that for a little while I was laid up through an accident at the docks. I got my shoulder broken, and the average may be a little more, but very, very little more.

Q. Now the question I am putting to you is, assuming you to be regularly and fully employed, and earning your full day wage, but excluding overtime, what would you earn now?—(A.) 66s. 11d.; £3 6s. 11d.

Q. The difference between 1914 and 1920 is the difference between £1 10s. and £3 6s. 11d.?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I just wanted to bring it to a point. I am much obliged to you.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I wonder would your Lordship put this question to the Witness: I understood the Witness to say he was a stower; that carries, I think, an additional rate which I do not think is included in the figures the Witness has given to your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you hear that question?—(A.) Yes; that includes it—that includes the earnings as a holdsman stevedore; but I might draw Sir Lynden's attention to this, that the holdsman stevedore, when working overtime at Birkenhead, does not get the same rate of money that a holdsman stevedore does at Liverpool.

Q. The figure which you have mentioned of £3 6s. 11d. takes no notice of the extra allowance to stevedores?—(A.) The stevedore's holdsman is not 30s. for 1914, you must add 2s. a day to that. I gave you the basic flat rate.

Q. You are a stevedore, and it is your case I was investigating. Now try it again?—(A.) In

1914 a stevedore's earnings would be 42s. per week.

Q. That is £2 2s.; and then in 1920?—(A.) At 12s.

Q. That would be £3 18s. 11d.?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. That brings out the point?—(A.) Yes, that is the point, my Lord.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Mr. ALBERT WALTER BUCKNER, Sworn.

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are the Clerk to the Tilbury Urban District Council?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Would it be correct to state that 90 per cent. of the labouring male population are engaged in dock work of one kind or another?—(A.) Nearer 95 per cent.

Q. I want to ask you as to whether it is a fact that a very large number of men working at Tilbury have to travel from London and other parts daily?—(A.) They travel distances from 3 to 20 miles a day, about 6,000 men.

Q. Nearly 6,000 men travel 3 to 20 miles a day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In consequence of that, is there a big demand upon your Council for houses to be built at Tilbury?—(A.) Yes; we keep a register of applicants, and we have already had nearly 1,500 applicants apply.

Q. In your present housing arrangements at Tilbury, is there a fairly large number of defective houses?—(A.) I should say a very large number. According to the recent survey that we made for the Ministry of Health, there are 650 seriously defective houses that need to be either demolished or substantially reconstructed, but we are at present prevented from dealing with them by the lack of other accommodation. We consider that 250 of these require to be entirely demolished, as being unfit for human habitation.

Q. Has your Council prepared a scheme of housing of dockers at Tilbury, and submitted it to the Government and others?—(A.) We have submitted a scheme for 1,520 houses, and that scheme has actually been approved, and we are now getting tenders with a view to placing contracts.

Q. What are the conditions associated with that scheme with regard to rent?—(A.) The conditions that apply to all the assisted housing schemes. In the regulations that were issued by the Ministry of Health, which is called the Assisted Housing Schemes Regulations of 1919, which is numbered 65736, and dated December 31st last, the principle laid down is that the rents are to be the best reasonably obtainable, having regard to these four points: (1) The rents prevailing in the district for houses of the working classes; (2) the class of tenant that is to be housed; (3) any increase allowed by the Increase of Rent Acts for the time being in force; and (4) any superiority of conditions or amenity provided in the new scheme. That is the general principle, but in October last a general Housing Memorandum, No. 8, Order 65227, was issued by the Ministry of Health, and on page 3, in clauses 20 and 21, the assumption is made that a normal level of prices will be reached in 1927, and that that level will be two-thirds of the present cost.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like you to read Section 20?—(A.) "The economic level of rent will depend upon the post-war normal level of prices in the building trade. It will be impossible at the present time to forecast with any degree of assur-

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ance what that level will be, but it is necessary for the purpose of determination that guiding rules should be laid down; the Ministry have therefore provisionally provided the following assumptions as guiding rules for the determination of rents:—

(1) That a normal level of prices will be reached in 1927, and (2) That the level of prices will then be two-thirds of the present level. The rules are, of course, liable to revision when the trend of prices becomes more clearly defined." Then Clause 21: "What the Ministry ask of the Local Authorities is that they should use every endeavour to obtain as early as possible a rent which would give a fair economic return on a capital outlay equivalent to two-thirds of the actual cost at which the houses were built," and that has this effect: the pre-war cost of a six-roomed house was about £240, and the rent 8s. 0d. per week. I say 8s. 0d. because that is the average prevailing in Grays and Tilbury. If I took Tilbury alone, I should have to say 9s. 0d., but I have put the average at 8s. 0d. The present cost of a six-roomed house on the scale laid down in the Manual issued by the Ministry of Health is £800 or upwards. If you take two-thirds of £800, it is £534, and the proportionate rent would have to be 17s. 9d. per week. In these new regulations, which I have mentioned, in December, the actual two-thirds question is not repeated, but Dr. Addison is apparently holding to the principle, according to the Report of his Submission to the House of Commons last night, because he is suggesting a rent probably will be required of £1 per week, and that wages must proportionately be increased. That was his submission before, to a Conference.

Q. That was in the House of Commons last night, the 17th February?—(A.) Last night; it is in the "Daily Telegraph" this morning.

Mr. BEVIN: You have read the budget proposed by Counsel the other day, in which a rent of 6s. 6d. is proposed to cover the working-class position for the future. What do you think of that proposition?—(A.) I have not read the budget, but if a rent of 6s. 6d. is proposed, well, it is altogether inadequate, especially if this contention is going to be maintained.

Q. Do you think that even a rent of that character will be maintained for the old property?—(A.) Undoubtedly not; already, I might say that under the Increase of Rents Act, owing to the increase of rates—and those will be larger—11d. per week has gone on in our district.

Q. Since the war there has been 11d. per week gone on the rent in spite of the Rent Restriction Act, owing to the increase of rates?—(A.) Yes, owing to the increase of rates.

Q. You have seen the proposal for an average rent of 10s. 0d. per week in the budget I proposed. Do you think that is adequate or inadequate?—(A.) I think you have underestimated it.

Mr. BEVIN: There is one point I should like to ask, if you will permit this witness to digress, it relates somewhat to conditions, but he is an outside witness, and if I could get the answer without prejudice to anybody else, I should be glad. It is just as to the sanitary conditions of the docks; but perhaps the witness would be good enough to come again at a later date, if I asked him.

The WITNESS: I hope you will ask it now, if possible, because I am extremely busy, and very pressed for time.

Mr. BEVIN: The question I was going to ask, if I may be regarded as asking it at a later date, if I may put it in that way—

The CHAIRMAN: You will not be prejudiced; it is manifest that Mr. Buckner is specially engaged. Just put your question, and we will see.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to ask you with regard to the approaches to the dock, and the sanitary conditions at Tilbury, whether or not it is the fact that your Council have lodged complaints to the Port Authority, to the Ministry of Health, and to others, pointing out the necessity of improvements, and the really economic improvements that would be brought about if the changes were made?—(A.) That is so. We have made specific complaints to the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Health, the Port of London Authority, and the Port Sanitary Authorities, both as regards the inadequate foot-bridge approaches, which are causing the present congestion both to men who go off by train, and to men in the district, and I have had an interview with a special representative from the Ministry of Transport upon the matter recently; we have also made very strong complaints upon the deplorable sanitary administration in the docks, and in my Council's opinion the health of the workers, and of the resident community generally, is very seriously jeopardised by the dangerous conditions in which ships carrying infection have been allowed to come into the docks; and then there is the question of the latrines, urinals, and other public conveniences. In our opinion they are not kept at all satisfactorily. We have made definite complaints about them. We have made a definite suggestion for the provision of a screen to prevent blockages. There is a waste of public money owing to blockages occurring in the sewers of the docks, which could be prevented if a screen after the kind which we already have in another part of the docks was placed there. We have got no response.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. In regard to the last question you raised, about infection on board ships, what Department deals with that?—(A.) The Port Sanitary Authority deals with infection on board ships.

Q. There are so many Government Departments now, what Government Department is that connected with?—(A.) The Ministry of Health.

Q. You realise it is nothing to do with the employers who are here?—(A.) No, not as regards ships; as regards the urinals, latrines, and those things, yes.

Q. Who is the local Sanitary Authority with regard to those things?—(A.) The Port Sanitary Authority are the supervising Sanitary Authority for that purpose, but there is the onus upon the Port of London Authority to provide them, just the same as there is upon an ordinary builder, and it is the Port of London Authority who do generally supervise and who are responsible for the cleaning and condition of those, and it is to the Port of London Authority that we have made our submission.

Q. Again, as regards latrines, and things of that sort, that is the Port Sanitary Authority?—(A.) That is so, but it does not alter the fact, and we have taken it up with the Port Sanitary Authority.

Q. So long as we know who are responsible for the facts, that is all we want to know; in fact, here it is the Port Sanitary Authority?—(A.) As the supervising Authority.

Q. The powers of the Port Sanitary Authority, of course, as you know, are governed by General Statute?—(A.) That is so, by General Statutes.

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and by an Order that you have to get from the Ministry of Health on matters of that kind which we are going into.

Q. Just as regards the housing; there are two schemes, are there not, under which houses are built; the one is called the Local Authority's scheme, and the other is known as the Private Scheme?—(A.) Yes, the Public Utility Scheme, and then there is assistance granted to even private persons.

Q. It is not under the Local Authorities' schemes that houses are being built to-day, is it?—(A.) I do not agree with you; I say that that is not the truth, because take Tilbury alone, there is no private enterprise, no Public Utility Scheme, and the workers would be stranded for ever apparently if they were dependent on other than the Local Authority. It is the Local Authority who are handling the question, and we are going to provide the 1,520 houses.

Q. How many have the Local Authority built up to date?—(A.) They have built 150 already, since the war; that was on the pre-war scheme. They are now getting the tenders for the others, for the 1,520.

Q. Taking it generally, and looking at the facts, the houses are being built to-day, are they not, by the Public Utility Companies and by private people with the benefit of the subsidies?—(A.) Not alone; Dr. Addison has already stated in the House the large number that have been already erected, or are in course of erection, and the still very much larger number—I have not the statistics, I am not in charge of that Department, but I can assure you it is a very large number that have got to the stage at which we are; there is a good deal of spade-work to be done, we have now done that spade-work, and we have begun to go forward, and we are going to go forward.

Q. What rents are you going to charge for your houses at Tilbury?—(A.) That is a question which will depend upon the Ministry of Health, and, if necessary, upon the Tribunal to whom the matter may have to be referred. It depends, also, upon the actual amounts that the contracts come out at. We have not fixed the rents, they will be fixed in connection with the Ministry of Health when the contracts are definitely settled.

Q. At the moment we do not know what those rents will be?—(A.) We have this principle laid down; that is the only point.

Q. That is as far as you can get. Is your proposal, then, that the houses which are to be let to persons engaged in dock labour at Tilbury are to be charged at a rent of—what was it you mentioned; was it £1 per week or 17s. 9d. per week? Is that your proposal?—(A.) I did not propose it; I simply said that the proportionate charge on two-thirds of the increased cost would be 17s. 9d. It is simple proportion; if it is 8s. on £240, it is 17s. 9d. on £534.

Q. I want to get down to the facts. Is 17s. 9d. the rent which you propose to charge in respect of houses used by the dock workers at Tilbury?—(A.) I have already told you that that question must await the decision which has yet to come. I cannot tell the amount, which has not yet been fixed. It depends upon the cost, and it depends upon the decision of the Ministry or of the Tribunal. We have not fixed them.

Q. Then I am afraid if the Court want further information they must apply to the Ministry of Health.—(A.) I am giving you the position that we have in the official regulations and the memorandum, and you can read Dr. Addison's own statement, wherein he refers to an amount of about £1 per week.

Q. They are six-roomed houses which you are speaking of, are they not?—(A.) That is what I was basing it on.

Q. A six-roomed house?—(A.) Yes. If you had larger houses, of course, the on-cost would be higher, naturally.

Q. Are the houses which you propose to be six-roomed houses?—(A.) No, there will be some more. There will be eight-roomed houses.

Q. Is there anything smaller than a six-roomed house, or is that the average which you take?—(A.) There will be a few which have been specially applied for, and therefore we have got the consent, which will have five rooms in. They are really left over from our previous scheme; but they will have three bedrooms. They are certain ones for people such as an old couple or people like that, who have applied for a few without parlour. The bulk will be six rooms, and upwards.

Mr. BEVIN: I have nothing further to ask.

The CHAIRMAN: You have mentioned 250 houses which are really very bad and have to be demolished?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are these houses occupied by dockers and their families?—(A.) Yes, occupied by members of the working class employed in the docks in one form or the other.

Q. What is the accommodation in those places?—(A.) Some are let in half houses—in flats; some are houses of which the bottom part is not occupied; you can float a bath about on the water which stands at the bottom at times, and at other times when the water is dried out you can see frogs jumping about on the floor.

Q. What is the accommodation?—(A.) The accommodation I should say would be about six rooms. In the majority of cases it would be six rooms. Some of those with the flats are eight-roomed houses, let in two sections.

Q. I understand that you have chosen six rooms because it seems to be the idea in Government circles that that is the proper accommodation?—(A.) And further, we inquired of our applicants; we asked them to give us certain particulars, and we based our application for particular types of houses upon the expressions of opinion given by the applicants in their applications.

Q. Tell me what the rooms are.—(A.) A six-roomed house, for instance, would have a parlour, a living-room, a scullery, and three bedrooms.

Q. By a living-room you mean a kitchen-living-room?—(A.) Yes; and then attached to the scullery we have a small bath recess in most cases.

Q. What is the size of those bedrooms?—(A.) I have not got that—that is the architect's duty—but they accord with the Ministry's manual. They are a larger size than the ordinary cottages which were previously provided.

Q. We do not want to go into too much detail about that; tell me this. You have mentioned that two-thirds of the actual cost will be £240?—(A.) No, two-thirds of the actual cost would be £534. £240 was the previous cost.

Q. Two-thirds of the £800 ————(A.) ————Would be £534.

Q. Who pays the other one-third?—(A.) The State.

Q. So that the State starts the thing by giving a contribution of 33½ per cent?—(A.) Yes, they subsidise it. As a matter of fact in all local authorities' assisted schemes there is a guarantee that their loss, provided that they comply with the conditions, shall not exceed the amount of a penny rate for the district.

Q. That being the subsidy, this is how Dr.

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Addison puts it. See what you say to this. "Local authorities had come to him to ask what rents should be charged, and he believed"—this is his statement in the House of Commons—"that in every case he had told them to charge more rent than they were proposing to charge. The idea was to take off one-third as excess war costs"—that is the one-third which reduces your £800 to £534?—(A.) That is so.

Q. — "and that in 1927 there should be an economic rent on the remainder."—(A.) Yes.

Q. That economic rent would be 17s. 9d. in your case?—(A.) That is so.

Q. See what he says about that: "This meant that the economic rent should not be less at the end of that time than about £1 a week." That should be 17s. 9d., should it?—(A.) It depends upon the actual cost. Some houses are costing more than £800.

Q. On your £800 figure that would be 17s. 9d.?—(A.) On the 8s. rent, but if you base it on Tilbury actually at the present time, and our 9s. rent, it would be £1.

Q. "That, of course," says Dr. Addison, "was an enormous increase, and was a grave matter, but they had to face it, and he was not afraid to face it. Rents for houses had got to be higher for better houses having better gardens"; and then he says this: "A man's wages should be high enough to enable him to pay a proper rent, and he was not going to be a party to subsidising low rents"; that is to say, the State subsidy comes at the building end?—(A.) Yes.

Q. After that economic rules will be applied for a fair return?—(A.) That is his expressed opinion.

Q. And the people who pay that fair return according to Dr. Addison's view are the people who are to have wages to enable them to do it?—(A.) That is so.

Q. About these 250 old houses which you think really ought to be demolished, what is the rent paid for them just now?—(A.) There it depends upon the type. For instance, there is 5s. 3d. and 5s. 9d. for a half house, plus this extra which they have added on for the rates. Then there are some houses which are let at 7s. or 8s., I think, in the Church Road, which are bad. They are really all varying rents, because they are in different parts of the locality.

Q. 7s. or 8s. is the rent?—(A.) Yes.

Q. For houses which ought to be out of existence if proper conditions were observed?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Do not take the half house, but take the ordinary 7s. or 8s. rented houses. Just tell us in one sentence why they ought to be demolished?—(A.) The actual decision, of course, was made by our medical officer—our Public Health Department.

Q. Describe the houses.—(A.) I understand that these are the causes of objection: That there are no proper damp courses, and that they have very faulty and leaky roofs, and that the structure generally is bad. I may say this, that our soil is of a marshy character, and that in order to secure your houses being satisfactory you should have a good foundation. There were many of them run up by the Liberator Society and other speculative concerns, who slung the houses up to get a profit, and some of them are falling towards each other and leaning; and if they were not leaning on each other they would fall; and some are shored up with very large timbers. I wish you could go and see some of them. You would appreciate the conditions the Ministry of Health have sent their representatives down specially to

view, and it was because of that that we had our scheme sanctioned.

Mr. BEN TILLET: I suppose they are kept up by the paper on the wall?—(A.) "United we stand, divided we fall."

Mr. BEVIN: I want now to call Mr. Henry R. Aldridge.

MR. HENRY R. ALDRIDGE, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN

Q. You are the Secretary of the National Housing and Town Planning Council?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will you tell the Court the constitution of your Association and its affiliations?—(A.) The constitution of the Council which I have the honour to serve is that of a grouping, on strictly non-party lines, of organisations, representatives of local authorities, technicians, architects, surveyors, and town planners; of employers' associations; of workmen's associations; and of men and women who take a philanthropic interest in the housing of the people.

Q. Do you make investigations over the whole country?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have regional councils?—(A.) We have as subscribing members upwards of one thousand local authorities, and we have regional district executive committees appointed by a ballot of those representatives of local authorities.

Q. Are you in close touch with local authorities in the preparation of details in their housing schemes?—(A.) During the last two years while housing schemes have been in preparation we have had conferences with an aggregate attendance of nearly two thousand delegates to discuss the actual details of the new housing schemes.

Q. Are you also a member of the National Advisory Council to the Ministry of Health?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have seen in the Press the budget suggested by leading Counsel giving 6s. 6d. per week for rent. Having regard to the houses to be built under the Government scheme, what is your view of that figure as an estimate?—(A.) If I may speak very frankly, if the figures in the other part of the budget are as absurd, the budget is not worth the paper it is written on.

Q. Can you give the Court the benefit of your experience as to the proposed rents for houses under the new Government Scheme over the whole country, or some typical cases?—(A.) I have heard the evidence of the previous Witness, and I find it extremely difficult to give the kind of answer which the Court would wish me to give, because at the present moment the housing policy of the Government is just at the stage in which the houses are being built. At the moment I venture to estimate that by the end of March 40,000 houses will be in building, and certainly by the end of August we may have well on to 100,000 houses built; but local authorities throughout the country are greatly concerned with regard to the rents which they ought to charge. They realise that the rents cannot be as low as the rents for existing houses, only they have to consider the needs of the poorer members of the community, many of them pensioners, and they are unwilling to accept the dictum of Dr. Addison that they must be put up to a very high level. At the moment my Council is negotiating with the Ministry of Health in regard to that very difficult question, but, speaking

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generally, I think you may take it that the interpretation of the four points in the schedule which Mr. Buckner placed before you, really governs the matter—if I may say so, incidentally the speech which expresses the view of Dr. Addison does not govern the matter—

The CHAIRMAN: You mean the schedule of December 31?—(A.) Yes, the schedule B. of December 31. That governs the matter, because the administration of the Act is governed by the financial regulations.

Mr. BEVIN: Is that Statutory Rules and Orders No. 2047?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: We will hand in copies of that. We will call that D. 33, I think. (**The same were handed in.*)—(A.) I would point out, too, that in points of dispute between the Ministry of Health and local authorities, questions in dispute as to the amount of rent are not decided by the Minister, but by a Tribunal set up under the same financial regulations, with two representatives of the local authorities, with two representatives of the Ministry, and an independent chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that by statute?—(A.) It is under those financial regulations which are now on the table of the House of Commons.

Q. Can we get that document?—(A.) I should be very pleased to put it in.

Q. We would like that, if you please.—(A.) With pleasure.

Q. It is a public document, is it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will you kindly give the Secretary that. Are these financial regulations adopted by the Commons?—(A.) The financial regulations are at the moment on the table of the House for the statutory twenty-one days.

Mr. BEVIN: What is the general accommodation provided under the different housing authorities' schemes, taking typical areas where docks are to be found?—(A.) The local authorities throughout the country take the view unanimously that, with few exceptions, the houses to be built shall be three-bedroomed houses, and shall be self-contained houses, with gardens. The number of houses with less than three bedrooms will not, I believe, be greater than 10 per cent. of the whole. There will be a certain number of four-bedroomed houses; but as the normal type of the new half-million houses you may take the house to be one with three bedrooms, in 50 per cent. of cases with a parlour, and all cases with a good living room, a scullery, and a bath, either in the scullery or in a separate bathroom. The surroundings are secured by the decision of the Government not to lend the money except where a limitation on new land is placed of twelve houses per acre, in order to secure allotment land and a garden.

Q. You have seen the proposal made in the budget which I submitted of 10s. per week, taking the whole country, for dock areas. What do you think of that estimate?—(A.) My reply must be qualified by the statement which I made earlier—that at the moment the question of rent is in suspense. Your Lordship has ordered a copy of Hansard for last night. I listened to the debate, and in that debate, as you will realise when you read it, Dr. Addison mentioned several figures. In no case did the figures mentioned by Dr. Addison involve a rent of less than 10s. per week, and in view of the probable permanent increase in the cost of building, I think we must recognise in this country that the rent to be paid for the urban

workman's house will not be below 10s. per week. I regard quite frankly—and I may say I speak without any kind of prejudice at all one way or the other; I am here, if I may say so, as a specialist—the figure of Mr. Bevin is under rather than over the mark.

Q. As a student of sociology, is it your opinion that there must be a definite attempt made to clear the congested areas round dock land, where people have been in the habit of living, and to remove them further out?—(A.) If I may attempt to answer that, not as a student of sociology, but as the secretary of the National Housing and Town Planning Council, I may say that Parliament has ruled under the new Act of July of last year that surveys must be made by all local authorities of their area from time to time.

The CHAIRMAN: What Act is that?—(A.) The Act of July, 1919.

Q. How does it call itself?—(A.) The Housing and Town Planning Act, 1919. By Section 1 of that Act the specific duty is placed on every local authority of making a survey from time to time and preparing schemes with the definite object of putting their areas right, and it is now recognised that within, say, the next twenty years local authorities will be compelled by Parliament to clear every insanitary area and get their towns free from any kind of blemish in that way.

Mr. BEVIN: You will have noted in the budget which I submitted to the Court an item of £1 5s. for clothing, etc., which included provision for household development, such as bedding and things of that character, and extensions of the workman's home. Do you regard that as an under-estimate or an over-estimate as regards furniture and other things?—(A.) With regard to clothing I speak only as an ordinary citizen, and I will not venture to put in any figures, but I would point out that in a very curious way in all these budgets—and I think I might criticise even Mr. Bevin's budget from that point of view—there is always a disregard of the fact that the rent for the shell of the house is not really the rent for the house, and that when we get, as we must get, a decent standard of home life, the furniture of the home, the plenishings of the home, the furniture of the table, the things which make a decent home for a decent family, must be regarded; and these things, as those of us who do earn more than the £6 per week included in the budget now realise to our cost, do mean a heavy weekly expense for replacement and other matters of that kind. I cannot answer the question with regard to clothing—I had better keep clear of things which I do not know well—but I would plead that that should be taken into account.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. In the course of your negotiations have you obtained any figures as to existing rents?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And are they in a form in which they could be put into the Court without my asking you detailed questions?—(A.) With pleasure.

Q. Have you got them there?—(A.) No, I have not them here, but if you will ask me questions I think I can give you the information you wish.

Q. My question is whether you have made any observations or inquiries as to existing rents.—(A.) May I reply in this way—

Q. It is a very short question. I mean, has your Council investigated in any particular districts,

* See Appendix No. 38.

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

and if so what, the existing rents?—(A.) The inquiries which we have made have been based on a Government return given, I think, in 1907, which took London as the index area.

Q. I know about that return, but has your Council made any independent investigations as to existing rents?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are the results of those investigations in a handy form?—(A.) I can place them in the hands of the Court within the next two or three days, with pleasure.

Q. Over what districts have your investigations extended?—(A.) The whole country.

Q. You have obtained, have you, what the rents are of houses of all classes; or is it any particular class of house?—(A.) The class of houses to which we have given special attention have been houses in which the working classes live.

Q. That is exactly what I should like to see. Therefore, I think if you would be good enough to let me have, and let the Court have too, particulars of those figures it may be of assistance.—(A.) With pleasure.

Q. Does the area of the investigation cover, for example, a place like Liverpool and a place like Preston?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Newcastle, Glasgow, and so forth?—(A.) Yes. We made a number of investigations in regard to the slum conditions for a whole series of towns, and—but I think I had better wait and answer questions.

Q. You are talking about clearing insanitary areas?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That, of course, one knows of, but apart from that, have you made anything which might be taken to be a comprehensive investigation into existing rents of houses inhabited by what you call the working classes in different towns?—(A.) I am sorry; I am afraid I have rather misunderstood. We have taken the Government Report—we have checked it from our experience, but we have taken the Government Report—as being practically the last word at the time it was taken. The inquiries to which I referred are special inquiries taken for several points throughout the country in order to deal more especially with, for example, the homes in which the dockers, or some of them, live in Liverpool.

Q. The last inquiry was in 1912, was it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you found that reasonably accurate?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: It was in 1907, was it not?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think the witness will probably agree that it was 1912?—(A.) That was the last inquiry. A series of Board of Trade inquiries have been made, my Lord, from time to time under order of Parliament, and Sir Lynden Macassey is quite correct.

Q. 1912 was the last, was it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you found that reasonably accurate?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I mean your experience confirmed the figures given by the Board of Trade?—(A.) Yes. May I add to that that I hope Sir Lynden Macassey will trace the relation of the Rent and Mortgage Interest Act to those particular figures?

Q. I did not catch what you said?—(A.) I hope you will allow me at the same time to put in a statement with regard to the effect of the Rent and Mortgage Interest Act related to those figures, and the rises in rates, which are quite germane to the point.

Q. Certainly. We desire to be quite fair. My first question to you was whether you had found the investigation made by the Board of Trade

Committee in 1912 to be reasonably accurate, and you said you did. Now you say that those figures have been modified in some respect by some other causes which you mention now. What are those causes which you say modify those figures?—(A.) Under the Rent and Mortgage Interest Act which was passed in the early part of last year provision is made for an increase in rent, to come into operation within 12 months after the official close of the war. Dr. Addison last night announced in the House of Commons that, together with the Lord Chancellor, he had set up a Committee to inquire into the operation of the Rent and Mortgage Interest Act. He was unable to give any kind of forecast of the legislation, but he told the House of Commons that they must anticipate a very substantial increase in the rents of all existing houses in order to meet, amongst other things, contingencies for repairs. It is impossible to make any kind of estimate, but many of us believe that that increase will certainly not be less than 25 or 30 per cent. over and above the 10 per cent. on existing houses.

Q. Dr. Addison has prophesied so many things. What is your view?—(A.) My view is, that as the repairs cost twice or thrice what they did before, Parliament will be bound in fairness to existing house-owners, to permit a fairly substantial rise in rent. Two-thirds of the working-class property of this country is held on mortgage.

Q. Let me put this question to you, because you have brought me up to the point which I wanted to put; that would operate more or less as a *pro rata* increase on the different existing rents?—(A.) The percentage would be based on the actual rent paid. Yes.

Q. So that if you take the different levels of rents in various towns as ascertained in 1912, the causes which you have mentioned would not tend to equalise all those rents, but to lift them proportionately higher. Would not that be the effect of it?—(A.) It would, as far as one factor is concerned, but the factor of rising rates as an additional factor is dependent, not on a percentage, but on the actual rates levied in the town, and under the Rent and Mortgage Interest Act the owner of the house has a right to demand for every increment in actual rates paid an increment in rent. We are looking with great seriousness at the rise in rates in towns which mean for education alone over a whole county 7d. in the £.

Q. That is quite true, but taking the first thing, repairs and things of that sort, they operate to increase, by a percentage of the rent, the existing rents?—(A.) Parliament will probably deal with it by means of a percentage in order to cover various items of a similar kind.

Q. Perhaps you would let us have those figures which you have got?—(A.) With pleasure.

The CHAIRMAN: In any schemes for new houses are there any schemes for flatted houses?—(A.) A very small proportion. There are a certain number North of the Border, but, speaking generally for England and Wales, the great mass of houses are to be self-contained houses with gardens. I might say, incidentally, that the view taken by my Council with regard to the prospects of success in regard to this scheme is that the results when they are made known to workmen will be recognised to be of very great value. We are building up a new type of house which really will bring the contentment which we all want into the homes of the people.

Q. I understand that, but I want to ask you with reference particularly to Scotland, in which, as you know there is a system of tenement houses

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—flats; not shoddy houses, but, on the contrary, the houses are described as being built for all eternity. They are built either of granite or of good freestone; there are no brick houses at all. These are built on the flatted system. Do I understand you to say that those are out of date?—(A.) I am rather in an embarrassing position; I am Joint Secretary to a Scottish Committee. We have a Committee for local authorities of Scotland, and I realise that in Scotland the great merits of the cottage are not fully realised, and for some time to come I believe the flatted cottage will be a sort of half-way house between the tenement and the cottage. May I say at once that I believe in Scotland the flatted cottage, with a limitation of the number of houses to the acre, will be very largely built by Scottish local authorities, and I have seen many most interesting plans for their provision.

Q. I wanted to ask you about this. Though it is a flatted house system, it does not necessarily deprive them of gardens. They have their allotted gardens in shares, and that is worked out family by family, knowing its rights. I want to ask you this—do not mind what your nationality is—do you prefer your own English system to that?—(A.) The Dundee City Council are preparing at the moment a most admirable scheme for Scotland of the kind of house with a separate garden, with amenities which will be very warmly welcomed; but from experience not only in England and Scotland, but throughout the whole of Europe, I have come to the conclusion that the best house for the workman which the world knows is the English garden suburb cottage at its best. I think that is easily the best type I have seen.

Q. In expressing that opinion, of course, we attach great value to anything you say, but would you say that that is, speaking generally, the view of the Council you represent.—(A.) Yes, with this reservation, that our Scottish Committee, having Home Rule, take their own view, and as Secretary I have to put my view but take their decision.

Q. And, of course, from their point of view, and with the Dundee examples before you, you could not condemn any of those as lacking in the elements of fresh air or sufficient land, etc.; it comes to be a question of what is mostly the local practice?—(A.) May I go further and say that the type of house to which you refer when compared with the block tenement built fifty years ago is almost like coming from a tunnel into the bright sunlight.

Q. That is to say, a tenement house, because it is a tenement house, is not necessarily condemned, but what you condemn is building a tenement house as part of a speculative builder's enterprise. Building a tenement house as part of a speculative builder's enterprise, with no provision for garden or any modern amenities, is practically what you condemn?—(A.) The real difficulty that many of us feel is in regard to the accommodation. The result of the inquiries that we have made in Scotland, and in some of the large towns is that where you have a limited number of bedrooms, you cannot give the room for a family to live as they should, and whilst I, with the obstinacy of an Englishman, prefer our type on that ground, I recognise very completely the great advance that the best type of flatted cottage means over the old type.

Q. I have no views, and if I had I would not mention what they are, but the point of our inquiry is on the question of cost. Have you considered whether it would be a cheaper method to adopt, as in Scotland, that flatted cottage system, or whether it would be cheaper to adopt your system?—(A.) Given the same amount of accommodation in the flatted cottage, there is curiously little difference.

Q. That is the point that I wanted to get at?—(A.) May I add just a word with regard to cost? I heard the evidence of the earlier witness. The question of cost is perplexing us very greatly to-day, and we are coming to a recognition that the hope that in 1927 prices may swing to a post-war normal figure of two-thirds will be condemned to disappointment. We are taking the view that the cost of building is permanently up, and that the figures revealed in the Government report of 1912 will be hopelessly inadequate as any index whatever to the cost. They are wildly out of date from the point of view of any validity.

Q. In any view, of course, it is a forecast one way or another?—(A.) Quite.

Q. You said to Sir Lynden Macassey that you would hand in certain returns. As a Court, the kind of returns we want are returns applicable to seaports. You know what that means; that means crowded population and sometimes insanitary areas. That is what we have to deal with. Would you be so very kind as to quote us some returns as to how the working classes live in ports?—(A.) Any effort that I can make will be at your service. Might I incidentally mention, if you will allow me to put them in, with the permission of the Liverpool City Council, the invaluable series of housing reports of the Liverpool City Council will be of inestimable value for consideration. I will telegraph to the Town Clerk and endeavour to put them in.

Q. You might give the authority of this Court and say that we shall be indebted to them if they will help you. But that is only one thing, and probably it is on much too large a scale. We want something definite with regard to the seaports of the country to give us some sort of guide?—(A.) Might I add this one point with regard to the scope of the enquiry? Quite recently, Mr. Seeborn Rowntree, whose budget has been mentioned, has drawn attention to the case of the dockers at Antwerp before the war who lived on a small farm or small holding outside the town under conditions which meant health to the children. If it is possible to get Mr. Rowntree, whose name has been mentioned so often, to deal with that aspect, I am sure his status is such, and his knowledge so great, that it would be most helpful. The point is this, if I might venture to put it, that there is a determination amongst housing reformers that the docker shall not live in the slums of the town; he shall be a normal member of the human family with a proper garden, living under right conditions, and not subservient to the industry, but have modifications in regard to travelling and in regard to times of transport made in order to enable him to live a normal life. I put that not so much from the point of view of the man but from the point of view of the children, because I have seen and I am familiar with the conditions in the Scotland Road district of Liverpool. My heart has bled many a time to see the conditions under which the people who are compelled to live near the docks lived with their children and their wife.

(The witness withdrew.)

JAMES GARMSTON, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are the District Secretary of the Dockers' Union at Bristol?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Which covers Avonmouth and Portishead?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have had to conduct the negotiations

largely for the whole of the waterside interest of that city?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I want to ask you a question, first of all, with regard to the willingness of the men to make common cause in a settlement. Is it a fact that when the 44-hour agreement was made, if it had been interpreted literally, the men at the old City Dock at Bristol would have received 14s. 11d. per day, and at Avonmouth 12s. 4d.?—(A.) Yes. That was due to the fact that at Avonmouth they worked from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m., whereas at Bristol they worked from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Q. Did the men, in the interpretation and the settlement of that agreement, make common cause between the two ports, and settle for a round sum of 14s. 0d.?—(A.) Yes. At Avonmouth the men had what is known as half an hour's allowance (as a matter of fact, it totalled 2½ hours during the week), which the men gave up, and for which payment was added. The amounts of money between the two ports brought their wages, when divided, somewhere near about 13s. 10d. or 13s. 10½d., and because of little concessions an agreement was arrived at whereby each set of men should have 14s. 0d. per day.

Q. They made common cause?—(A.) Yes.

Q. A few men had less than they would have been literally entitled to, and some had more?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You have heard during the progress of this enquiry that a minimum wage for piece-workers is impracticable. Have you had the experience of negotiating a minimum wage for piece-workers in the grain trade at Bristol?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it true that, prior to the fixing of that minimum wage agreement, there were considerable delays and disputes?—(A.) I should say that even on normal cargoes of grain there were what we term disputes, in the nature of claims for payment, every day.

Q. Owing to the lack of facilities and delay for trucks, and nobody's business, so to speak?—(A.) It so happened, especially in the early stages of the war, that Bristol merchants had an old time Charter by which they could practically hold up a grain ship when they desired to do so, and have no consideration at all for the men.

Q. Does the agreement provide for 14s. 0d. per day at the moment for a certain output?—(A.) That is so.

Q. For 1600 bushels?—(A.) The men are allowed 14s. 0d. per day for 1600 bushels of grain and extras for over and above.

Q. If they do not have the facilities to give the output of 1600 bushels, they are guaranteed the 14s. 0d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If this 16s. 0d. was granted, that automatically goes to 16s. 0d.?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not quite sure that I follow that.

Mr. BEVIN: The present arrangement is 14s. 0d. for 1600 bushels or less, and the witness says that if this 16s. 0d. is granted, that 14s. 0d. becomes 16s. 0d. (*To the Witness*): When the men have given an output of 1600 bushels they then get, according to the class of grain, so much per 100 bushels over and above what they have done?—(A.) Yes, over and above the 1600 bushels.

Q. It is commonly called a day-work-and-extra principle?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Has output increased since the agreement?—(A.) I should say that the output has increased nearly 50 per cent.

Q. Was the figure given by the employers during the negotiations that hand discharge of grain

was 2,000 bushels on the average per day per gang?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And is the return now nearly 3,000?—(A.) The information that I have been able to gather from our men who have kept the records works out, for five days in a week, that there is an average output of 3,000 bushels.

Q. What does that represent in tons on the average per gang?—(A.) If you were taking the heaviest class of grain, that is maize and wheat, 3,000 bushels would represent nearly 90 tons.

Q. I want to put it the other way. I want to get the increase. Taking light and heavy, would the figure represent about 25 tons per day per gang?—(A.) I should think that would be a very fair average, taking the light with the heavy grain, because the lightest grain in the port is oats, and the majority of the grain handled is heavy grain, such as maize, wheat, and barley.

Q. Do you find the men, when the employers fail to give facilities, immediately complain that they want more work?—(A.) Yes, even under the guaranteed minimum, when the men are now in possession of their 14s. a day as a minimum, if there are no facilities for the men earning above that, the men very often come to us and ask us to make further claims even above the minimum.

Q. Then the minimum wage in the grain trade has not restricted output?—(A.) Certainly not.

Q. I want to ask you some questions now with regard to piecework in other parts of the dock. You were connected with the Dockers' Union in 1910?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you remember a strike at Newport?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Was that strike because the men wanted to retain piece-work and the employers insisted upon day-work?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And were the ships diverted to Bristol because it was a day-work port?—Yes.

Q. Have the employers consistently refused on general cargo to consider piece-work at Avonmouth?—(A.) Yes, and in addition to general cargo, deals as well.

Q. Is it a fact that during the war, at the request of the Government, the officials of the Union at Bristol consulted the men with a view to adopting piece-work in order to assist the country in the turn round of ships?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Did the middle-men, who are stevedores, together with the Dock Authority, stubbornly resist any consideration of it?—(A.) Yes, because they said it was impracticable to do it. I think they had obvious reasons for it.

Q. They thought it would reveal how much they were getting over the tonnage rate?—(A.) I think that was the reason.

Q. With reference to overtime, you have heard it stated in Court that the 4 hours guarantee at night is impracticable. Have you the guaranteed 4 hours overtime in operation at Bristol and Avonmouth?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you are paid for meal hours at night?—(A.) Day and night.

Q. And if a man is ordered to work after 8.30 at Avonmouth or 9 o'clock at Bristol is he guaranteed a full night?—(A.) Yes, in both cases.

Q. Would it be true to say that the employers themselves at Bristol have agreed that this has made a marked improvement in their dealing with the merchants by forcing the merchants to send their goods in the day instead of at night?—(A.) When I have met the employers individually their general comment has been that it has greatly increased output and given greater satisfaction.

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Q. In the coastal service Bristol, since this arrangement, has about the quickest turn round in the country I believe?—(A.) From what experience I have had of other ports I should say Yes.

Q. Because the merchant, having to pay these guaranteed overtime rates, has sent his goods during the day instead of delaying them till late at night?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Now turning to the cost of living. You live in a typical area where the general body of dock workers in Bristol live?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is the type of man who would be regularly following the dock?—(A.) That is so.

Q. What is the rent of your house?—(A.) 7s. 3d. per week.

Q. It is an ordinary jerry-built 6-roomed house, I believe?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I mean it is not in a fashionable suburb?—(A.) No.

Q. Do you find that among the dockers in your district there is severe competition to get houses near the edges of the city where they can get allotments?—(A.) Yes. As a matter of fact there have been about 8 of the slum areas in Bristol where the houses have been taken down, and they have made playgrounds of the places where the houses were, and the men have migrated to the outskirts, and I am pleased to say there is considerable improvement in the men's physique and the children's as the result of it.

Q. Have you found in your experience in trying to improve the organisation at the Dock Gate considerable opposition until the period of the War?—(A.) Yes, we have, and it is very regrettable to say so. We have often made suggestions for improvements, which have never been taken any consideration of.

Q. Turning to a suggestion for an improvement, is it a fact that in grain handling at Bristol in some cases they still use the mediæval method of lifting a sack of grain on a man's shoulder?—(A.) Yes. I have brought one with me from Avonmouth Dock.

Q. I should like that to be handed in to my Lord. I want to illustrate my point of labour assisting machinery. If they had to do that on these rations it would be heavy work. This is what is called by the dockers, a billy, I believe?—(A.) A handy billy.

(Mr. Bevin illustrated the method of work to the Court.)

Q. They fill the sack on a floor which is lower than the truck-door?—(A.) Yes, from the bulk grain. It is taken away from the busheller and tied up and trucked off the scale and placed on to the billy, and two men, one at each end, lift that sack of grain, which, as I say, in the case of a sack of wheat, would be over 2½ cwt. and a sack of maize about the same weight. Two men, all day long, sometimes all the week, would be lifting sacks of grain on to a man's back for him to place either on to a railway wagon or a carter's vehicle.

Q. If the platform was put level with the truck, or if there was a conveyance, much more work could be done with much greater ease?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it a fact that the men have made a request to the Dock Authority to so arrange their sheds as to abolish this work?—(A.) They have gone so far as to say that they will not work that now unless they get extra help, because it is murdering the men.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you conclude your examination, I think you went off on one point. You spoke about the men making common cause.

How do you apply that to the present case? Are you wishing the witness to apply that to the present case?

Mr. BEVIN: I was going to elucidate that further between port and port with another witness, if you will permit me.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. There is not much of the grain handled in the way you say by billies, is there?—(A.) The whole of it is handled by the billy that is placed upon the ground floor. What the percentage is I could not tell you.

Q. But it is a small percentage of the whole?—(A.) I should not say a small percentage.

Q. The great bulk of the grain is not handled in the way you describe?—(A.) Not the great bulk, because in the building you may have four floors with bulk grain, and you will have one ground floor with bulk grain.

Q. In point of fact, during the war a good deal of reconstruction has been gone into to do away with this method of handling grain by billies?—(A.) I cannot say that, with the present warehouse accommodation.

Q. Take the Ministry of Shipping sheds; it is all done away with there?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is because the construction of the sheds enabled that to be overcome?—(A.) That is so.

Q. What you call pilers have been introduced?—(A.) Yes.

Q. This particular business which you speak of is confined to one or two sheds, not the Ministry of Shipping sheds; is not that so?—(A.)—Not one or two sheds, but to many sheds, both at Bristol, Avonmouth, and Portishead.

Q. I am speaking at the moment of Avonmouth?—(A.) I want to convince you about Portishead. Portishead is practically a grain port; there is nothing else handled excepting an occasional cargo of timber, and the majority of the grain at Portishead is handled by the billy.

Q. That is to say, from warehouse into truck?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And only from warehouse into truck?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What do you suggest ought to be done to avoid that portion of the grain which is still handled by billy being handled by billy?—(A.) I think the space ought to be occupied by other classes of goods which would not necessitate the use of the billy, and that the grain should be placed on other floors whereby it could come down the shoots and do away with that brutal kind of work.

Q. Tell me precisely what your proposal is. Suppose you were in charge of it, what would you do?

Mr. BEVIN: I rather object to my witnesses being asked to give the benefit of their brains to the employers while representation is denied them. I would advise my witness not to answer.

The CHAIRMAN: The cross-examination is quite legitimate.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will quite fairly say what my point is. A criticism has been made of this particular section of work, and I want the witness to say what ought to be done.

The CHAIRMAN: I think it is a fair question.

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The WITNESS: Abolish putting grain on the ground floor.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Where would you put it?—(A.) On other floors, and use that ground floor space for other cargo which would not necessitate the handling of the billy. That can be done.

Q. The trouble is a grain ship is a grain ship, and there is no other cargo there?—There is plenty of other cargo about.

Q. Are you suggesting that they should take a cargo from some other place and put it into this particular shed where it does not want to go?—(A.) I do suggest that, because when they were built the person who designed the shed had no consideration for the human being, and I say it is about time it was altered.

Q. Now we know what your suggestion is: that cargo should be taken from elsewhere and put on the ground floor, and grain should only be put on the first and second and third floors?—(A.) Yes, on the other floors on the level of the trucks.

Q. And then handled after that, how?—(A.) In the easiest possible manner, which is done in, as I say, at least 60 or 70 per cent. of the grain handled at Avonmouth and Portishead and Bristol.

Q. It has to be put in sacks. Where would you bag it?—(A.) The stuff would be trucked on the level, if you did not have any grain on the ground floor.

Q. It goes into the trucks in sacks, does it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How is the grain to come down from the floors into the truck—by the shoot?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And it is to be bagged upstairs?—(A.) No, it is in bulk upstairs, and it comes down in the shoots on the floor level with the trucks.

Q. Now I know what you want. I want to ask you about piecework. You have found, have you not, that the introduction of piecework at Bristol has been attended with increased output?—(A.) It is not the introduction of piecework. The principle had already been established for years.

Q. You agree it is a good principle?—(A.) I cannot say I do.

Q. You are against it, are you?—(A.) I cannot say I am against it, but I cannot say it is a good principle, because I see the results of it by the cripples that are about the dockside.

Q. I gather from what you say that it has led to very considerably increased output?—(A.) It has led to very considerably increased output as a result of the establishment of the minimum.

Q. When was the minimum first established?—(A.) The present minimum quite recently.

Q. Take the first minimum, when was it established?—(A.) On some classes of cargo it has been established during the war—in the early stages of the war—but in the majority of cases of grain, last May.

Q. Could you tell me, if it is not taxing your memory too much, about what date was the first minimum established in respect of the first kind of grain?—(A.) I should say in the early stages of 1915, on cotton seed.

Q. Take grain: can you give me the date?—(A.) I should say somewhere about two years ago.

Q. Do you say output went up then?—(A.) Output has gone up since.

Q. But after the establishment of the minimum, do you say output went up?—(A.) Output has gone up since last May.

Q. My question is that when the minimum was first established—I put it to you quite bluntly—the output went down?—(A.) No.

Q. You think it went up?—(A.) Yes, I do.

because the minimum then was less than it is now.

Q. Then the minimum was reduced, was it not, after the National settlement?—(A.) Yes, it was reduced.

Q. And it was not until the minimum was reduced that output went up?—(A.) That the price went up. The number of bushels was reduced, but the price went up.

Q. I say that it was after the minimum was reduced that the output went up?—(A.) After the number of bushels was reduced.

Q. It comes to the same thing?—(A.) But the shillings were increased.

Re-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. The minimum that was in operation on grain prior to May was a minimum that was only forced, was it not, by the men ship by ship, with all sorts of minimums fixed?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There was no regular minimum of 14s. 0d. established until May?—(A.) No, there were individual settlements on each ship.

Q. As a result of disputes?—(A.) As a result of disputes.

Q. Which arose mainly through lack of organisation on the part of employers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is this the position, that a piece-worker would go to the dock, the employer had no liability other than the piece price, and the men would, in all possibility, be standing about for hours?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The man would then say: "I have wasted my time; now I must be paid a minimum day's work"?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Did that lead to the establishment of a general minimum by agreement?—(A.) I should think that would be the greatest factor in it.

Q. When you arrived at the minimum you reduced the minimum from 2400 bushels, which yielded at that time 14s. 0d., to 1600 bushels, which yielded 14s. 0d., and made the minimum 14s. 0d., and then the extras over 1600?—(A.) That is so, because the employers themselves came to us and said they would rather have a less minimum, and have an extra ½d. per 100 bushels over and above the minimum, because they thought they would get a greater output.

Q. That is to say, you increased the amount but reduced the amount the man had to do for it?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And that automatically led to a greater amount being done over the minimum?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And your experience has been that it has forced organisation on the part of the employers?—(A.) Yes, because the employers complained so often of the many claims coming in that they wanted something definitely established to obviate the necessity of these things being put in ship by ship and hatch by hatch.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the size of the gang?—(A.) It all depends.

Q. You have mentioned a rise from 1,600 bushels to 3,000 bushels. What is the size of the gang?—(A.) In the grain gang the ports vary but in Bristol there would be three bushellers in the whole of the ship—it is now four, under a new revision within the last few months—and the you would have a corresponding number of loaders—that is the man who carries the sack from the scale. They are employed in accordance with distance.

Q. You have cited the instance of the billies?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

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Q. Is that at Bristol?—(A.) Yes, Bristol port.

Q. Who is the authority at Bristol?—(A.) The Bristol Docks Committee of the Bristol Corporation.

Q. Is there any representation directly of the working men engaged in the port on that authority?—(A.) Not through the organisation, but through the City Council. There are Labour representatives upon the Docks Committee, but they are appointed by the City Council and not directly through the organisation.

Q. It is a municipal dock?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I was going to ask you if you thought that the increase of workmen might perhaps have the advantage of bringing forward better appliances, such as you have given?—(A.) Suggestions are made very often, not only by the officials of the organisation, but by the men themselves who actually have to do the work, and I feel confident that if those suggestions were put into operation it would do away with a large number of disputes and complaints which arise from time to time in connection with handling the cargo.

Q. And produce a greater sense of contentment?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And increase the output?—(A.) And increase the output.

Q. I want to ask you on that point frankly, and I want you to be quite frank with me, do you find in your experience that the men are against labour-saving appliances?—(A.) It so happens that we had an experience of that kind in Bristol. The Dock Authorities some years ago attempted to introduce what is known as a blower—that is, a machine for getting the bulk grain out of the ship. The men raised a strong objection to it for this reason, that there is already mechanical appliances at Avonmouth for getting out grain, and the custom of the authorities has been to place the machine in the best bulk of grain under the best of conditions and place the men in the hold under the worst of conditions. In addition to that, when the machine has been put into the best of the work the men have been expected to go back and clear up the mess which the elevator could not clear up, which they strongly objected to do. Now, there was no consideration shown for the workman. All the suggestions for improvements which had come from our own side were ignored. The men said, because there was no consideration of them in the industry, they strongly opposed the introduction of a new blower, mainly on human grounds; but, secondly, it was pointed out to the dock authorities that, instead of having a new machine instituted in Avonmouth Dock, if they modernised their warehouses and built more warehouses, what we term the brutal work of dock life would be done away with.

Q. I am putting this to you because Mr. Bevin made a very enlightening statement that the men wanted to assist machinery and not to take the place of machinery. You agree to that, do you not?—(A.) Yes, I agree.

Q. On this question, which you have illustrated by the blower, if there was a greater representation of men on the Board, which managed things and proposed to introduce machinery, do you think that the men would resist the introduction of labour-saving appliances?—(A.) I do not; I believe if they were taken into consideration that that would be the greatest factor and help in the port in the introduction of modernising conditions and ideals.

Q. Of course, from your experience and knowledge you will agree that the introduction of that, if it can be done with the approval of all parties,

necessarily raises the status of the workmen employed?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. It necessarily raises the status of the workman and necessarily, at least according to all expectation, increases the output of the port.—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. And would reflect itself in a general improvement all round.—(A.) All round.

(The witness withdrew.)

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Mr. BEVIN: I want now to call Mr. Arthur Barnard, from Avonmouth.

ARTHUR BARNARD, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are the Dockers' Union representative at Avonmouth?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have heard it stated this morning that the Ministry of Shipping sheds had been fitted with machinery, being a new shed, which precluded the use of what we describe as the cornporter's Billy?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think you need labour this further than the point that you have already put—namely, that pressure upon the governing authority might, and in all probability would, have the result of considerable alterations being made.

Mr. BEVIN: The point I wanted to make, if your Lordship will permit me, is this: the point was endeavoured to be brought out by Counsel that it was only the old sheds, but this is a shed which has been built within the last three years, and there was no consideration really given to the modern inventions and appliances which were in use before that, but it is still left for the men to use this old method of working. If you accept that I do not want to ask any further question.

The CHAIRMAN: It will not take very long: put your question.

Mr. BEVIN (*to the witness*): I want you to describe exactly how they built that shed?—(A.) It was built during the war by the Ministry of Shipping, and it is termed the Ministry of Shipping shed. It was built to take away a good deal of the surplus of grain, because the old sheds were congested. This shed was built on the level of the ground. In the past the Corporation had done something towards putting platforms somewhat raised from the ground by means of which men could truck stuff into the railway wagons, but this particular shed, which is a very large shed, is built on the ground level, with the result that the stuff has to be carried, if not taken in any other way, taken over the Billy and carried on planks into the trucks, which would be somewhere about 3 or 4 feet high to the bed of the truck. The arrangements made to take it up by mechanical labour are that there is one piece of machinery that they call a piler, which was originally bought, I believe, to try to pile bags of flour in the first instance, but was afterwards used to lift stuff, so that all the men could take it back high into the trucks. But, as against this one piler there would probably have to be four or five other gangs, probably more, and may be less, which would have to take the stuff over the Billy, because one piler could only serve one gang, and there would often be as many as eight or nine gangs working out of the same shed.

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Q. So there is a good deal of work which is being done in a comparatively new shed by the old hand method without the labour-assisting machinery?—(A.) Yes, and we objected—when I say “we” I mean the Avonmouth branch of the Dockers’ Union. We sent a letter to the Bristol Corporation in the early days of the shed being built objecting to this shed, inasmuch as the men considered that they were going back to the very old days of having sheds on the level of the floor instead of back high.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. With regard to this particular shed it was not put up, was it, by the Bristol Corporation, but by the Royal Commission on Wheat Supplies?

The CHAIRMAN: By the Ministry of Shipping, he said.—(A.) It is called the Ministry of Shipping shed.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the phrase he used.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You appreciate that it was not put up by the Bristol Corporation.—(A.) That is so, and we objected to the Corporation taking it over from the Ministry of Shipping; that is why we raised the objection.

Q.—It was put up by the Ministry of Shipping as a purely emergency measure, was it not?—(A.) I believe so, but it is still being used.

The CHAIRMAN: Was the shed on the ground floor on all sides?—(A.) Yes, right through.

Q. Your view was, that this was no doubt an emergency measure, but there was some error of judgment somewhere?—(A.) That is so; no practical experience was used in building it. At the same time as this shed was built one was put up by the Government very close to it, and that was put up with the floor the level of the truck.

Q. And that was right?—(A.) That was quite right.

(The witness withdrew.)

MR. W. PAUL, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are the District Secretary of the Dockers’ Union at Southampton?—(A.) I am.

Q. Southampton is a dock owned by a railway company?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The liners and the shipping principally running there would be a similar class of shipping, for passenger traffic, at any rate, to that which runs to Liverpool?—(A.) Yes, it would—the same lines.

Q. When the companies transferred their shipping to Southampton did they, in fact, adopt the rate per hour which was being paid at Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Exactly the same minimum?—(A.) Precisely the same.

Q. And the rates at the moment are near about the same as at Liverpool, are they not?—(A.) The minimum rate is exactly the same.

Q. That is 11s. 8d.?—(A.) The shipmen’s rate is 4d. a day higher.

Q. 4d. a day higher than Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They have been influenced by the Liverpool owners who have transferred their shipping to Southampton?—(A.) All the time.

Q. When you have been negotiating they have

always insisted, have they not, that you should not go above Liverpool?—(A.) The trouble in Southampton during negotiations for lifting wages has been the fact that we are in competition with Liverpool, and Liverpool is paying a rate precisely the same as our own. That has been the difficulty all the time.

Q. And they have argued that if Liverpool wages went up they would have no objection to Southampton wages going up?—(A.) I have been left to infer that without having it definitely stated.

Q. Is the work at Southampton extremely casual?—(A.) Very casual. It is primarily a passenger port.

Q. Would you average the earnings at Southampton at more than three days a week, taking the year through?—(A.) Certainly not.

Q. With regard to the men employed by the South-Western Railway Company at Southampton, who have to walk to the extreme end of the dock, about how far is it?—(A.) It takes roughly about twenty to twenty-five minutes to walk.

Q. There is no travelling facility, is there?—(A.) None at all.

Q. If there were travelling facilities it would save a good deal of time?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. The men often leave the ship, do they not, and when it is raining they are wet through before they leave the dock premises?—(A.) Yes, very often.

Q. Is it the fact that the sickness and death-rate in Southampton have been particularly high among the dockers?—(A.) Very high indeed.

Q. Has it been your experience that the men for fear of losing their ship have at times worked as many as twenty-four and thirty-six hours right off?—(A.) I have known men work forty hours right off.

Q. Because they were afraid if they ceased and went to sleep that they would not be again engaged on that ship?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And they have worked forty hours right off?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: That is all I desire to ask the Witness about Southampton.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Can you tell me this: What is the line of separation between the dock workers proper and the railwaymen at the Southampton docks?—(A.) I should like to understand what you mean by your question.

Q. That is quite fair, and I will tell you what I mean; I mean the line of separation between the men who would be covered by this arrangement and the men who are covered by the railway arrangement as to wages.—(A.) There are a number of men who until recently have been covered by the awards given to the railwaymen, but who have just been transferred—when I say “just” I mean within the last few months—and they should have had their transfer wages and conditions a considerable time ago. That has been agreed and settled. Those men are all permanent men engaged in handling cargo, either in the sheds or on the quay—the grain men—and that would be all.

Q. Are those who work the traffic about the docks and who shunt traffic railwaymen or dockmen?—(A.) They are railwaymen.

Q. Do the railwaymen work the traffic down the dock side?—(A.) In Southampton docks we have a special set of men who take the goods from the railway companies’ permanent way, which is part of the dock area, and bring them into the docks.

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Q. Where do they take the traffic over from the railwaymen?—(A.) Immediately across the road outside the dock gates.

Q. They are exchange sidings, are they not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In those exchange sidings are there two sets of men working on the traffic, the railwaymen and also the dockmen?—(A.) Oh! dear, no.

Q. How is the work divided between the two?—(A.) The railway trucks bring it down into the transit shed, and the dockworkers take charge of it.

Q. Is there any agreement or arrangement which says what men are to be under the railway arrangement and what men are to be under this proposed arrangement here?—(A.) The whole of the men who handle cargo of any description are transport workers. That has been agreed upon.

Q. When you say agreed upon, what do you mean?—(A.) Agreed upon between ourselves and the railway company.

Q. That has been done nationally?—(A.) That has been done nationally.

Q. Is the arrangement in every port the same, do you know?—(A.) I only speak for Southampton. I only know that at all ports where they were railway-owned docks the same discussions and negotiations took place, but what were the actual arrangements at the other ports I cannot say.

Q. Is the agreement in a printed document or anything that we could find details in?—(A.) You could find it. I have the agreement in my own office. I have not got it here, but you could get it also from the London and South-Western Railway Company.

Sir LYNDEN MACANSEY: Very well, then, we will ask them.

The CHAIRMAN (to the Witness): You said there is a large amount of casual labour.—(A.) A very large amount.

Q. Can you tell us the fringe of the casual labour compared with the substance of the regular labour?—(A.) We have a staff of men in the docks who are permanently engaged by the dock company, and there are no other people who employ any permanent men. They have a staff of men of, roughly, about 200, and the total number looking for work and getting it sometimes would be somewhere around 3,000. There are 200 permanent men, and there would be approximately 300 to 400 men who would have first preference; the others are extremely casual.

Q. Amounting to towards 3,000?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Where is that casual labour supplied from?—(A.) I do not quite follow your question.

Q. I mean, supposing they fall out of work in any other line of business, do they go down to the docks?—(A.) Yes, and that has been one of the difficulties at Southampton. We endeavoured to introduce the registration scheme some twelve months ago.

Q. That is what I have been working up to. Tell us about that?—(A.) That was in order to try to prevent the man who is unemployed in another trade coming to the docks, because the docks have always attracted the unemployed men in other trades. The failure of the scheme has been due to the fact that the principal employers have not carried out their agreement. They entered into an agreement with the Port Labour Committee that they would employ first the men holding the registration tally issued by the Ministry of Labour, but the principal employers, the Dock Company, have not carried out that agreement, and as a consequence a very large number of men during the last four or five months; or perhaps

longer, who have been out of employment owing to the depression in trade have been attracted to the docks, and made work much more casual than it would otherwise have been.

Q. You would be in favour of registration?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. Of course, you must acknowledge, as I suppose we all must, that Southampton was a port which was particularly overwhelmed and overturned in consequence of war necessities?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And that may have to some extent postponed any regulation?—(A.) I do not think so.

Q. May I put this to you: Was this large casual fringe as large before the war as it is now?—(A.) Before the war it much worse than it is now. I have known many men turn out at six o'clock in the morning and wait until ten o'clock at night in the hope of getting work, without getting any, day after day.

Mr. BEN TILLET: It is chronic casualism.

The CHAIRMAN: So that we may take it that Southampton is a place, war or no war, in which there is chronic casualism?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You are in favour, I gather from your evidence, of some sort of order being brought out of this confusion, and the first step would be a reasonable system of registration?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you see anything in practice to prevent the application of a reasonable system of registration in Southampton?—(A.) I may say that the whole of the employers in the port agreed in principle that they ought to do it, and the whole of the shipowners are already doing what they agreed to do.

Q. So you told me.—(A.) But the Dock Company, the principal employers, are not doing it.

Q. By Dock Company, do you mean the Railway Company?—(A.) I do.

Q. The railway labour goes to a certain point at the docks, and then the dock labour begins, does it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Can you tell me whether there is any casual labour on the railway system that you know of?—(A.) There is none that I know of.

Q. Is there anything in principle which inclines you to say that the railway controlling the docks should have their own labour without any casuals, and the docks with casuals?—(A.) I cannot conceive of any.

Q. You must acknowledge, must you not, that when you come, as it were, to the coast and ocean traffic, you come to a condition in which there is a push and a stress at particular periods?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That has been met in the past by letting the men who are not in the push at the unpushed time go without labour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Does anything occur to you in the way of having an evening out of the labour for all the men?—(A.) I think, particularly in Southampton, that should be done.

Q. Would you give us some idea upon that? That bears upon casualisation.—(A.) So far as Southampton is concerned, as I indicated a moment ago, it is primarily a passenger port, and secondarily a cargo port; ships arrive to time and leave to time to a set time table, so that practically the whole of our ships are covered by a time table, and we know exactly before they arrive, barring accidents, when they are going to leave, the day and the hour at which they are going to leave. Knowing that, it does seem to me to be possible so to even up the work that the work should be at least continuous for five days of the week.

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Q. You have told me about the Railway Company: have the Railway Company approached the Union officials with a view to regularising casual labour?—(A.) We have, as a matter of fact, an agreement that we would do that. My complaint is that they are not carrying out their part of the agreement.

Q. Is that in writing?—(A.) It is on the Minutes of the Port Labour Committee.

Q. There is a Port Labour Committee, is there?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is that a war Committee?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEN TILLET: It is an emergency Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Apart from the emergency arrangements, is the Railway Company in charge of the port?—(A.) Yes.

Q. When the transfer was made from Liverpool to Southampton, that was a transfer, was it not, of mail ships?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Of the fast trans-Atlantic type?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Those were ships of moderate capacity, were they, that came into Southampton?—(A.) In what sense does your Lordship mean—carrying capacity?

Q. Yes.—(A.) A monster liner has only a small carrying capacity, comparatively speaking, with a smaller ship.

Q. Do you think that, apart from all consideration of the men (if one can put them out of one's mind), it is a convenience to have a great block of casual labour about?—(A.) No, I do not think it is.

Q. For those who are wanting a job done, and do not get the men?—(A.) I think the employer suffers very largely by having a great glut of casual labour, because a good man goes away because he cannot sustain life on what he gets, so one result is that you have a poor class of labour left. I think the employer suffers by it.

Q. So that if the employer took an enlightened view of this matter, he, too, would find it to his interest to decasualise?—(A.) I should say so, certainly.

Q. Apart from your being Secretary of the Union, tell me frankly, do you think, if the employers, the Railway Company, and the men, met together, they could not devise some scheme under which this great social scandal could be avoided?—(A.) I am certain that could be done.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Will your Lordship ask the witness in what respects he says the Railway Company have not carried out the agreement?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I should have asked that. (To the witness): You have heard that question: what is your answer to it?—(A.) The agreement was made with the employers of the port and the representatives of the dock company and the Chairman of the Port Labour Committee, that only persons holding the registered tally issued by the Ministry of Labour to dock transport workers should be employed until all were absorbed, and what has happened has been that the dock company has, on their own confession of three weeks ago, had at least 480 men who were not holders of a port labour tally, so in that sense they have broken their agreement badly. At the same time, there were at least 500 or 600 men holding tallies walking the town with nothing to do. That is what I mean.

(The Witness withdrew.)

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Lynden Macassey, the

Court hope that you may be able to produce some evidence illustrating a point dealt with by the last witness, as applicable to the large amount of casual labour at Southampton, and particularly the Railway Company's failure to carry out some agreement. When your time comes, perhaps you will keep that in view.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes; I had better reserve the explanation till my witness comes.

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We can deal quite readily with that point, my Lord.

MR. JOSEPH HOUGHTON, Sworn.

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are the General Secretary of the Scottish Union of Dock Labourers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The first point I want to put to you is as to whether you found a very serious difficulty in Glasgow when the national agreement for 44 hours was arrived at in inducing the employers to accept it?—(A.) A very great difficulty indeed.

Q. Glasgow was, in point of fact, the last port to settle?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. Did that opposition of the employers arise on the difference of wages that the 44-hour agreement made between Glasgow, Liverpool, and Manchester?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Did they argue that the competition of those two ports and the lower rate of wages would seriously hamper them?—(A.) They did.

Q. Did it leave a difference of 2s. 4d. a day on the oversea trade between the quay men at Liverpool and at Glasgow?—(A.) Yes.

Q. To the advantage of Liverpool?—(A.) To the advantage of Liverpool from the employers' point of view.

The CHAIRMAN: To the advantage of Liverpool?

Mr. BEVIN: From the employers' point of view.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not like that way of putting it. Did the men get less in Glasgow than in Liverpool, or more?—(A.) More.

Q. Then that is the other way: 2s. 4d. more per man. That was under the settlement?—(A.) Under the settlement.

Mr. BEVIN: Under the 44-hours' agreement. At that conference, did the employers urge upon you, as representing the men, the desirability of inducing the Federation to launch a programme that would standardise the minimum?—(A.) They pressed me to agree that the standardisation principle would be a good one at that particular time. I had difficulty in inducing my colleagues to allow me to sign a joint requisition which was sent by the shipowners and ourselves to the negotiating Committee here in London for the standardisation principle to be taken into consideration.

Q. They wanted to standardise at that time by reducing the wages in Glasgow?—(A.) That was our impression, that by standardising they might bring us lower down than the 14s., but they did not mind so long as other ports paid the same.

Q. And did your union, in consequence of the difficulty arising out of those negotiations, forward to the Federation a resolution urging us to undertake the standardisation of the minimums to carry

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out the Glasgow employers' wishes?—(A.) We did.

Q. You pressed it very hard at the Annual Meeting?—(A.) I had a resolution on the agenda in our name for the carrying out of that principle.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you read that resolution?

Mr. BEVIN: I do not know whether I ought to read the first part of that, because it is congratulations to some of us, but the second part is the important one. The final part of the resolution is as follows: "And urges that steps be taken to standardise the wages for the new working week of dock and waterside workers and maintenance staffs throughout the country."

The CHAIRMAN: That was a resolution by Glasgow?

Mr. BEVIN: The Scottish Union of Dock Labourers.

The CHAIRMAN: In Glasgow?

Mr. BEVIN: Passed at Glasgow, and forwarded to us and placed on the agenda of our annual meeting of the Federation, which was held in Swansea in June last.

Q. This resolution of the Scottish Union of Dock Labourers was passed by them immediately following the 44-hour week?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. Owing to the pressure that Glasgow should not be in a worse position from the point of view of minimum wages than Liverpool and Manchester?—(A.) That is right; we saw danger.

Q. It has been said in the Court, by Sir Alfred Booth and others, and Counsel, that if 16s. as a minimum was granted the fact that you have now 14s. and Liverpool 11s. 8d. would cause Glasgow to require to have that difference above the advance of 16s. Is that so, or would they be content, assuming the advance meant, as it does mean, 3s. 4d. advance to Liverpool? For the purpose of making common cause, will Glasgow accept the 16s.?—(A.) Glasgow and the Scottish ports will accept the standardisation principle of 16s. without a doubt.

Q. They have accepted that principle and clearly understand it?—(A.) They clearly understand it, because it has been before them for so long.

Q. They have been educated up to it, as Sir Alfred Booth said?—(A.) They have been educated up to it because they know there is a danger while there are such divergent rates existing between them and other ports.

Q. You have two rates in Glasgow; you have the rate for the coastal traffic and the rate for the oversea traffic?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Coastal traffic is less than the oversea traffic?—(A.) Much less.

Q. Are the men in Glasgow itself, in the port, prepared to make common cause, and if the coastal comes to 16s. and the other traffic to 16s., are they prepared to make common cause within the port?—(A.) They are, because they have been continually agitating since 1911 to have the coasting rate brought up level with the deep-sea rate.

Q. And the top man is willing to make common cause with the bottom man for the purpose of bringing what we call the bottom dog up?—(A.) They would have done it any time during the last nine years, if it could have been done.

Q. That applies to Glasgow?—(A.) That applies to Glasgow.

Q. The nature of the work as between coastal and overseas is very similar, it is a kind of like with like, is not it?—(A.) It is all general cargo.

Q. Those men who would be above the ordinary minimum, like coal porters and iron ore men, are again another like; they would go up proportionately?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But, like with like, you are prepared to make common cause of these minimums?—(A.) Undoubtedly.

Q. It has been said that Glasgow refused registration. Can you tell me the particular point associated with registration, or the scheme that was submitted, that caused the men to reject it in Glasgow?—(A.) There were two main reasons: one was that we have a system of daily pays in Glasgow, and it has always been the case, and undoubtedly a registration scheme would involve weekly pays, and the men are opposed to that.

Q. But supposing the registration scheme did not—as it does not, in fact, in many other ports—involve weekly pays at all, if these conditions had not been attached, would you have been able to sign registration in a milder form?—(A.) No, we would not; the main objection to it, I believe, is the fact that the men are afraid of losing what they call their liberty and their freedom so far as selecting their work is concerned; they are afraid that registration would mean they would have to go to the job they were wanted to go to, whereas at the present time they have a right either to work or not, as they like.

Q. So that in the case of registration, if the registration first began with purely making a ring around, as it has in so many ports, without any onerous conditions at all, so that the men could begin to understand it did not involve hardship, do you think there would be serious difficulty about it, or is it the Scottish temperament?—(A.) The time the last scheme was put before the members they simply would not listen to any argument at all with regard to it. They do not want it, and I am quite confident we will have a good deal of difficulty indeed in getting our men to accept registration.

Q. But your men do not interfere with the establishment of it everywhere else?—(A.) We have no objection to ports doing as they like with regard to a registration scheme, or any other schemes, weekly pays or anything else.

Q. But your men have opposed many other reforms until they have been shown they were good, have not they?—(A.) Well, naturally, yes, now and again that has happened.

Q. That is characteristic, is not it?—(A.) Experience, of course, educates as well as teaches.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Just to get the facts: I think your men turned down a registration scheme on the last occasion, in 1917, was not it?—(A.) No, last year.

Q. 1919 was it?—(A.) Yes. We had a scheme before them. I think it was about last September.

Q. Then I think there was a similar scheme put before them in 1912, was not there?—(A.) Yes, the Liverpool scheme at that time was what our Executive, as well as myself, recommended. It went to a ballot vote of the men, and the men turned it down.

Q. And on both occasions I think you, personally, and your Executive, recommended the scheme?—(A.) This last time we had made the scheme so compact that the Union badge was safeguarded, and we thought that that was a good

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principle, and we certainly thought it would influence the men in accepting it. Our position was a recommendation to give it a trial.

Q. And, notwithstanding the fact that the Union badge was safeguarded, the men would not accept it?—(A.) They would not listen to it.

Q. What I want to know is this: supposing this Court says there ought to be registration at Glasgow, will that influence the men in their attitude, do you think?—(A.) It might. I am afraid it is a stiff proposition though, still; knowing them as I know them, I am afraid it is.

Q. Knowing them as you know them, could you suggest to me in what particular way the proposition might be put before the men by this Court as one for their acceptance?—(A.) I do not think you can improve on the scheme the Port Labour Committee and ourselves recommended to them last September.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you happen to have the terms of that scheme?—(A.) I have not the terms with me; I do not know whether the Glasgow shippers have.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We have a copy of this scheme. I will just hand it to Mr. Houghton. Just see if that is not it. (Handing a document.)—(A.) Yes, this is the scheme.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We can put in copies.

(*The document was handed in and marked D 34.)

Q. That is a good scheme, is not it?—(A.) The last paragraph, paragraph 7, which deals with the men being guilty of serious malpractices, also met with a great deal of opposition. They contended that this would be abused. Of course, we tried to make out that equal representation on the Port Labour Committee would safeguard that position; but it is really suspicion and prejudice on the one hand, and the idea that they are going to lose their liberty and freedom by having a scheme of this sort, even as good as it is.

Q. Is that a real objection, or is it just an artificial objection made for the purpose of objecting to the scheme?—(A.) I could give an individual opinion, but that is no use. Their opinion is that there is no real good in the scheme at all, and they do not want registration. They do not want to be registered at all.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think your Lordship has a copy of the scheme?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. It is only fair to say to you that my attention has been called to the names of the workpeople's representatives: Houghton, Marshall—Marshall is Scotch enough—Naylor, M'Guigan, O'Brien. They may be workpeople's representatives, but they are not Scotch representatives.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: With regard to the last two names, I am precluded from offering any comment.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not blaming you at all, except that when you introduce Scotland you must bear in mind there may be some other explosive element in the case.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It was not the Irishmen, was it, who were at the bottom of this objection?—(A.) No, I think we have just as many Scotchmen as Irishmen on the Glasgow

Docks. As far as I know, there is only one Englishman, and that is myself.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Ireland is exculpated; so it lies between the three Scotchmen, I am afraid.

Mr. BEVIN: I just want to ask whether in this scheme (I have not had time to read it) the actual issue of the registration tally, or, at least, the card of registration, was to be done through your own offices?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They arranged that? (A.) Yes. The card was not to be a card; as a matter of fact, our own Union badge was going to be the tally.

The CHAIRMAN: When you recommended to this important port the introduction of the system of registration, what were your reasons for that?—(A.) Our reasons were because we were pressed from the Ministry of Labour, I think it was, through the Port Labour Committee, to have a scheme of this sort because other ports were adopting it. Naturally, having regard to the wishes of the Ministry of Labour, and the other side, we did not wish to place any obstacle in the way of the men having the opportunity of considering a scheme of this sort; and there were thousands of these issued, and the men all got them. The reason was that we were pressed to put it before the men, and we did it.

Q. And you gave notes of seven clauses, or seven heads, which in your judgment ought, at least, to be given a trial for the improvement of the conditions of labour?—(A.) That was my own judgment.

Q. You represent the Scottish Union, do not you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are the views you are giving those of the Scottish East Ports people?—(A.) No, we are organised on the West side; we have all the ports on the West Coast, and Dundee. The East Coast ports are in the National Union of Dockers.

Q. Leith and Aberdeen?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They are in the National Union?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Tell me this: suppose the inducement were offered that registration would carry with it a certain right to be on a list which would earn a certain allowance, would that have any influence?—(A.) I do not think it would, because that point of view was put before them with relation to the unemployment donation at the time; by accepting a scheme of this sort we would have been able to see the men who were idle, and recommend them for the unemployment donation, whereas, as it is now, no one knows whether a man is out looking for work, or is not, or is employed, or not.

Q. So one is able to appreciate your anxiety for having a weekly registration; you would know then where you stood?—(A.) I would like to see the man with some sort of remuneration if he is unfortunate enough to be left without work; and without you know positively whether a man is employed or not, you cannot recommend him to anything.

Q. I want you to be quite frank with us, and I am sure you will. Is some part of this difficulty simply this, that the men unhappily have got into such a condition that if they do get a day or two's work, they have got enough to go on with for a while?—(A.) Well, we have a number of men who are probably in that position, and it is intensified, in my opinion, by the model lodging-houses that exist in Glasgow; but the vast majority of our men, in my judgment, are well-doing men, and are out to look for their employment, and are very anxious indeed to get it.

* See Appendix No. 39.

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Q. Do you mean daily regular employment?—
(A.) I mean they are out every day looking for their employment as casual men.

Q. They want employment which is not sure, apparently?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Even for a week?—(A.) There is no assurance for a day. I should think we have the most old-fashioned system of starting men in Glasgow that exists in any port in the world.

Q. All that confirms the action of your Union in trying to get a start with a more regular way of life for these men?—(A.) I certainly feel that the conditions surrounding the starting of the men in Glasgow are conducive to a good deal of the underemployment that takes place, because by the system of starting men now they start them at the different berths; for instance, a man may be, say, at York Hill, and there may be plenty of men down there, and he does not get on; but a mile away, up this other end, or even the other end, they may be looking for men; but when he gets there they are not going to make a start till dinner time.

Q. You said your Union had undertaken the registration work?—(A.) No, I said we, that is the Executive, recommended this scheme, and we recommended this scheme because we were pressed to do so by the employers of labour; but even on the Executive there were differences of opinion as to advising the men definitely to have it.

Q. Yes, I know about that, but it is another point I am on. What I asked you was if the Union had undertaken the registration work?—
(A.) Yes.

Q. Is that a matter of objection with the men?—
(A.) No, because that point was raised before, and was agreed upon by the employers; we had to press them; that was one of the main points.

Q. I do not know the individual opinion of the Court, but you may take it from me we are all anxious, if possible, to throw light upon where there is so much dark, and to bring order out of where there is so much confusion and trouble. Cannot you help us about that?—(A.) Well, I have done my best, and I have been doing it. I was extremely active with regard to the scheme that existed in Liverpool in 1912, and with this last scheme I did my best to advise my people to give it a trial.

Q. Then I put this specially to you: assume the condition to be as desperate as you describe it, suppose a recommendation were to issue either from his Majesty's Government, or from ourselves as advising the Government, that in the interests of the men and their families, on the one hand, and the employers and the port, on the other, registration would be highly advantageous, and that it should be accompanied with a certain rate of remuneration to those on the register, do you think that would be unavailing on the Clyde?—
(A.) Judging by the tone of the last meeting that we had, or, rather, the meeting at which we put this scheme before them (it was a very packed meeting; I should think there would be 1,500 men there), when they almost unanimously would have nothing to do with it, I do not think I am in a position to state exactly what influence that would have upon our members. Judging by the tone of that meeting, I am afraid it would receive very little consideration—especially if it emanated from the Government.

Q. I fear I may have pressed you on this too far, because I know you are in a representative position, and one has to consider the influence. Pray forgive the Court if we have pressed you on this point, but we are extremely anxious, as we think it is mixed up with the good fortunes of

the men in the future, for light. That must be our apology.—(A.) Thank you, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: Would your Lordship put one question to the witness, as to whether he thinks if there was a general scheme worked out by the Federation, which would be possibly modified to meet exceptional conditions in each port, and the Federation itself undertook responsibility for going down to Glasgow to meet your people, whether or not, with the experience of the other ports behind them, they may not induce Glasgow to fall into line with what had been done in every other port in the country?—(A.) It would certainly be more likely to have a better effect; it would be more likely to succeed than anything emanating from the employers' side, or the Government.

Q. So that if the Court recommended a scheme of registration, with an indication of it leading to subsistence, I think that is a fair way of putting it, and the Federation was responsible for its acceptance or rejection, and the Federation accepted it as a Federation, there is not much likelihood, judging from past experience of the Federation's activities, of your district turning down the Federation?—(A.) On everything else, I do not believe they would, but on this question of registration I believe they would defy the Federation. I am speaking plain.

Mr. BEVIN: I can only say to your Lordship—

The CHAIRMAN: You observed my concluding remark to the witness, and I think you will appreciate it. I very much appreciate the spirit of your question, and I think Sir Lynden Macassey must also appreciate it, but the witness occupies a delicate position, and, I think, probably we have pressed him as far as it is expedient. I thank you, Mr. Houghton.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. DAVID BONHAM, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are the representative of the Dockers' Union at Port Talbot, South Wales?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have also been connected with a good many of the South Wales negotiations for dockside workers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have heard it stated in the Court that if 16s. 0d. per day were granted to dock workers, it would upset the railwaymen who bring the stuff to the quayside. As a matter of fact, is there a section of men in your district called tippers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And are they guaranteed the weekly wage of £4 14s. 0d. per week?—(A.) Yes, £4 14s. 10d.

Q. They are dockside workers.—(A.) Yes.

Q. Employed by railway companies?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it not a fact that in the negotiations with the railway-owned docks of South Wales all the different sections have been adjusted under the respective agreements?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is to say, a section up to a certain point have been placed under the railway agreements, and the other section under what is called the transport or dockside workers' agreements?—(A.) Entirely—water transport and rail transport.

Q. Is it a fact that a lot of these men in South Wales engaged as tippers are members of the Railwaymen's Union as well?—(A.) Quite a number of them.

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Q. In Barry, Cardiff, Penarth, and so on.—
(A.) Thirty-five per cent. of the men employed in that industry.

Q. And although they are members of the National Union of Railwaymen, they negotiate with the Transport Workers' Federation as to the conditions of their work, jointly?—(A.) They are at this present hour.

Q. They are meeting to-day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And they negotiate distinct from what is called the National Railway Settlement?—(A.) The employers absolutely refuse to deal with them in any other line as far as South Wales is concerned.

Q. That is to say, they wanted them, and got them, classified as dockside workers?—(A.) Entirely.

Q. Does a similar position arise with general cargo, pit-wood, and all other classes of workers on railway-owned docks?—(A.) Entirely.

Q. There never has been, has there, a conflict between, say, a shunter and a tipper or an iron ore worker, or any of these men?—(A.) Never.

Q. All the sections for which we now cater, and which come under the scope of this inquiry, have always been settled separately, as separate entities?—(A.) Entirely.

Q. And there have never been any strikes or disputes with any other section arising out of the settlements?—(A.) Never to my knowledge for the last twenty-five years.

Q. Therefore, if the 16s. is granted, with its consequential adjustments, you do not anticipate any difficulty in applying it to the various sections?—(A.) None whatever.

Q. Did you get any serious difficulty arising out of the National Agreement?—(A.) None.

Q. You also negotiate, do you not, for a large section of metal workers, as well as dock workers?—(A.) Ninety-five per cent. of the copper and other metal industry of Wales, and also the chemical, fertilising, and explosive industries for Wales and the West of England.

Q. In that case, do you find that the employers are demanding national settlements?—(A.) They definitely gave me to understand that they absolutely refused to negotiate any further other than on a national basis.

Q. And they have refused to negotiate a settlement in Wales recently unless you could also, irrespective of the conditions of other trades, bring them like with like into the negotiations all over the country?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. You have heard Counsel state and compare other rates. As a matter of fact, has it been your experience that you have negotiated each trade on its merits, irrespective of dock work?—(A.) Entirely.

Q. If you go into a copper works you do not begin arguing what a docker gets?—(A.) The employers will not allow us to argue what a docker gets.

Q. You settle it on the merits of the trade when you are there?—(A.) Entirely.

Q. And you have had experience of dealing with both sections?—(A.) The whole of the industry as far as South Wales is concerned.

Q. You have seen the budget submitted by the employers. Supposing the wages were so fixed that that budget had to be applied to the South Wales Transport Workers, do you think the result would be a strike?—(A.) There is no question at all.

Q. It would be the spark for revolt, would it not, right through that troubled area?—(A.) Yes.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Just a question about Port Talbot. Is the work at Port Talbot entirely piece work?—(A.) Practically the whole of it is piece work.

Q. Do you find that the piece work system works well?—(A.) Yes, we have no room to complain.

Q. You would not like to go back to day rates?—(A.) No.

Re-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. The class of work which you have in Port Talbot is what we call in dock work "straight work"; that is to say, it is a cargo either of pit-wood or timber or angle iron or something—straight work?—(A.) That is so. On general cargo the men are anxious for day work.

Q. That is where they get on to what we call the fiddling cargoes, which they cannot go straight on with?—(A.) Yes. Fortunately for Port Talbot very little of it is done there.

Q. The bulk of the cases where you work piece work are on the bulk cargoes in which the men can go straight ahead?—(A.) That is so.

Q. If you have not trucks in Port Talbot or if you are delayed are you paid waiting time?—(A.) Yes.

Q. At what rate?—(A.) The arrangements are made according to the time, 2s. or 2s. 6d. an hour; but there is no established rate.

Q. According to the output of the day?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You still state that if you had the small classes of cargo piece work would be unsatisfactory?—(A.) Yes, entirely.

The CHAIRMAN: Upon that last point some of us would like to know this. Assume ordinary piece work, which you have explained, and assume a time work rate, what would the time worker get as compared with the piece worker?—(A.) The average for the piece worker when we do get cargoes, which is very rare—it is generally iron ore or pig iron or angle iron—

Q. That is piece work?—(A.) That is piece work. It is very rare that ever we get any day work.

Q. What does a man make on that?—(A.) He makes on that anything from 20s. to 25s. per day.

Q. On 44 hours day work, what is your piece rate?—(A.) The average works out at £1 5s.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. J. DONOVAN, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are the District Secretary of the Dockers' Union at Cardiff?—(A.) I am.

Q. On general cargo in Cardiff have you a minimum wage for pieceworkers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. For men employed by the Cardiff Railway Company?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Has it worked satisfactorily?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you found the minimum wage restrict output?—(A.) No.

Q. You have found the men anxious to earn above the minimum?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you also a minimum wage in force in the grain trade?—(A.) An agreed rate, yes.

Q. What is it? Can you speak from memory?—(A.) 15s. 0d. per day. If the men cannot earn more than that they are paid 15s. 0d.

Q. Have you found that that restricts output?—(A.) Not at all.

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Q. Can you tell us something about the rent in a typical place like Cardiff? You have heard Counsel describe the rent of 6s. 6d. per week. Are there any houses available at 6s. 6d. per week in Cardiff?—(A.) I do not know of any workmen's dwellings at Cardiff under 8s. 6d.

Q. And that is with the imposition or restriction of the Rent Restriction Act?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have seen the budget submitted by the employers and the amount of food allowed. You yourself have worked in dock work most of your life?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you think it is possible on that allowance of food?—(A.) Utterly impossible.

Q. Utterly impossible to carry on the work of the dock?—(A.) Yes.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. At Cardiff have you found the system of piecework works fairly well?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I suppose the prices are agreed from time to time between yourself and the dock authority or the shipowners; or how are they arranged?—(A.) Between the dock company and myself and the various employers in the port.

Q. You meet from time to time to negotiate prices?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And if a special cargo comes along you fix, I suppose, a special price for that special cargo.—(A.) There are rates laid down for all cargoes.

Q. Has there been any difficulty, if there is goodwill on both sides, in applying the piecework pretty generally?—(A.) There has not been any trouble since the minimum has been agreed upon.

Q. I want to ask you about that minimum. Is it a question of paying a man the minimum if he is prevented by circumstances from getting on with his job?—(A.) That is so.

Q. But if he does not get on with his job through his own fault, is he paid the minimum?—(A.) If it is through his own fault he would not be paid.

Q. That is what I understand to be the difference between what is ordinarily called a guaranteed minimum and making up the man's earnings if he is prevented by circumstances beyond his control from earning it.—(A.) That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Surely there must be some way of agreeing between the two sides of the bar upon this. The minimum is demanded for a man who is there and is willing and ready to work; the minimum cannot be demanded for a man if he does not turn up in the yard at all.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There is that distinction.

The CHAIRMAN: Or for a man who goes out for refreshment, or anything like that, and stays away half an hour. That kind of thing could not be done.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is just the very point which I want to bring to the close attention of the Court. As long as that sort of thing is safeguarded it assumes a very different complexion, but if a guaranteed minimum rate is fixed for all piecework it means that the man, whatever may be the circumstances, is prevented from making that—

The CHAIRMAN: You mean for time-work?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, piece-work. The point is this, if I may put it now: Supposing work

is done on the piece-work basis, if there is a guaranteed minimum time-rate the man gets that guaranteed minimum, irrespective of what his output may be and whether he is prevented from making that amount by circumstances beyond his control or from circumstances within his control.

The CHAIRMAN: We do not know what is behind, but surely both parties have approached this Court in a spirit of great reasonableness, and the like of that is surely a matter for complete understanding and for no misunderstanding. I do not understand the case presented to be that a man should be allowed the minimum either for an hour, or for a day, or for a week for time when he should have wrought and was not willing or ready to do it. That is no part of Mr. Bevin's claim.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will have to ask Mr. Bevin that.

Mr. BEVIN: Is it not unnecessary? Is it not common-sense, after all? I never asked an employer to do what is suggested by Counsel.

The CHAIRMAN: I thought it was, but Sir Lynden and those instructing him must have some motive for putting this. All I suggest is that there is a reasonable spirit on both sides, and that that ought to be made as clear as day.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship has the point?

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is a practical point, because your Lordship will hear that in many ports where this national agreement is not observed and men slip away, the guaranteed minimum time-rate would operate to give them the earnings whether they made them or not. If that is not the intention, of course we can deal with it.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a point that may be cleared up. We are in possession of the point now.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship pleases.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not want to ask anything further.

The CHAIRMAN: What accommodation does your 8s. 6d. rent give, if I am not asking too much?—(A.) For 8s. 6d. you would have a 4-roomed house.

Q. Would you have a kitchen?—(A.) A kitchen, one other room, and two bedrooms.

Q. Have you any scullery?—(A.) No, not for 8s. 6d. The question of housing accommodation at Cardiff is very acute. It is a very serious matter.

Q. What is your family in that 4-roomed house?—(A.) Mine?

Q. Yes.—(A.) My family are six.

Q. Are any of them earning wages?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Two or three?—(A.) Three of them.

Q. Still you all live together in the old home?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The grain rate, you say, was 15s. a day. Did you say that?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is a minimum time-rate. What would a man discharging grain get on his piece?—(A.) If

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the weather and conditions were all right he would earn 20s. or 22s.

Mr. BEN TILLET: That is a day when he is allowed to work?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Only another question about this time minimum. If there were a time minimum, we shall say, in another port of 14s., is your idea this, that Mr. Bevin is justified in saying that you are all solid on having a national fixed minimum?—(A.) That is so, yes.

Q. Whatever the sum be it should be fixed so that the workmen in all parts of the country stand with regard to the minimum on an equal basis?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There is no desire, is there, on the part of one port which happens to be better than another just now, to keep up the other port's disadvantage?—(A.) There is a tremendous amount of agitation now at this particular moment as between Cardiff, Swansea, and Newport, because they are not being paid the same flat rate for the men who are on day work and also for the men who are on piecework. The greatest trouble that we have to contend with in the various ports is that there are different rates, which causes so much ill-feeling and discontent between the men.

Q. You mean jealousy between the ports?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: I should like this question put to the Witness before he goes out of the box: Whether or not it is the fact that the employers on many occasions have insisted that before they give an advance we give an undertaking that that advance shall apply to the other ports?—(A.) They have asked for that, and where the other ports have been paying a lower rate they have intimated to us that they would require to see the other ports brought on the same scale.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you add this to your question, please; or may I put it for you?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Does that signify to your mind that when you have a circle of ports like that together—Swansea, Cardiff, and Newport—both employers and workmen want to avoid preference between the rates of the respective ports?—(A.) That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: That is all I wanted to get. That is your point, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. R. H. FARRAH, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are the District Secretary of the Transport Workers' Federation at Hull?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have the conditions of labour at Hull for some considerable time been particularly casual?—(A.) Very casual indeed.

Q. What would you say would be the average of the Hull dockers?

—(A.) Scarcely four days a week.

Q. What are the minimum rates at Hull?—(A.) We have two rates. What we call the lumpers' rate or the stevedores' rate is 12s. 10d. per day, and the general cargo rate is 11s. 8d.

The work done by the general cargoman is in many respects identical with the lumpers'. I mean such a firm as Ellerman Wilson let their work out to master stevedores, and our men do work at piecework speed but only get a day work rate. It is done by a lumper—a contractor.

Q. Have you ever had in Hull the employers coming along with a proposal for piecework on general cargo at all?—(A.) No, never.

Q. They have contented themselves with speeding up and only paying day work?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Has Hull advantages over other ports on the East Coast?—(A.) Very distinct advantages. Of course, Hull is a very important port from the point of view of the importation of grain, and I should estimate roughly that 70 per cent. of the grain which comes into the port goes over the side; and the whole of the merchants and ships are exempt from overside charges. These craft take the cargo and convey it direct to the mills. It has a distinct advantage over many ports in the country.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you mean overside into barges?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And thence direct to the mills on the river?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: And the neighbouring ports receive higher wages than Hull without such good advantages?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are your men prepared to make common cause with the rest of the dockers in the country in the 16s. claim?—(A.) We have done all along.

Q. They have struck on one occasion to obtain it, and went back to work at the request of the Federation?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And they, in fact, have demanded £1 per day?—(A.) That was their demand at a very large mass meeting which we had in Hull when the negotiations were taking place.

Q. And it was at the request of the Federation that they reduced their demand to 16s.?—(A.) That is so.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. You have got a registration scheme in Hull, have you not?—(A.) Under the Port Labour Committee, yes.

Q. Do you find that that scheme works satisfactorily?—(A.) Yes. On the whole it has the blessing of the trade unions which cater for transport workers, because we are well represented on the Committee.

Q. I am not suggesting that that is the sole source of satisfaction; but do you find in other respects, looking at it from the point of view of the port and also from the point of view of the port employere, that it works pretty well?—(A.) Yes. What I meant to say, if you will allow me, is this, that the reason there has been a good deal of prejudice against Port Labour Committees is that the trade organisations have not had some control. So far as the Port Labour Committee in Hull is concerned, before it will register a man he has got to take a credential card from his trade union, and, of course, that has obviated the docks being exploited by any Tom, Dick or Harry.

Q. It has avoided all sorts of people coming and trying to get work at the docks?—Yes, it has been of distinct advantage to us, but in spite of that fact I took out particulars in 1916, and we were then averaging 42 hours a week, and to-day, according to the statistics of the Port Labour Committee—I have them here for many weeks past—it is not

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four days a week, with an approximate registration of about 9,000; or, rather, not a registration. There are nearly 11,000 registered, but, taking deductions, we have just under 9,000, and out of that 9,000 the average working is four days a week or just under, sometimes a little over and sometimes under.

Q. Then you have another Committee in Hull, have you not, which deals with disputes as to wages and conditions of employment?—(A.) Yes, we have a Committee with the Chamber of Commerce, what we call the Dock Labour Committee. Is that the one you are referring to?

Q. That is a Joint Committee too, is it not?—(A.) Yes, we meet from time to time and try to adjust matters that may arise. This matter of the equivalent pay for equivalent work has been considered locally on many occasions, but up to now the employers have refused to entertain it.

Q. Looking at that second Committee, and the way it works, it is a hopeful type of organisation, is it not?—(A.) Yes, I am rather proud of our local Committees, especially with regard to coal trimmers. We have a good working agreement with regard to coal trimmers, but I cannot say we have anything tangible so far as transport workers are concerned, apart from the Port Labour Committee.

Q. It was found, was it not? notwithstanding the registration scheme, that at recent times of pressure you could not get men, because the men would not work more than four days?—(A.) No, I do not think that was the reason. Shipping, in a port like ours, fluctuates considerably, and we lost a lot of bona fide transport workers during the period of the war, and there have been occasions when there has been a shortage of labour, and the Port Labour Committee have given what I call probationary tickets for a month to outsiders. It was not because the men would not work more than four days a week; I absolutely deny that.

Q. The particular months I wanted to put to you were November and December last. Does what you say apply to them? I put to you that in those months there were men available, and you could not get them to work?—(A.) I do not know anything of it.

Q. November and December last?—(A.) No, I do not think there is any truth in the statement. We have the most tinpot system, just similar to what Mr. Houghton has described. All our men are started at the ships' side. We have been organising and trying to persuade the employers to adopt a system of starting centres, and, where there is a rush of men to one dock, and there is not work to absorb them, they could be transferred to another dock, where there is a shortage of labour.

Q. In other words, that the men should become mobile?—(A.) Yes, but the employers have not approved the scheme.

Q. On the question of principle, whether in one place the employer objects or in another place the men object, you agree that it is most desirable that the dock labourers should be mobile?—(A.) I do, but to assist him in being mobile the employer should agree to a uniform standard for the loading and discharging of ships.

Re-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You referred to the work of the coal-trimmers, which is not before this enquiry, but is it a fact that their conditions were largely influenced by a national settlement?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And practically the whole of their tariffs are being negotiated nationally?—(A.) Yes, at the

present time, but the tariff that is now in-existence is what we may describe as a local tariff.

Q. But there is a general desire on the part of the employers and everybody to get a national tariff to supersede those old local tariffs for coal? (A.) That is already before the employers nationally.

Q. And is being discussed?—(A.) That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you give me any idea of the amount of casual labour in Hull as compared to the amount of regularly employed labour?—(A.) You mean generally, my Lord, do you, in all branches of industry, or only transport?

Q. With regard to dock labour?—(A.) During the present period, if it were not for congestion—that is, congestion on the railways—I do not think there would be such a very great amount of casual labour. All the quays are blocked with timber, the warehouses are full of grain, all the river craft are full, they are simply using them as warehouses, and if we had anything like normal facilities, as in pre-war days, I do not think we should have a very large amount of casual labour in the transport industry.

Q. How long have you been in your present position?—(A.) I have had sixteen years' experience as a dock-worker, and I have been an official in Hull for 10 years.

Q. Take the period 1913/14 before the war, what was your fringe of casual labour then?—(A.) Very small, because, speaking from memory (I took it from the Board of Trade figures), the imports and exports, not in tonnage, but in value, in 1913 were 84½ millions pounds.

Q. Was that import and export?—(A.) Yes, apart from coal, and we had 8,000,000 tons of coal into the port. Of that 8,000,000 tons, 7,000,000 was either export or coastwise. I could not give you the figures up to date, but I drew out some comparative figures in 1916. Owing to the submarine menace our imports went down, and I think our total was 2,000,000. I should say that, generally speaking, in 1913, which is the only year you can quote—you could not quote any year now because there are not normal conditions—the number of transport workers unemployed was very small indeed. What I want to say, if you will allow me to be brief, is this. I have followed this enquiry with very great interest, and the argument advanced by Sir Lynden Macassey is that if you give us our flat rate of 16s. it is going to cause unrest amongst other trades. The opposite is the position, because in pre-war days (and I am speaking from a long experience) the general labourer in the port of Hull had about 25s. per week. That was 12s. 6d. below the transport worker. Many of those general labourers, by negotiations and Government awards, are to-day almost equal with the transport worker. If I might state a case or two, I will take a fitter's labourer. He had 25s. before the war, and to-day he has £3 6s. I want to emphasise this point, that the reason the docker was given a higher rate than the general labourer was because of the laborious character of his work and the casual nature of his employment. If I may cite other trades, such as flour millers, paint and colour workers, oilmillers, fish dock workers, those men have come in some cases to a higher standard than the docker, and they get a fortnight's holiday, with pay, from their employers. The flour miller, who is only what I call a general labourer, in pre-war days had 30s. a week. That is a roller man, and I should not put him on a higher level than a man who stowed cargo. He has now 76s. a week, and a fortnight's holiday

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with pay. The whole argument about other sections of labour is that they have risen to a very high standard. I have negotiated for them with many of my colleagues. Just recently we have brought the whole of the men in the paint and colour trade, some 30,000 men in the country, from 24s. pre-war to 63s. a week, with a fortnight's holiday, with pay.

Q. Is the trend of your evidence this, that each industry must stand upon its own conditions?—(A.) It is. There is one point I should not like to miss. We are supposed now to work 44 hours a week, and I venture to say that on the average the docker's day in Hull is equal to 9 hours a day—I do not mean actual work, but owing to the inefficient system. If I am working at a ship at a dock I have perhaps half an hour's walk to go to the employers' office for my money, and wait probably another half hour before I get it. It is a bad system, I will admit, paying every day; but I venture to say that the average docker does not get away with his money, if he finishes at 5 o'clock, before 6 o'clock in the evening.

Q. What is the constitution of the Port Labour Committee in Hull?—(A.) The constitution was three employers and three workmen, I believe, and then there was a military and a naval man on it. I think we have four labour men on it now. I was a member of it up to last year, but I resigned owing to pressure of other business. The chairman of the Committee is here in Court.

Q. Have they worked harmoniously together?—(A.) Very harmoniously indeed.

Q. And you think it is in the interests of all parties and of the port?—(A.) I think it is in the general interests of the men and the employers that we should have this system of registration, and I am compelled to believe that if Sir Robert Horne's Bill becomes law, whereby the transport workers can be enrolled in the insured trades, the Government will enforce some system of registration for those men to qualify.

Q. You think that with registration, for instance, they can mobilise the labour better?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. They have been trying to do that for how long?—(A.) They have only been doing it for a few weeks in the sense that we want. We want calling-on centres, instead of the men starting at the ship's side, and then telephonic communication from dock to dock, so that the men can be utilised.

Q. Here is a point you might consider. Do you not think that if there has been this helpfully working Port Labour Committee they might have addressed themselves to that problem?—(A.) They have tried to do that, but up to now they have failed. The Labour Department have offered us every facility, including the expense of building calling-on centres and the stamping of cards.

Q. What has stopped it?—(A.) A number of the employers have argued in this way: "If I start my men at a calling-on centre I am not sure that they are going to arrive at the ship within reasonable time." I thought that was a very poor excuse. Supposing there is half an hour's walk, we now ask our men to be at the calling-on centre

15 minutes before starting time, and we try to meet them in that way.

Q. Do you think that any observations made by this Court on the lines of your evidence would stiffen and help you as a Port Labour Committee?—(A.) I am sure it would.

Q. And it would be in the interests of the workman and the port?—(A.) It would.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Would your Lordship put this question to the witness. He has objected to the principle of men being paid each day.

The WITNESS: I was only expressing a personal opinion on that matter.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Have not some of the employers proposed that they should be paid each week?—(A.) I do not think there has been any proposition from the employers at all.

The CHAIRMAN: One cannot help knowing about your position in Hull, and respecting it. Tell us frankly what your idea is. Would it be better for the workmen, as heads of households, to be paid once a week?—(A.) That has been my view for many years past.

Q. You have heard the evidence this morning from Glasgow that that is at the bottom, or nearly at the bottom of the objection to registration altogether?—(A.) I cannot see the logic of that argument, because we are paid day to day, and yet our transport workers have given the Port Labour Committee's work their blessing.

Q. So that payment from day to day does not necessarily interfere with registration?—(A.) Not the slightest, because 95 per cent. of our men get their wages each day.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to put this question: Whether or not one of these difficulties about this weekly payment exists until maintenance is established, because of the fact that a man may be out of work for a week, and must get money the first day he starts in order to get food again to go on, and whether that is not the real fundamental cause of the payment night by night?—(A.) That is one of the difficulties, but there is another one: that a dock worker might work for two or three employers in a week, and if he agreed to accept his wages on a Saturday he would have very great difficulty in getting to two or three centres for his money.

The CHAIRMAN: There has been established, I think, in Liverpool, a clearing house. Would that avoid that trouble?—(A.) It might. Our men have not looked with very great favour on the Liverpool scheme, but it might obviate that difficulty if there was a clearing house system.

Q. But even though a scheme comes from Liverpool it may have some good in it?—(A.) Quite so.

(The witness withdrew.)

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning at 10.30 o'clock.)

EIGHTH DAY.

Thursday, February 19th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Mr. BEVIN: The first witness I want to call this morning is Sir Leo Chiozza Money.

Sir LEO CHIOZZA MONEY, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You were Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Shipping from its formation in 1916 until the Armistice?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You were also the founder and Chairman of the National Maritime Board and Chairman of the Tonnage Priority Committee?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. What was the object of founding the National Maritime Board?—(A.) The National Maritime Board was formed to prevent, and if possible to settle upon their arising, any disputes or differences in the seafaring industry. That was its first object. Its second object was to establish, revise, and maintain a national standard rate or rates of wage for all classes of seafarers. In addition it had functions in reference to seamen and firemen with regard to supply—the supply of seamen.

Q. How was the project of establishing a national standard rate of wage for seamen regarded by the interests when you began the work?—(A.) There was a great diversity of opinion with regard to both the desirability and the practicability of establishing national rates of wage. I should think it would be true to say that the majority of persons connected with the employing side of the industry doubted whether a standard wage could be established; many of them were violently opposed to it. The reasons chiefly given were these: they thought that standard rates would never be accepted by the men; they urged the great diversity of rates of wage for seamen as between port and port; thirdly, they urged the great diversity of rates on a single ship, because of the great diversity of classifications of ratings on a single ship. For these and other reasons the practicability of establishing the national rate of wage was (and I have no doubt sincerely) doubted in many quarters.

The CHAIRMAN: What was the third element?—(A.) The diversity of employment—of ratings, to use the technical term—on a single ship; the many classes of seamen.

Q. These views, you very properly say, appeared to you to be sincerely held by men who knew the trade?—(A.) Yes. I should like, if I may, to urge that. I had a talk with many leading shipowners, such as Sir Alfred Booth, who gave evidence here the other day, and many of them were sincerely convinced that the thing could not be done; and if it had not been for the enthusiasm of some of those connected with the idea it would have certainly failed.

Mr. BEVIN: But eventually it was found possible in practice to establish the national standard rates applicable to all ports, like with like?—(A.) Yes, it was found practicable. We established a National Maritime Board, and we obtained the services on the one hand of all the trade unions connected with the different classes of seamen, and on the other hand the services of, unfortunately not all, but a great body of representative shipowners. We then met, and in the course of many meetings—while I was chairman of the Board I think there were about 130 meetings—we hammered out all these complicated rates of wage and reduced them to national rates, and these national rates are now firmly established and

recognised throughout the industry in the United Kingdom.

Q. What classes of seamen obtain the standard rates?—(A.) The Board found it possible to deal with all classes of seamen, the masters of the ships—captains as they are commonly called—alone excepted. The shipowners refused to recognise that the masters came under the provisions of the Board, but apart from the masters, from the first mate and the first engineer downwards to the cabin boy, we arranged national rates of wage, that is to say for seamen, firemen, cooks, stewards, butchers, bakers—all the catering department—the whole of the deck or navigating officers, from the first mate downwards, and the whole of the engineer officers.

Q. That is to say there was a standard rate fixed for each grade?—(A.) A standard rate for each grade, sometimes classified, as in the case of officers, according to their seniority and so forth.

Q. Were all the shipowners represented on the Board?—(A.) No; as I have indicated, we did not get a complete representation, and that was through the unfortunate obstinacy, as I think I am bound to call it, with all respect to them, of the Liverpool shipowners. The Shipping Federation were represented on the Board. The Shipping Controller did his best, and I did my best, to obtain the services of the Liverpool shipowners. They, however, washed their hands of the whole affair, pointed out that we were doing what in their opinion was an amazingly stupid thing, and in effect said: "Your blood be on your own heads." We, therefore, never had the assistance of the Liverpool shipowners. It is only fair to say—and it is rather a curious thing—that after the Board had with great pains arrived at national standard rates which affected the Liverpool shipowners as much as they did all the other shipowners, the Liverpool shipowners did loyally, for the greater part, accept the rates and apply them to their servants.

Q. What, in your opinion, are the advantages of the national standard rates of wages?—(A.) I think it is becoming increasingly recognised that the advantages are great. The main advantage is that the existence of a national standard tends to prevent local disputes, and therefore to prevent a very large number of strikes and differences. The national conception of a wage is speedily recognised by all concerned; it is respected by all concerned. If I may add a word to that, my Lord, it has a particular reference to the case before you, because when my Board began its work there were great differences as between port and port—

The CHAIRMAN: You mean the National Maritime Board?—(A.) Yes, the National Maritime Board. There were great differences as between port and port. The North-East Coast seaman got £10; at other ports he only got £8; there was a difference of as much as £2, or 20 per cent., as between one port and another port; and it was urged when we began our work that as soon as we settled a national standard rate the North-East Coast man would say: "I used to get more than the man at Bristol; I want more now." He would immediately proceed, they urged, to upset the national standard rate. Nothing of the kind occurred; everybody loyally accepted the rate.

Mr. BEVIN: In addition to having been Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Shipping, you have also given consideration from time to time to the question of the standard of living?—(A.) Yes, it is a subject in which I have always taken very great interest.

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Q. I think you wrote "Riches and Poverty" and "The Nation's Wealth"?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Did you before the war draw up what you regarded as a poverty line?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: I will hand in a copy, my Lord; it is No. D.35.

(*The document was handed in.)

The WITNESS: Just before the war, in a little book called "The Nation's Wealth," the preface of which, I see, was signed on March 21, 1914, about five months before the war began, I drew up a suggested poverty line for 1914.

Q. Not a living standard, but a poverty line?—(A.) No, not as a representation of what I considered to be a decent standard of life, but of what I considered to be an absolute minimum, or poverty line. I remarked, "We are not in the England of 1800; we are at this hour the inheritors of a plenitude of discovery and achievement. If, then, we suggest the following modest standard of comfort as a twentieth century poverty line for an average family of two adults and three children, we may justly feel that we are not asking too much of modern production." I then give this line, which shows an expenditure of £2 5s. per week, at the prices, of course, which then ruled—the prices in 1914.

The CHAIRMAN: What household were you thinking of?—(A.) This was for a man, his wife, and three children.

Mr. BEVIN: What expenditure, in your view, would equal £2 5s. now?—(A.) I have handed a statement which shows that if this £2 5s. were recalculated at the prices which obtained a week or two ago the result would be an expenditure of £5 0s. 7d. That is arrived at by increasing each item in my list by the percentage which is thought to be fair by the Board of Trade in the "Labour Gazette." I also show at the foot that if it is calculated in another way, if the Board of Trade general increase of 125 per cent. on the £2 5s. is taken, it comes to £5 1s. 3d., or almost precisely the same figure. I have to point out, if I may, that since then the latest issue of the "Labour Gazette" has increased the 125 per cent. to 130 per cent. I should like also, if I may, to direct attention to the utterance of Dr. Addison, the Minister of Health, our effective Housing Minister, that he cannot countenance anything but an economic rent for the new houses which are to be built—

The CHAIRMAN: You were not, I think, present in Court yesterday?—(A.) No, I was not.

The CHAIRMAN: That was brought out. The passage, I think, was read.

Mr. BEVIN: If you take the "Labour Gazette" now and accept those figures as accurate, it gives a poverty line minimum at this stage of £5 1s. 3d.—(A.) Yes; to take the latest figure, about £5 3s.

Q. What is your opinion, as the result of your investigation, of the standard of living suggested by Counsel for the employers, of £3 13s. 6d.?—(A.) I do not myself think that a decent standard of life could be maintained upon such an expenditure, and if I may respectfully say so, it seems to me that the employers in presenting the case on that head must have been somewhat misled by what is called the Sumner Report on the Cost of

Living. The Sumner Report, I think they failed to notice, did not take account of the rise in actual cost of living as between the pre-war and post-war position, but merely was based upon the increase in the actual expenditure; but the actual expenditure was governed by the conditions of the war, so that it was not really a measure of the rise in the cost of living; it was merely a measure of the rise in the expenditure that was possible for the working-class family because of the conditions of the war, which is, of course, an entirely different thing.

Q. You have given considerable attention to the question of the ability to pay the wages by shipowners. In your opinion ought the cost of these advances to be passed on to the consumer?—(A.) I am very strongly of opinion that it should not be passed on to the consumer, and I cannot see anything in the nature of the facts of the case to suggest that it is necessary that it should be so passed on. That opinion, it seems to me, could only legitimately be held if it were held that it was necessary for all time to maintain the war standard of profit. If, of course, one grants that as a reasonable proposition, then everything must be passed on to the consumer, while those who own capital continue to draw more profits, but, save on that supposition, I can see no reason why they should be passed on to the consumer.

Q. Then you say that if the position is granted that these war profits must be maintained, the position of the men would be prejudiced for all time?—(A.) Yes, I very strongly hold that view; and if I may be allowed to explain what I mean, I should like to do so by reference to a concrete case. I have here one of several prospectuses that might be produced relating to recent shipping transactions. Here is the prospectus of the Western Counties Shipping Company, Limited.

Mr. BEVIN: I submitted that as D.8A in the presentation of my case.

The WITNESS: The point here, my Lord, seems to me of very great importance and relevance to the inquiry. The Western Counties Shipping Company, Limited was a company which recently issued a public prospectus asking for the public subscription of capital in order to purchase the whole of the well-known shipping line known as the Moor Line, belonging to the well-known Runciman family. The prospectus shows that the ships acquired, counting both the new ships they were acquiring of the Moor Line and their existing ships, amounted to only 105,000 tons odd: they were deadweight carrying-capacity tons, not gross tons—105,000 odd deadweight tons. The ships are valued in the prospectus at £2,400,000, and I think the purchase price approaches £2,000,000 as shown in the prospectus. The capital of the company was £2,250,000; it is divided into 1,000,000 6½ per cent. mortgage debentures and £1,250,000 ordinary shares, upon which the prospectus indicates that 20 per cent. will be paid in future. Under the heading "Profits and Dividends"—I am quoting the words—it says: "It is anticipated that the whole fleet with a deadweight tonnage of 105,683 tons"—I think that is the figure, but they are newspaper figures—"should make a profit exceeding £850,000 per annum." I venture to direct the attention of the Court to that anticipated profit of £850,000 per annum. What are the ships worth? These ships, my Lord, if they had been built new in the year 1914 would have cost about £6 per ton deadweight, or about £600,000.

The CHAIRMAN: And if bought new now?—(A.)

* See Appendix No. 40.

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If bought new now would probably cost about £25 or £28 per ton.

Q. What would be the capital sum as against the £600,000?—(A.) The point is that these ships were not new in 1914. Many of them were old ships, and if the war had not occurred, at the present moment they would be worth not more than £400,000.

Q. I know; but the war has occurred.—(A.) The war has occurred.

Q. And this is a post-war flotation. It is only to get the advantage of your figure that I am asking. Have you any reason to doubt that this flotation of £2,400,000 is a flotation upon capital value as it could be acquired at the present date?—(A.) No, not at all, but my point is that this value—

Q. I do not mind your point at all. We all see your point in a moment, and very forcible it will be, no doubt; but the point that I want to get at just now is to prevent you being represented in the Notes as maintaining that that capital is only worth £400,000. You do not mean that?—(A.) No, that is not the representation.

Q. You say that at present valuation that may be so; but then your point is something different from that: why should it be so?—(A.) Yes, I am coming to the point now. My point is that if the war had not occurred these old ships would be worth at the present moment about £400,000. Now the war has occurred, and because of the profits that were created by it, these ships are sold out to new owners at a capitalisation which will either compel the consumers and producers—the seamen and dockers of the future—to produce £800,000 per annum, or the Company must be ruined. That is to say, with ships which if the war had not occurred would be worth £400,000, the work in and about them has got to produce in future every year twice what their value would have been in order to keep this Company afloat. My point upon that is that if it is thought necessary by this Court and by the nation to maintain that position, then obviously the workers in the future cannot have much higher remuneration, because so much of their time and work must be given to the manufacture of these exaggerated dividends.

Mr. BEVIN: Why, in your opinion, are these war profits relevant to this Inquiry?—(A.) That I think is implicit in what I have said. The war profits prejudice the whole of the future. The war profits create these new valuations. If I may put it in this way, if one imagines that some great national trust had possessed the ships of the nation, then at the end of the war they would not dream of writing-up fresh values upon those ships merely because the war had occurred. It is true that on any new ship which they would have had to create they would have had to face these new prices, but as far as the great bulk of the ships in their possession were concerned they would rank in their books at the old prices less depreciation. Therefore, if one can imagine such a trust working those ships, and working the docks, they would not have to cause men to labour to create high rates of profit on a new war valuation. It would not exist; the capital would remain quite small in spite of the war. Because of the commercial system we get this new valuation of the whole or the great bulk of the ships of the country, and then the seamen and the dockers and the public between them are asked to work under such conditions and to pay such freights as to create, in the case of this Company, £800,000 a year, and in the case of the ships of the country at large, of course, sums which run into nine figures. That is what I mean by the war profits being relevant

to this Inquiry as prejudicing the whole future of the workers of the country, and that I represent to be common, not merely to the shipping industry, but to all the industries of the country, and only to have a special relevance to shipping because the shipping industry was more fortunate than most industries.

Q. Did taxation really affect shipping profits much during the war?—(A.) The position on that head was very well shown by Mr. Bonar Law in the House of Commons. I have here the quotation, and if I may I would like to read it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We almost know it by heart now.—(A.) If my friend Sir Lynden knows the quotation there is no need for me to give it.

Q. It has been given several times; but I do not want to stop you.—(A.) If it has been put in I shall be certainly only vainly occupying the time of the Court by reading it again.

Mr. BEVIN: I quoted it.—(A.) It is what Mr. Bonar Law said on May 2, 1919.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a weapon which is in the armoury of discussion already.—(A.) Perhaps then I may only supplement it by putting it in this form: that it was true down to the end of 1916, when the requisitioning took place, that a shipping company had to make four times as much profit as it usually made before the war before it paid a penny in excess profits duty; that is to say, it did not come within excess profits duty until it had made four times as much profit as before the war.

Q. Is that the law now?—(A.) Yes, that is true now.

Q. What happened in 1916?—(A.) The full requisitioning of shipping took place.

Q. That is what I was meaning. What was the effect of the requisitioning?—(A.) The effect of the full requisitioning of shipping was to bring to an end the excessive profits which had ruled up to early in 1917. It brought them to an end, and very greatly reduced the shipowners' profits, although it left them with a quite respectable rate.

Mr. BEVIN: How do you regard the suggestion which has been made here that there should be a sliding scale of wage to rise and fall with the cost of living?—(A.) I think it follows from what I have said that I think the claim which the dockers are making is not an exaggerated one, and that it should be regarded as a minimum. There will, of course, sooner or later be a fall in prices, although no one can venture to give an opinion of any value at this time as to when that fall will take place. If and when it takes place then I think that the fall should be regarded as adding an increasing margin to a standard of living which is already sufficiently poor, and that the fall would therefore help to raise the present insufficient standard to a more reasonable standard. For that reason I should be very sorry to see a sliding scale of wages fixed to rise and fall with the cost of living. Further, I have not heard any suggestion from the employers that there should be a sliding scale of profits based on the cost of living.

The CHAIRMAN: That does not matter, does it? You are not basing the workmen's case upon what the employers do?—(A.) No.

Q. What I want you to do is to continue your valuable evidence with regard to the points which are put to you.—(A.) Yes. The relevance of that is that what I am thinking of is such a sliding scale; for example, as is possible in connection

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with the gas clauses, as to which you know a gas company—

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. With regard, first of all, to the National Maritime Board scheme, has every sailor who is taken on to pass through a local office which is constituted of a representative of the employers and a representative of the Seamen's and Firemen's Union?—(A.) Yes, that is true of the sailors and firemen.

Q. And he has the right to select his ship, and the employer has the right to select his man?—(A.) Yes, that is true.

Q. And the essence of the scheme is practically one employer throughout the whole of the country?—(A.) I do not quite understand the sense in which you use those words.

Q. Let me put it to you again; I want to make myself clear. Every man who is taken on any ship under the scheme has to pass through a local office in each port constituted of a representative of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union and a representative of the employers.—(A.) Yes.

Q. An employer has the right to select his man and the man has the correlative right to select his ship?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And the essence of the scheme therefore is in effect one employer throughout the whole country?—(A.) I do not see that that follows.

Q. I put it to you that the local office consists of a representative of the Shipping Federation and of a representative of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union?—(A.) I do not want to fence with the question—

Q. I am sure you do not.—(A.) I only want to understand what you mean. You yourself put it to me that the employer has the right to choose his man. That statement itself, which you yourself put to me, seems to me inconsistent with your further suggestion that there is only one employer.

Q. I will try to be as consistent as you. Elevating myself to that high standard, the point I want to put to you is this: there is a unified control throughout the whole of the country in respect of the employment of all sailors and firemen?—(A.) Yes. That is the very object of the Board which was set up. That is quite another point, surely.

Q. That is the point. You realise that in regard to the dock industry, whatever is done you will have all the individual employers continuing to exist in all the individual ports?—(A.) I can see that this Court might recommend the adoption of some system which would assimilate the conditions of employment; so that if you put that to me as a necessity I should have to deny your necessity.

Q. We are still ascending into Empyrean heights, but dealing with hard practicality you realise that in regard to the port and dock industry there will still continue to be all the individual employers, the port authorities, the shipowners, the warehousemen, the wharfingers, the barge-owners and the tug-owners, all continuing to exist in all the different ports?—(A.) Yes, and you are putting to me exactly the kind of objection which was put to me when I was trying to form the National Maritime Board with regard to seamen; you are saying that a good idea is impossible because of certain things which exist; and I suggest to you, if I may respectfully do so, that these things which exist may be altered in order to suit the good idea.

Q. That is what I was just coming to. So that

in order to put the port and dock industry on a comparable basis with the shipping industry, it would be necessary in some way or other to consolidate into some organisation all the individual employers in an individual port?—(A.) I can imagine nothing more desirable than that some such organisation should take place.

Q. As long as we understand what it is, very well. In regard to the National Maritime Board scheme, that was introduced, and very properly introduced, as an emergency measure during the war?—(A.) Yes, it would be true in one sense to say that; but it is also true to add that everybody concerned realised that this organisation set up would in all probability continue after the war; and, indeed, before the war came to an end, I remember I was Chairman of a Conference to consider whether it could not continue after the war, and there, again, unfortunately, we met our friends the Liverpool shipowners in an attitude of opposition.

Q. It is true to say, is it not, that some of the Unions have not yet acquiesced in the National Maritime Board scheme?—(A.) Which Unions—the men's Unions?

Q. For example, the British Seafarers' Union?—(A.) On the very contrary, the British Seafarers' Union desired to become members of the Board. They came to me and pleaded hard in my room at the Ministry of Shipping to be allowed to become members of that Board, and I can assure you that it was with very deep regret indeed that, in the circumstances which obtained, I had to refuse them special representation.

Q. As long as we know what the facts are, I am content. Do you say that all the shipowners are paying the National Maritime Board's rates? I put it to you that some of the shipowners have not been in a position to pay; in other words, that they could not enforce the Maritime Board's rates on their crews?—(A.) I am sorry to say that is news to me.

Q. Then we will deal with it ourselves. Now I want to come to another point. In regard to this national standard rate, it is in the sense of a national standard rate that you understand the application before his Lordship's Court?—(A.) A national standard rate or rates.

Q. It is in the sense of the national standard rate or rates that you understand the application before his Lordship's Court?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then we are in agreement on that point. I want to ask you this: Take some big industry, take the engineering industry, is there anything in the shape of a national standard rate in the engineering industry?—(A.) Well, I should not like to go so far as to say that I see a precise resemblance to the case of the seamen's wage.

Q. You are seeing a little further than my immediate question; I am going to put that in a moment. Let me just deal with one thing at a time. Do you know whether, as a matter of fact, there is a national standard rate in the great engineering industry?—(A.) I do not think I could reply to that in the affirmative in the sense that we are putting it here to-day.

Q. Do not you know that there are district rates obtaining in all the various districts under the engineering industry?—(A.) Yes; that is what I meant when I said the standard rate is not of the kind that we were able to settle in the case of the seafaring industry.

Q. Do you know whether attempts were made during the war to introduce a national standard rate throughout all the districts in the engineering industry which absolutely failed?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You know that?—(A.) Yes, but at the same

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time the tendency there is, and the aspiration there is, towards a national standard rate; and that, I think, is a tendency—I hope I discern rightly—in all the industries, including the mining and other industries, which I think could only have one eventual result.

Q. I realise I am dealing with an eminent economist, and I am only putting to you what are the economic facts of to-day. Take the shipbuilding industry. You know that there is no national standard rate in the shipbuilding industry?—(A.) No, I am sorry to say not.

Q. That there are different district time rates in all the districts in which shipbuilding is carried on?—(A.) And I think, if I may say so, with very unfortunate results, as has just been shown at Chepstow.

Q. I am not going to argue the unfortunateness of the Chepstow incident, because you have more knowledge of that than I have. What I am going to put to you is the fact. In regard to piece rates, take, for example, the expense of rivetting any particular berth in any particular type of ship. The piece prices are different piece prices in every district in which shipbuilding is carried on?—(A.) That is perfectly true, and may I say that all these things were urged against the proposition to establish a standard rate in the seafaring industry—all these arguments that you are now using were used to me.

Q. Again you are anticipating what I am going later to put to you: that that shows of itself a fundamental difference between the case of the seamen and firemen and other industries.—(A.) I was going to say not, because, as I pointed out to the Court in giving my evidence in chief, there were profound differences in the seafaring industry before the National Maritime Board began its work, but we were able to deal successfully with those profound differences and establish national rates, which are given in these papers which I have handed in here.

Q. Let me put to you a case. In one particular instance where the proposal which you suggest now was accepted to be carried out the shipbuilding industry, namely having a standard rivetting list, for example, that was brought into operation, was not it, with regard to Isherwood's ships?—(A.) There I am sorry I have no information which will enable me to give you an answer of any value. You have more information than I have, but I accept it at once.

Q. I cannot compete with you?—(A.) I did not know of that particular fact, but it is evidently known to you.

Q. You did not know, then, that a standard rivetting list was introduced for Isherwood's ships?—(A.) No.

Q. And that was entirely non-effective because the men would not work it?—(A.) I was not aware of that fact.

Q. We can prove it. Do you happen to know anything about (because you are a great authority on wages) the great flour milling industry?—(A.) I have no special knowledge of the wages in the flour milling industry; I wish I had.

Q. We can deal with that.

Mr. BEVIN: They have a standard minimum. I signed the agreement.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Just in regard to another point; you made a criticism upon the Report of Lord Sumner?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I did not quite catch it. May I ask you to tell me what your criticism on that Report is?—(A.) The criticism is the one which I ventured to express at the Royal Statistical Society when

the same theory was put forward there. The Sumner Committee, instead of examining the rise in prices as it affects the cost of living in the ordinary sense, was persuaded to examine the rise in the actual expenditure that was possible in the circumstances. Will you let me explain what I mean by that, my Lord?

The CHAIRMAN: It is perfectly clear.—(A.) I thought perhaps it was not plain.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Do I understand you to say that the Report of Lord Sumner's Committee made no reference to the standard of living?—(A.) Oh, yes.

Q. That it merely took the difference between two things, one at an earlier date and one at a later date?—(A.) Yes, but you see what it did was, it took the budgets of the earlier period, the actual expenditure of that period, and compared them with a list of budgets of the other period, the later period, and the expenditure that obtained then, not the expenditure corresponding to the same things which were purchased in 1914, but what they were actually buying in war conditions, limited by war conditions and limited by the fact that there was rationing and the people were unable to get what they wanted. That is what it is.

Q. Now we understand, we can meet that criticism. Do you appreciate, as I am sure you do, the statement in the Report in paragraph 38 at page 7? It says: "A slight reduction appears to have taken place in the equivalent value in calories of the food consumption of the skilled class recorded in the budgets collected, perhaps 3 per cent. This appears to be due to the proportions in which bread and bacon are consumed, and a slight readjustment between the two would in fact wipe out the reduction." Do you modify your criticism having regard to this statement in the Report?—(A.) No, I am sorry, but I cannot accept the statement in the Report. I am here, not for the first time, very severely criticising the conclusions at which they arrived.

Q. Do I understand that what you say is that this statement in the Report is not true?—(A.) Yes, in the strict sense.

The CHAIRMAN: You can hardly put it that way.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I was going to put it in that way to the witness.

The CHAIRMAN: No, you must accept a certain ruling on that. You are mentioning the case of a Report under the hand of Lord Sumner, and you are not to put the witness in the position of saying it is not true; you must put him in the position of saying it is erroneous.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I accept the other phrase, certainly, my lord.

Q. Do you say that this statement is erroneous?—(A.) Yes, I should say that it is erroneous, and that the error arises out of a false view of the facts and a false judgment of the facts.

Q. Then being arrived at on a false view of the facts and a false judgment of the facts, the statement is false?—(A.) I should not myself hesitate to say that it gives a false impression of the state of affairs. I have said so before, and I repeat it.

Q. There is no reason why we should fence about our meaning?—(A.) It is very plain, and plain language ought to be used about it.

Q. I want just to pass to a further passage in your evidence, the question of inflated prices. You gave some figures which were taken from Mr.

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Bevin's table D.8a, from the prospectus of the Western Counties Shipping Company, and your point I understand to be this, that the inflated prices (I think you put it) of the ships when sold prejudiced the whole of the future?—(A.) Yes.

Q. May I put this to you, that shipping freights are on a world competitive basis?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is true, is it not?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, he says so.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: And that when a shipper is bargaining between international or other sections of shipowners, he does not consider the freight which he is prepared to pay according to the capital cost, or the capital sum represented by the ship in which the goods are to be carried?—(A.) No, he is charged what the traffic will bear.

Q. And therefore under the competitive conditions of freight, the question of the cost of the ship, what it was built for, or what it was sold for, does not affect the amount of the freight?—(A.) No, that is, of course, a fortunate position for the shipowner that arises.

Q. Now to come to another point: in your view, I understood the cost should not be passed on to the consumer?—(A.) That is my view.

Q. Now take the case, for example, of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, who are performing services in respect of handling traffic, and are charging for those services sums that they are authorised to charge by the Acts of Parliament, which charges are paid by the merchant, or the consignee, or you, or me, or any person else who gets the goods through. How are those charges to be met, if they are not passed on to the consumer?—(A.) You are asking me by what method passing on could be obviated or prevented.

Q. I want to know your scheme for ensuring that those charges are not passed on to the consumer?—(A.) Obviously there are several methods that the State could adopt to prevent it. The State could, of course, amalgamate all these transport services and utilise those world freights of which you speak, to relieve the consumer and to pay decent wages to the persons concerned. That would be one obvious way of doing it, and not a difficult way.

Q. Let us just get that fact. Your first suggestion is that all the ports should be nationalised?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. And if they are nationalised, surely does not the State stand in the position of the present port employers and have to charge on to the consumer under your scheme what is charged on to the consumer to-day?—(A.) Not if the State had either taken the liberty—let me substitute the word "precaution" for "liberty"—of requisitioning the mercantile marine as it did in the war, at Blue Book rates, or had nationalised the shipping; then it would have at its disposal the whole fund arising from the transport operations, and it could distribute that fund that it created partly in the relief of the consumer, as is done in Australia, and partly in higher wages to the work-people concerned.

Q. Your first proposal for avoiding the cost being passed on to the consumer is first of all to nationalise all the ports, and secondly to requisition all the ships?—(A.) Yes, that is the most effective way. It was done, you know, and it could be done again.

Q. What are you going to do with the foreign ships?—(A.) The foreign ships, of course, cannot be controlled by the British Government, but I have yet to learn that because the foreign ship is charging as much as the traffic will bear, it should therefore follow that the British dock labourer

should not have a proper wage. There does not seem to me to be any logical connection between the two. We cannot help what the foreigners do, but we can help what our own people do.

Q. We have this suggestion; have you any other? Shall I use the word simpler suggestion?

The CHAIRMAN: What is the first?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: To nationalise the ports and requisition all the shipping.—(A.) The ships have only just been de-requisitioned; there is no secret about it, and they could easily be requisitioned again.

Q. I will not go into that. What is your second best proposal?—(A.) I do not know that there is any necessity to put forward any further proposal on the subject; but obviously you could pool. The State might say: "Well, the shipowner, as you, Sir Lynden, say, cannot help charging what the traffic will bear; very well, we will pool these profits and come to a national and proper basis as to what shall be done with them afterwards." They might do that; they might allow the shipowner to collect these world rates of freight, and they might deal with them under some pooling system; that would not be impossible, but it would be certainly very inferior to the other method of procedure.

Q. You take your stand, I gather, on your first proposal.—(A.) But, Sir Lynden, do you suggest—I do not know that I can properly ask you questions—do you suggest the British Government cannot do what the Australian Government does; have we less power than they have? They are nationalising their shipping; why should not we, the British Government, nationalise our ships?

Q. At present I am only engaged in the interesting occupation of asking you for your proposals.

Mr. BEVIN: The other day Sir Lynden was using Australia as a precedent.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is quite right.—(A.) I suppose I ought not to continue, but I may point out that they bought a fleet of ships outright, and out of the profits they wiped out the whole of the capital account.

Q. I have still to learn whether that, by any Divine interposition, avoided the Australian Government having to do what the private or the public employer would have to do: pass on the costs of handling the goods to the consumer.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the point you are being examined on.—(A.) On that—

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Let me put it quite shortly; the cost goes on all the same, whether it is the State is the employer, a public authority is the employer, or a private person is the employer?—(A.) Oh, yes; it makes this difference: that if the State were in possession in the way I have suggested, it would have in hand this great mass of profits, and it could then return the money to the consumers in any way it cared; it could wipe out the whole of the tea duty, or the cocoa duty, or the sugar duty, and so give compensating relief. It could in several ways restore to the community what has been taken from the community.

Q. Does it issue paper money, or what is the suggestion; it has to get money somehow; it has to get money from direct taxation, or in some manner, from the goods; it does not drop like manna from the heavens; where does the money come from?—(A.) I do not understand your posi-

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tion. During the war we requisitioned the ships at Blue Book rates, and in consequence the public got their bread cheaper than if the ships had not been requisitioned at Blue Book rates, and yet you suggest to me that the cost of excessive freights must necessarily be passed on to the consumers, but I tell you that in the war after control they were not passed on to the consumers.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am much obliged; I have got your proposal.

Re-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I was wondering whether you had heard, showing the development in the engineering trade, that the employers, the National Engineering Employers' Federation, did at York last week submit certain conditions to the Unions, in which they said that the proposals must be regarded as standard rates, and must be accepted en bloc for the whole country. Have you come across that yet?—(A.) No, I must take it from you. I was in Scotland, and missed that item.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps you will help me on one or two points. Broadly speaking, what was the composition of the National Maritime Board; was it proportionate among workers and employers?—(A.) There was equal representation, six on one side and six on the other, with myself as Chairman.

Q. You were the independent Chairman?—(A.) I was the independent Chairman.

Q. What I want to get at is, did you manage the thing conveniently together after free and full discussion, and were you able to come to a working arrangement?—(A.) Yes, I think it would be true to say that in the majority of cases the Board was able to arrive at a decision. In a minority of cases, some of which it is only fair to say, however, were not unimportant, the Board failed to arrive at a decision. Then, under the constitution of the National Maritime Board, as it then existed, there was a reference to the Shipping Controller. I then prepared a case for the Shipping Controller, and the Shipping Controller, who always took the very greatest interest in the work of the Board, then arrived at a decision; and I am glad to say that in every case his decision, which endeavoured to be a fair compromise, was accepted by both sides on the Board.

Q. That bears upon a question which we are much interested in here, namely, increased representation of the workers employed at a port on the Port Authority. You would favour such increased representation?—(A.) Yes, I should think it ought to take the form of equal representation.

Q. With probably an appeal to whatever department was the superior department for the time being?—(A.) That suggests itself as possible, as it was possible in the case I speak of.

Q. I am rather anxious on another point, if you can give me some help. You started, not unnaturally, with the figures with regard to the expense of living for a family of five. I think we are all aware that that is a pretty generally accepted datum for industrial life throughout the country; is not that so?—(A.) Yes, my lord, it does afford a sort of common-sense basis, but in practice it has always been found that the average working-class family cannot exist like that; it is—

Q. Pardon me, I am on the number. What I would like to get (but perhaps you cannot help me) is this: the dockers in the kingdom, their number, the number of them who are bachelors, the number of them who are men with families,

and the sizes. Is that obtainable, do you think?—(A.) No, I know of no means of obtaining it. One could only make, I think, specimen inquiries in ports, and then endeavour to form a common-sense view for the whole; but I do not know that that has ever been done.

Q. I understand, I may be wrong, that in foreign countries it would be obtainable, as, for instance, in France: that you could obtain, through the official equivalent to the Registrar-General in this country, in each trade the average ages of the men employed, whether they were bachelors, what families they had, and so on. There is not in this country, on the present basis, such available data?—(A.) No, our census methods are very, very incomplete, and very inadequate.

Q. You agree, do not you, that that might be a very helpful figure in the case of the docks?—(A.) It would be exceedingly helpful, and in every other industry as well. I daresay you know, my lord, the average working family only carries on because someone, either a grown-up child, or someone connected with it, or a lodger, eases the rent; it is only by that means that the average working-class family carries on. It does not carry on, in the general case, by reason of one person's earnings; it could not do it.

Q. You agree, would not you, with the general statement by writers on this subject that the period of the man having a wife and three young children is the critical period of the working man's life. If he has been a bachelor thrifty, then he tides it over; if he has been a bachelor thriftless, or a young married man thriftless, then there is a period of very considerable strain?—(A.) That is so.

Q. After that there comes a period when some of the young people get to work, and that increases the family earnings?—(A.) I think that is a perfectly true view of the circumstances, if I may say so.

Q. Do you happen to know whether this type of man marries very young?—(A.) As a general rule.

Q. He does?—(A.) I should say so.

Q. With regard to the Sumner Report, the word "untrue" has got into our report. What you mean, or what Sir Lynden meant, and we quite take it, is that it is incorrect?—(A.) Yes; I do not mean, of course, that it is—

Q. It has a very distinguished name attached to it, and I should not like anything in our proceedings to suggest for one moment that there was untruth in it in any improper sense?—(A.) I only want to suggest that it is a false view.

Q. I am going to suggest to you that it was not a false view, but it was a sound view upon imperfectly limited premises?—(A.) Yes, and not only so, what it is is fairly stated in the report.

Q. That is the point. Now let me call your attention (I think we are agreed, but I want to bring it out, if you would allow me) to this vital passage in the Sumner Report, page 1, head 5. This is what that Committee says: "It was not part of our reference to consider whether the standard of living attained, in 1914 or 1918, was or is inadequate, sufficient or excessive." Therefore you see the premises upon which they proceeded were very strictly limited. Then I want to call your attention further to another passage on page 5, head 13: "Certain omissions were deliberately made. We did not ask how much the wage-earners received." Now suppose that had been asked, and that had been put alongside of the expenditure for the time being, that would have thrown very considerable light upon this, I gather: that it is quite possible to conceive that

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the expenditure for years might have been up to the very limit of all the wages they earned?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You see it bears upon the other point you mention—namely, that people with high prices come upon them, and, with not equivalently high wages received, have to suit their living to the amount that they have?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. Now you see it is a living so restricted that Lord Sumner's Committee confined itself to?—(A.) Yes.

Q. As I understand, what you and this Court are asked to do is to consider what would be a fair standard of living, taking things as they are, and seeing what would be not a mere poverty-line standard but a standard of living which would recognise the citizenship of the worker—I will put it in that way; you know what I mean. The Sumner Report does not seem to give you any help on that problem at all?—(A.) It does not purport to do that either, my Lord.

Q. That is what I mean; it expressly says that that is not the problem it was engaged on?—(A.) And may I add one word to that, which I think is of very great importance. In 1918, the second of the dates treated here in this report, we were very strictly rationed, and it was not possible to buy the things; therefore it was comparing a period during which it was possible to buy things to a period in which it was not possible to buy them, and for that reason also it really had no relevance to the rise in the cost of living, it had relevance to what was actually spent under conditions of great dissimilarity.

Q. I do not want to labour this, but I think there is enough from the report to show (do you agree with this), that it was engaged upon an essentially restricted, and in some respects different, problem from that on which this Court is enquiring?—(A.) Yes, but I think it is also true to say that I do not think that they ought, even in the circumstances which then obtained, to have taken the particular view of their functions which they did take. I take rather strong objection to the view which they took, quite apart from those considerations.

Q. I see that point. I do not say what my own view about it is, but may I put the two questions to you, thus: the cost of living, in the ordinary sociological and statistical sense, means the expense that a family would be put to in providing itself with accommodation, sustenance, and all the other elements of common life. The cost of living in the restricted sense of no matter what you required but what you expended, might be conditioned completely by what they had to spend?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. And, therefore, the latter figure may not be the cost of living in the ordinary sense of the term?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. And it is because that is the ladder that seems to have been rested upon by the Sumner Committee that you have certain objections. Do I express your view?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I do not detain you about the passing on of the profits, but it is perfectly manifest, I think you will frankly admit, that if you were to attempt to arrest this natural process of making the consumer pay (unhappily you, and I, and the rest of us, are all the consumer)—the arrest of this natural economic process can be procured, and in your view ought to be procured, by a transmutation on a very large and national scale; in short, nationalisation, as a whole, and the requisition of all the shipping, as a whole?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That may come, or may never come, but

the questions I am going to put to you have reference to the world in which we live. What I want to get at is—I do not make any suggestion whether it is relevant to our Inquiry or not, but since you have mentioned it let me take it up: with reference to the Moor Line, you gave that as an illustration of very heavy increment of capital, I gathered from you that that increment of capital in that case ran into between £1,000,000 and £2,000,000—something like that. Would that be so?—(A.) About one and a-half millions.

Q. The point I want to get out is this: that was sheer profit to the possessors of the ships?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And profit accounted for, without going into details, from the generic and common cause, namely, that, unfortunately, we were at war?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it your view that the State should have taken, or may even now take, some more effective steps to put itself as a nation in possession of the profits so acquired?—(A.) Certainly it is, especially in view of the fact that that 1½ million pounds in that case is absolutely untaxed, it does not pay a penny farthing in taxation, and it will not do unless the holders of it die and pay through the death duties.

Q. Of course, the income on it will pay, that is one thing; but here is a case in which, notwithstanding, as I understand, the putting on of the war profit tax, there has been on account of the war a stupendous increment of capital?—(A.) Yes, and it is not an exceptional case. I should be very sorry to bring it forward as an exceptional case; it is representative.

Q. I am taking it as a type of the others, too. I am anxious to get this clear because, mind you, Sir Leo, you will appreciate what I am going to say, and I am saying it in all good heart to both sides, because if the case of the worker depended upon getting hold of that profit, it would be getting hold for itself of what should go into the exchequer of the country. Do you follow me?—(A.) I agree, my Lord, but I did not raise it on that ground.

Q. I know you did not, only while you are there, I want to get all the help I can from you about it. True policy, you say, would address itself to the problem thus: The war has plunged our people into distress as a class, there is a capital increase owing to the war; let the people be the inheritors of that increase. If the workmen claim to share that, then the mass of the people will turn the same argument against the workers.—(A.) The mass of the people, I should hold myself, consists of workers.

Q. Mark you, no. We are dealing with a particular industry, and I am very anxious to keep the workers' claim quite clear on its own merits. I do not want it mixed up with this idea of wanting, as it were, to pocket what should go to the people as a whole?—(A.) No, my Lord; I hope your Lordship will allow me to make my position quite clear upon that.

Q. Do, please?—(A.) To my mind, this case of shipping is illustrative; it is a parable. It is just as true of the Coats' profits that are dealt with in the Report that has just been issued to the public. The capital swells and swells, reserves are built up, reserves are transferred to capital; the new capital demands its rate of interest. Always capital *vis-à-vis* the worker says: Make me more and more profit on my enlarged capital. The workman comes in and says: I want a decent rate of living. No, says Capital, you have first to find the interest and profit on my enlarged capital. That is why I brought this

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forward, not because I want the workers to share in the swag, but because I wanted to point out that those enlarged capitals, enlarged by the war, are now demanding the new rate of interest on the enlarged capital.

Q. I am coming to that in a moment; I am not oblivious to that. I think up to date, so to speak, we are agreed that the proper and drastic finance of this country that the war demanded would have put its hand upon these increments instead of allowing them to go into, whether it be workmen's pockets or employers' pockets.—(A.) I am not urging that the workmen should have them.

Q. No, I know. We had evidence from Sir Alfred Booth: Were you present?—or perhaps you read it.—(A.) I had the misfortune to be away from London then.

Q. We had evidence with regard to these profits during the war of the Cunard Company. That, of course, is a large, powerful company, with wide ramifications of the best commercial type. Since the war their profits have been 20 per cent., notwithstanding Excess Profits Duty, and all the rest; but we were favoured also with a statement of their profits for 32 years before from 1881. I could not get anybody to do it, but I got one of our secretaries to address himself to that. I am referring to the distribution of profits. You may take it from me, if you will, that it was 20 per cent. during the whole time of the war to the ordinary shareholders, but for the 33 years from 1881 to 1913 inclusive it was only 3.12 per cent. During that period there was sometimes a year when there was no profit, twice periods of two years when there was no profit, and once a period of four years when there was not profit. But they held on, and their average for 30 years was only 3.12 per cent. Now if things went back to that period it is perfectly clear, is it not, that all this of which you have given us a sample is a complete map of disastrous inflations. The mischief is that if that proves true it will be calamitous to the trade so far as the workers are concerned.—(A.) It will be calamitous to all the parties concerned: it will be calamitous to the nation. It is making calamity, if I may say so.

Q. People know their own business, and financiers and so on know their own business better far than we do, but as a Court we are bound to look these facts in the face—that the five years' 20 per cent. profit of the Cunard Company was preceded by 30 years' 3 per cent., or slightly over 3 per cent. There is where my difficulty is again (and I think you will appreciate it now more fully) of endeavouring that the workers' case should be put upon its merits instead of being mixed up with this question of profits. You know, do you not, that there is a great hope that the output and profit will keep up along with a going down in prices. That is the hope. As a statistician, can you help me in this: Suppose the workmen's ambition in this case in substance were yielded to, that is to say, a much more sufficient scale of pay, much better living conditions, much better representation in regard to the management of the ports, do you think it is reasonable to expect that, the workman's human nature being what it is, he would respond to the measure of his duty as there was response made to the measure of his need and increase output?—(A.) I entertain that hope, because I believe in the fundamental decency of human nature. I believe one is justified in that, and life would not be worth living if one did not take that view.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a very human answer: it is the answer that I am struggling with. But

of course, you know again, to put to you a very general question, that if there has been a sense of injustice in the past, you may remove the causes but the effects may linger for a long time.—(A.) There must be a lag, of course.

Q. Assume that there is a gradually spreading consciousness that the life of the worker is being better attended to and his rights more recognised, you do not despair of his rising to a better view as to his duty in the way of output.—(A.) I think that, while, as I have said, there is a lag, in a great number of cases there has been a remarkably quick response to better treatment, an even quicker response than one would have been inclined to hope for.

Q. I am very glad to hear that. By response you mean more activity in work, and less slackness?—(A.) Yes. I should like to add something with regard to the profits before the war. It is of some importance. In the two years immediately before the war the shipowners did very well indeed. In the years before, in 1912, the net profit of the shipowners taken as a percentage on the book value of the ships was not more than about 6 per cent., but in 1913 it was about 26 per cent., and in 1914 it was about 18 per cent.; and it was that fact that enabled the shipowners under the Excess Profits Duty to get such a high standard for excess profits. They were able to take those two years out of the three standard years, and that is why they so largely escaped payment of Excess Profits Duty.

Q. The curious thing is that that does not apply to the Cunard Company.—(A.) The Cunard Company is an exceptional case, and it is not by any means representative of the great mass of cargo lines.

Q. There were sums in all those cases put to reserve, and so on, as you know.—(A.) Yes.

Q. Without those sums put to reserve the concerns could not have carried on in the slack years, could they?—(A.) I think it is only fair to say that that is so.

Q. One cannot look at the history of the Cunard Company, and those periods when they struggled for four years without any profit, without seeing the foresight of putting to reserve and managing courageously on that footing. During those years they may, of course, have been adding to their capital assets?—(A.) Yes, and I believe they made very large repayments to the Government.

Q. But, of course, so far as the shareholders were concerned, they got nothing. The property may have increased in value.—(A.) Very greatly. On the other hand, it is only fair to say that they had exceedingly heavy losses during the war owing to the submarine campaign, though, of course, in that case they did get compensation. At the same time, I do not doubt myself that the Cunard Company has every intention of replacing their ships, unlike some other companies.

Q. They are not taking the profits and giving up business, but where they have to replace them they have to replace them at enormous prices, have they not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Would you mind telling us this: those dividends have been declared, have they not, after paying Excess Profits, I think you told us, and also free of income tax?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Assume this case, for which the Moor Line is a type: where there was to start with a very large capital relative to former years, the anticipated profit would depend upon the existence of a straightened condition of world trade, would it not?—(A.) Not necessarily. I think it is a just view to take of the commerce of the future to suppose that the amount of carrying about the world

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will be enormously greater than it was before the war. I have no doubt myself that after we have won through these immediately difficult years the production of the world will be enormously greater than we even dreamed of in the nineteenth century. I think the amount of carriage in the world will be enormously greater. I think, therefore, there is no reason to anticipate bad times for shipping. There may be, of course, difficult periods, periods of inflation and depression, but I do not think we need anticipate that there will be too much shipping.

Q. On the other hand, is it not a fact that every month in which we live sees an increase of the available tonnage for the world's trade?—(A.) That is true.

Q. And that again will be governed by the requirements, and will go on until the one reaches the other?—(A.) Yes. To take the case of the United Kingdom, I think it will be two or three years from now at our present rate of building before we shall be in possession of a mercantile marine as great as we should have had if the war had not occurred. I think it will be several years from now.

Q. How do you think labour is capable of keeping pace with this rapid inflation of capital? I am asked to put that question to you.—(A.) That is what I desired to impress, though I am afraid I did it imperfectly. I am afraid, if the workers of this country are to be confronted with these new war capitalisations, and are to be expected to manufacture dividends and profits upon them such as have been promised to the shareholders, it will be an impossible task and one which would only be consistent with the degradation, not with the advancement, but with the continuing degradation of the workmen themselves.

Q. You may be right in that view, but that may reflect upon what I was suggesting to you as to the possibility, even now, of the Government arresting that process by seeing to it that the people at large, the taxpayers, shall have a share of that conceded inflation.—(A.) Yes; but in practice there would be great difficulty, and that is why I venture to make the suggestion, with respect to Sir Lynden, that the effective method is to take charge of the property concerned.

Q. Yes, I know that is your view. It is in view of all those facts that you mention that you do not see your way to agree to a sliding scale, at least at present.—(A.) No. Rightly or wrongly, I take the very strongest objection to the adoption of sliding scales at this time for the wages of the working classes of this country.

Q. That may be right, but if it is right, is not that rather a fortification of your argument that if, without any sliding scale, a fair and just, instead of an unfair and unjust, scale of wages were adopted, every increase of output would have the effect of decreasing prices? I mean, as a general economic proposition that is so; and therefore the workman would have a direct interest in increasing his output.—(A.) I am afraid it would be very, very difficult indeed to persuade the workman upon the facts of industry as they now obtain, that to increase production would necessarily mean lower prices for him; in fact, I am afraid it is not true, because one has the whole industry of the country governed by a number of interlocked trusts and combinations with interlocked directorships, so that you have really a machine to prevent the worker from getting the fruit of his better production. I am all for better production, but I cannot conceive that with the present machinery it necessarily follows that the fruit of that production will go to the worker.

Q. Do you not agree that increased output all round would have a tendency to reduce prices?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. Well, it is only in that sense. It is not that the worker will get it *qua* worker, but that he as part of the general citizenship of the country will benefit by the lowering of prices. That is what I mean.—(A.) Yes, but even if machinery existed to cause that fruition to inure to the benefit of the worker, it would still obtain that the scale put forward by Mr. Bevin, or the one that I put forward here—not as a standard of life, but as a poverty line—gives, after all, so little to the working-class family that I do not think you would get that result out of the average workman by saying to him: "Now, in five years' time the position will be this, that if you do better work and send down the cost of living your wages will be falling with it and you will be just as well off as you are to-day." That is a very poor prospect for a workman, and I cannot understand a man tolerating it.

Q. For the first time in the course of your evidence you have not appreciated the problem. I am accepting your view that the wages do not fall, so we are at cross purposes?—(A.) I am sorry.

Q. One argument for keeping the wages sound and good at the present moment, and continuing them even after prices have lowered, is that the workman, *qua* citizen, would be getting his living cheaper, and therefore the relative value of his wages would be increased?—(A.) I beg your pardon, I misunderstood you. I quite agree.

Q. Now, in that way do you say the workman, whether it be as a workman or as a citizen, at all events the workman, rising to a higher measure of duty as regards output would directly benefit, not only his class, but the nation at large, and he would in that way—perfectly true, although circuitous—be increasing with every lowering of price the value of the wage that he received?—(A.) Yes, I do not think it would be possible to contradict that.

Q. I was sure we must be at cross purposes before?—(A.) Yes; I thought you were putting the point the other way.

Q. That is perfectly true, both in economics and human nature, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I am asked to put this question to you, How does the analogy of representatives of labour on the National Board apply, where the only question is labour wages and conditions, whilst on port authorities large questions of trade and financial policy are involved?—(A.) I quite see. It is quite true that the National Maritime Board did not exercise any functions whatever with regard to the real governance of how an industry should be conducted—it did not extend to that—but I very strongly believe, if I may say so, in the extension of such functions to the workers in industry, and I think it could be done with very great effect in every industry with which I am acquainted.

Q. It is a pretty strong thing when a port authority has to consider so many questions, for instance, of international rivalry, as you know, as between Rotterdam, New York, and London, and all those kind of things. They all have to be gone into by a port authority, and it is a pretty strong thing, is it not, that the analogy of the Maritime Board and a port authority should hold to the full extent?—(A.) In my evidence I only pressed it so far as it had relevance to the possibility of establishing a national standard wage for dock workers.

Q. It might be accompanied by a full representation of the working classes, full in the sense of being adequate to cover all those interlocked questions of social conditions and the relations

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between capital and labour in the port?—(A.) I myself see no reason why it should not go further: I think it is such a pity not to make use of the extraordinary amount of brain power that exists in the masses, which at present is quite neglected. Men of the greatest lucidity of thought are not infrequently met with in all classes, but our present system cuts out the assistance of those men in so far as they exist amongst the great mass of the people, and we rob ourselves of the help that we might have.

Q. How would that work in London?—(A.) On the Port Authority, do you mean?

Q. Yes, on the Port of London Authority. There are only the two representatives—

Mr. BEVIN: May I make one request, my lord? I should like you to request Lord Devonport to go into the box on that issue rather than Sir Leo Money.

The WITNESS: I do not pretend to give evidence of any special value on that; but, of course, the direct labour representation is very small. There is other representation which might be represented as indirect democratic representation by virtue of the London County Council and so on, but that does not meet my point at all.

Mr. BEN TILLET: Are all the members of the Port of London Authority experts in shipping?—(A.) No.

Q. Is the Chairman an expert in shipping?—(A.) No.

Mr. BEVIN: I should like you to put this question, my Lord, if you will, on this question of indirect management: Whether Sir Leo's experience in the various Government Departments and investigations that he has made has been to find that the labour representatives are inferior in brain power, and unable to understand these problems about capitalisation, when they have been sitting with him when he has been acting in an impartial position?

The CHAIRMAN: It is a little bit argumentative, but, however, it may go down.—(A.) I am glad to have been able to test it so far as the Board over which I presided was concerned. I had the assistance of sober judgment, lucidity of thought, and real practical help from the workmen's side of the Council. They never failed us.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. BEVIN: That concludes the evidence that I desire to call, my lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Now, Sir Lynden Macassey, will you call your first witness?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I propose to call Professor Bowley as my first Witness.

Professor ARTHUR LYON BOWLEY, *Sworn.*

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you a Doctor of Science?—(A.) Of the University of Cambridge.

Q. You are a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society, Professor of Statistics in the University of London, a Member of the Council of the Royal

Statistical Society, and a Member of the Council of the Royal Economic Society?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think you were a member, were you not, of Lord Sumner's Committee on the Cost of Living?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And in 1917-18 you were engaged in the Statistical Department of the Ministry of Food?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think you are the author of a considerable number of well-known treatises: "England's Foreign Trade in the Nineteenth Century," "National Progress in Wealth and Trade," "War and External Trade," "Measurement of Social Phenomena," "Livelihood and Poverty," "Wages in the United Kingdom of the Nineteenth Century," and "The Division of the Product of Industry"?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think you have had a very great experience in questions connected with wages and cost of living?—(A.) They have been my special study for about twenty-five years.

Q. Both before the war, during the war, and since the war?—(A.) That is so.

Q. In considering the general question of the standard of living, is there an absolute standard?—(A.) I think there can be no absolute standard of living. That, I think, is shown by the very great variation that is always found in the minimum standards put forward.

Q. Is there any absolute scale of dietary?—(A.) No, that is quite relative, and governed by customs and by a hundred things.

Q. Looking at the question of the standard of living generally, has the standard of this country been progressive for some considerable number of years past?—(A.) It depends on the period that is taken. If one goes back to the middle of the last century, there was quite a definite progress up to about the end of the century. Since the end of last century it is very difficult to decide whether there has been advance or actual retrogression. People disagree on that point.

Q. In your experience what is the main question in a working-class diet? Is it the relative amount of meat and bread, looking at the matter statistically?—(A.) Do you mean from the point of view of general progress?

Q. Yes?—(A.) The general tendency in nations as they develop and become richer has been definitely to pass from a diet that is of a so-called inferior type of cereals, oats, and rye—I said so-called—passing on to a wheat diet, and then passing on to a meat diet. That has been my general observation as regards all the European nations. English people have always tended to pass to a meat diet as soon as supplies were available.

Q. So that in framing a standard of living the object should be to set up a progressive standard?—(A.) Yes.

Q. During the war and since the war have there been difficulties in that respect owing to limited supplies of animal and cereal foods?—(A.) That is certainly the case.

Q. What are the three factors by which any standard of living is conditioned?—(A.) Perhaps I should put first the customs or habits of the persons concerned, and secondly the availability of supplies in the immediate and near future, with the governing condition that whatever the diet is it must supply a certain amount of nourishment which the physiologists profess to be able to measure.

Q. In terms of calories?—(A.) Yes, and certain other units.

Q. I think in dealing with the first factor that conditions a standard of living, that is to say,

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custom, you have already referred to the fact that different nationalities have different tendencies in the details of their diet?—(A.) And different classes within the nationalities.

Q. That is shown in this country by the gradual change of diet as meat became more available?—(A.) Yes, in particular since the importation of foreign meat in the last quarter of last century.

Q. The importation of American beef and Australian mutton?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Did that very materially affect the quality of the diet?—(A.) That made a general limited meat diet possible. Before that time it was not possible.

Q. Going to the second point which conditions the diet, namely, the available supplies, you have said that there is no absolute dietary?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Therefore, in suggesting a dietary regard must be had in your view to the meat tendency as compared with cereals?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. Of course, the imposition of rationing restrictions, too, has very much affected the availability of supplies, has it not?—(A.) I will not say rationing restrictions have affected supplies, but the distribution of supplies.

Q. Yes, that is a more accurate way of putting it. In view of the existence of difficulties in supply, would an increase of wages in your view result in any larger supply?—(A.) In most of the important commodities of food I think no change of wages would result in any immediate larger national supply. In general, in times of unrestricted commerce, and in a world that can obtain enough food for itself, an increase in demand, of course, calls forth an increase of supply from abroad or at home; but in the near future there seems no prospect of there being more of the necessities of life to divide.

Q. Therefore, there is that very important factor to be borne in mind, that now, under present conditions, an increase of wages does not of itself operate directly to procure additional supplies?—(A.) That is my view.

Q. The third factor that you said must control the question of the dietary is the question of efficiency, which, you said, was measured by physiologists in terms of calories. What was found by Lord Sumner's Committee as to the efficiency of the weekly diet of an average family in 1914? It was 3,130 calories per unit per head, was it not?—(A.) That is, I know, the number, but I should say that one must not pay too much regard to the odd 30. It is necessarily a rather rough measurement.

Q. That was for an average family?—(A.) That was per head on the basis on which those measurements are generally made, so the size of the family does not affect the question in any way.

Q. Now, in your view, that is too low a standard for anything like normal conditions?—(A.) In the physiologist's view it is too low except for sedentary or very light work.

Q. I think in your view you would take a standard of 3,500 calories as being a standard of efficient diet for unskilled work lying between light and heavy work?—(A.) I should accept that on the authority of the eminent physiologists and others who have made experiments on it. I have nothing to say myself about it.

Q. You would accept the result of their experiments?—(A.) So far as this, that if a diet was found to contain less than this amount per man there would be very strong reason to hold that it was an insufficient diet. If it contained more it would not necessarily be excessive.

Q. You have prepared the budget which has

already been submitted to the Court, have you not?—(A.) Which budget are you referring to?

Q. It is the one called H 1. I do not want to go to it for the moment, I only want to get the fact from you that this is the budget which you have prepared?—(A.) The budget H. 1 is intended to show what was the actual expenditure, in the most recent and careful investigation that was made before the war, for families which, in fact, contained only one wage-earner and two, three, or four children—an average of three children—with an income corresponding to medium skilled work in Birmingham at that date. I selected this budget for the sole reason that it was the only adequate group of budgets prepared in the 12 months before the war, and it was prepared for quite a different purpose to what we have now in hand. Therefore, I take it it may be accepted as a full statement of the ordinary way of expenditure.

Q. I am coming to that in detail, but taking the budget which has already been submitted to the Court, the budget which came to £3 17s. 6d., that is a budget which allows, does it not, in terms of calories, 3,700 for the man, and a lesser amount for his wife and children?—(A.) Yes, that is how it works out.

Q. So there you have taken 3,700, as against the 3,130 taken by Lord Sumner's Committee?—(A.) Yes, and 3,400 on this Birmingham budget.

Q. Before I come to the budget you have prepared, may I ask you one or two questions upon the "Labour Gazette" Measurement of Retail Prices? The "Labour Gazette" prices may be divided into two parts, may they not?—eggs, milk, sugar and butter; those coming to about one-third of the 1914 expenditure.—(A.) Yes, those four commodities, eggs, sugar, milk, and butter, three of which are so scarce as to be unobtainable in ordinary quantities, and the fourth, milk, is very dear, account in the "Labour Gazette" method for one third of the food expenditure in 1914.

Q. Let me just ask you with regard to some of these individual commodities. Take eggs, for example. According to the physiologists do 14 eggs equal 1 lb. of meat, and 36 eggs equal 1 lb. of bacon?—(A.) That is how it works out in units of nourishment, but I think it is quite contrary to common opinion. I think people generally regard eggs as quite a nourishing form of food.

Q. But that is the expression of eggs in terms of meat or bacon?—(A.) Yes. Shall I give the reference to that?

Q. We will take it from you that that is the scientific fact?—(A.) Perhaps I may put in the exact reference, because this is not my subject, I have merely accepted the figures. It is in "Food Economy in War-Time," by Professor T. B. Wood, Cambridge, 1915, pages 14 and onwards. That is connected with the Royal Society's Committee to which reference I believe was made on an earlier day of the Enquiry.

Q. I have no doubt we can get his Lordship a copy of that pamphlet?—(A.) I hope it is still accessible.

The CHAIRMAN: Anyhow, it is a demonstration of the wisdom of Irishmen, because 1 lb. of bacon seems to be equal to 36 eggs, and 1 lb. of meat is only equal to 14 eggs.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Again, in regard to one of those four commodities we were speaking of, namely, butter, of course the amount of butter included in a budget has had necessarily to be

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varied by reason of the shortage of supplies?—
(A.) Of course.

Q. And according to physiologists that can be varied if there are other supplies of fat and of fresh food?—(A.) Yes, there are two different things needed to replace butter: first the actual fat properties which can be obtained in various ways, and secondly somewhere in the budget there must be some fresh food, not necessarily any one of those articles.

Q. Again, what do you say with regard to milk?—(A.) Of course, milk is an extremely dear article of food at present, and it is one in which every householder would endeavour to economise. The actual supply over the country is less than in 1914, but I think the Ministry of Food would have to be consulted to know how much less. Milk can be replaced by various other foods in the same way that butter can, except in the case of young children, and especially, I suppose, with children under eight it is advisable and safest, if the milk is good, to use milk in preference to almost any other form of diet.

Q. Of course, when prices fall, the quantities of those four classes of foods, namely, eggs, milk, sugar and butter, can be increased?—(A.) When prices fall in some cases, and, in the case of sugar, when a greater supply is available.

Q. At the present moment we have got to deal with these very exceptional conditions?—(A.) Yes, but even since this was put into type the price of eggs has fallen, and they are becoming more within the ordinary range of purchase.

Q. If you take those four commodities, eggs, milk, sugar and butter, they have increased, according to the "Labour Gazette" Measurement of Retail Prices, by 210 per cent. in price, have they not?—(A.) Yes, taken together.

Q. Now, taking the other commodities, namely, meat, bacon, bread, flour, cheese, potatoes, they account, do they, for two-thirds of the 1914 expenditure?—(A.) Yes, with one or two quite minor items.

Q. Roughly, two-thirds?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have they increased about 100 per cent.?—
(A.) On the "Labour Gazette" reckoning, that group, taken in the proportions that the Board of Trade take them, have increased 100 per cent.

Q. So if you take the two groups together you get the figure of 136 per cent., which is the increase of retail prices given in the "Labour Gazette"?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Evidently very much depends upon the proportions which you give to the two groups and the question of substitution?—(A.) Yes, you can get anything from 100 to 210, according to whether you favour the one group or the other.

Q. Before we go to your budget, I want just to obtain one or two observations from you on the tables which have been put in by Mr. Bevin. In regard to Table C.2 what are your criticisms?—
(A.) That is the Economist Index-number?

Q. Yes?—(A.) You do not expect me to give criticisms of that index-number itself, but of the figures given in this case?

Q. Yes, we will take that table for the moment, and for the moment refrain from criticising the index-number?—(A.) Of course, it refers solely to wholesale prices, and except in times of stationariness, one cannot assume, without very careful analysis, that the movement of retail prices will reach the same amount as wholesale. Therefore I think these are not relevant.

Q. Therefore there is no necessarily definite relation between the wholesale prices and retail prices?—(A.) No, there is the whole of the cost of distribution and other things. The retail prices

may vary more or less; there is no necessarily definite connection. In the particular case of wheat the wholesale price, I take it, will be the market price of wheat, while the retail price will include the bread subsidy. Then, putting the three together, equal importance is given to textiles and other foods and cereals and meat, while very ordinary expenditures in the first column would have much greater importance. That is by way of the relevance of the figures. I am not saying that they would move to more or less than the retail prices, but I hold them irrelevant for the purposes of this particular enquiry.

Q. Then, of course, the average of 198½ per cent., said to be the increase of the present cost of living over 1914, is an unweighted average?—
(A.) Yes, it is not properly weighted, at any rate.

Q. Is that at all an accurate average?—(A.) No.

Q. The same point as to an unweighted average applies to the Tables C.3, C.3a, and C.3b?—
(A.) Yes, it is virtually assumed as an equal expenditure on every item mentioned in those three tables.

Q. Is that wrong, according to your experience, in dealing with questions of the cost of living and of food consumption?—(A.) Certainly, and I should never take an unweighted average for retail prices, but for wholesale prices I often should. I do not think any inquirer would ever take an unweighted average for retail prices.

Q. At any rate, is it erroneous?—(A.) In this case it is quite different. I have worked it out according to the Board of Trade weights, and keeping the prices as here given I have an increase of 192 as against that figure given in C.3 of 223. That is for 1905, of course. On the same table, I am not at all prepared to accept the prices. I will not go into them in detail, unless the Court wishes me to, but perhaps I may make this general remark. In comparing retail prices it is well known that there is a very great difficulty in getting commodities which are similar from one place to another or one time to another. You can get almost any price you please in ordinary cases by choosing the shop and the place and by the accident of selling. Therefore, I think it necessary to depend on the Labour Department's collection for comparative purposes, hoping and believing that they do secure strictly comparative prices, that is to say, prices of commodities which are the same, as near as may be, from one period to another. I have taken the "Labour Gazette" prices and quantities for the whole period, and I get 171 as against the 223. I could take the prices in detail, but it would take a long time.

Q. Your general criticism is quite enough. The same criticism applies, does it not, to Tables 3a and 3b and 4b?—(A.) In the case of 4 the assumption is that the lowest price named in the Board of Trade report was, in fact, the one obtained by the customer, and that is compared, not with the corresponding price for the same type of food, but with the price of the better type of food. It may be the case—there was evidence at the beginning of the war that it was the case—that the lower-priced meats and some other foods were unobtainable for various reasons, and that, therefore, purchasers were driven to the better quality. If they were driven to the better quality, of course, they also got better value for their money. If it can be shown that the working class, or a section of the working class, have definitely suffered by the absence of specially cheap foods, and are forced to buy more than they would wish to of the expensive foods, then, of course, that is quite an important point. Otherwise the criticism is merely again that the thing is unweighted.

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Q. Now I want you to come to Table C.5, which is the table showing the soldiers' rations, put in by Mr. Bevin, and I want to get your criticisms upon that. First of all, in the Army the conditions of supply in the camp as compared with an ordinary market: What do you say?—(A.) They are quite different. The soldier does not feed on what he likes, and the officers responsible for the food cannot get the food in the ordinary ways. The two things are not in any way comparable, I think.

Q. And is the ration wholly unattractive* for general purposes?—(A.) So I believe the soldiers found it.

Q. Does that tend to economy?—(A.) Certainly not, not that budget as it stands. It may not necessarily be a luxurious budget, but it is certainly wasteful.

Q. The present retail price is set down as 3s. 6d. What do you say on that?—(A.) I agree with the small items, the half-pennies and three-farthings, but in the main item of meat the price is put at 1s. 10d. You can, of course, buy meat at 1s. 10d. and, I believe, at 2s. 2d. The average price in January on the "Labour Gazette" prices was 1s. 3½d., but there was a fall in February; but I have not seen the figure so as to see what the fact is. 1s. 4d. is quite an ordinary price to pay, for example, for thoroughly good mutton at the present moment. I do not think the soldier had the best beef steak on that ration.

Q. If you take an average price on the amount you give of 1s. 4d. that reduces substantially the amount set down in this Table?—(A.) It reduces it by 6d. or 7d.

Q. Again, would you recommend the amount of meat and dried vegetables here, or would you suggest instead of that the more usual combination of meat and potatoes?—(A.) Certainly, I should suggest that potatoes should be taken with the meat, giving the same nourishment and being more satisfactory, that is to say, making it another 2d. or 3d.

Q. That would bring it into line with modern standards?—(A.) Yes, with ordinary customs.

Q. Therefore, if you bring it into line with ordinary customs that again operates to reduce the cost?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Now the ration provides 4,330 calories?—(A.) Yes, that is what it totals to.

Q. But if you take the figure of 3,500 calories?—(A.) It would be so much cheaper.

Q. Again, there would be another reduction?—(A.) I think the 4,300 calories is never needed except in very exceptionally heavy work. I think probably it would be quite an injudicious diet to take for ordinary work.

Q. No, I want you to come to Mr. Bevin's budget on Table C 7. Take the first three items on that budget.—(A.) I think that money, 66s. 6d. could very well be spent on food. I do not think it need be spent, but, of course, it can be spent, and spent with satisfaction. Equally, I should say £10 a week could be spent.

Q. If you apply the criticisms which you have made upon the soldiers' ration Table to this Table it reduces those first three items, does it not?—(A.) Yes, this 3s. a day for the man is, I think, I am not sure, intended to be a concession, bringing it down to a lower ration than the soldiers'.

Mr. BEVIN: It is not based on it at all.—(A.) The way I should bring it down, taking the three points that have been named, it would give 3s. 5d., reducing the other in the same proportion, which is the proportion which is generally accepted.

That brings down the budget to 53s. for the three items of the family's food instead of 66s. That I should suggest rather in the light of a correction than an alteration at first sight, on the method in which it is intended to be used, but that, of course, is subject to Mr. Bevin's statement, because I do not know what is in his mind.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No doubt Mr. Bevin will put his points to you later. Now, bearing in mind that there is no absolute standard of dietary, is it advisable to learn how, in point of fact, a limited amount of money has been spent in pre-war days?—(A.) In order to determine the custom for a given sum of money I think it is very important.

Q. That, again, has been done to some extent, has it not, by Mr. Rowntree in his well-known book, "The Human Needs of Labour"?—(A.) Mr. Rowntree's is rather an ideal than an actual budget, that is to say, it is rather how he thinks money could be spent on the minimum standard than according to actual custom.

Q. In his book, which is called "The Human Needs of Labour," he has prepared what he thinks is an efficient minimum budget?—(A.) Yes, on the assumption that the 15s. then allowed for food is spent on the diet that he outlines.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We shall give your Lordship a copy of that book.

The CHAIRMAN: I have been studying it. What does he bring it to?—(A.) 15s. 1d. for the food of a family of two parents and three children.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That, of course, is 1914, pre-war?—(A.) It is 15s. 1d. for the family, man and wife and three children, for food alone.

The CHAIRMAN: In a week?—(A.) In a week.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That, of course, is 1914. On page 129 you get Mr. Rowntree's summary of his 1914 budget.

(*The book was handed to the Court.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Mr. Rowntree's budget was prepared, as he states in his book, after investigating the conditions of 2,161 families in York.

The CHAIRMAN: When was Mr. Rowntree's book published?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It was published in March, 1918—at least, the preface is dated that. (To the witness): I think his investigations were made over a number of 2,161 families at York?—(A.) I do not think that was the number of families for food; that was the number of families in reference to his enquiry as to the number of children the family was supporting.

Q. He took the conditions in those families as a guide in framing his budget?—(A.) He took the numbers in those families as a guide for choosing the man, wife, and three children as the minimum.

Q. Later on was a very important investigation made in Birmingham?—(A.) In 1913 or 1914 this investigation was made, and it was published in 1914 or 1915.

Q. I think you have prepared in the form of a Table the results of the Birmingham investigation?—(A.) That particular part which relates

* Not printed.

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to families with middle incomes and with only one earner.

Q. Will you hand in now the results of the Birmingham investigation?—(A.) Yes.

(*The document was handed in marked H 4.)

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Just before the luncheon adjournment we put in a budget prepared by Mr. Rowntree and included in his book on "The Human Needs of Labour." Now I want to come to the investigations which were made in Birmingham into the question of family budgets.

The CHAIRMAN: That was for the years 1914-15?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: 1913-14, was it not?—(A.) That was the year of collection.

Q. And you have included in a table, have you not, the results of those investigations?—(A.) That is so.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think the table is numbered H.4, my lord. I understand that your Lordship and the Court have copies of that table.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. I see that you are quite right; it is 1913-14.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Will you explain in your own words to my lord and the Court what this investigation in Birmingham was, and what it resulted in?—(A.) The investigation originally was to determine the food of two classes of families, one healthy and the other tuberculous, in order to find out the connection between food and illness. The budgets I have selected are those of healthy families. I take it that they are typical of the method in which families in Birmingham or the Midlands immediately before the war were distributing an income of about 32s., and so they tend to show the custom of the working class of a grade above the unskilled labourer which had been attained before the war.

Q. Do the budgets of the families which you selected and set out in Table H.4 show that amongst the healthy families the expenditure on food was 17s. 6d.?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That compared with Mr. Rowntree's figure of 15s. 1d.?—(A.) Yes, and the difference is mainly due to the purchase of more meat than in Mr. Rowntree's minimum.

Q. There was included in that a figure for rent of 6s.?—(A.) Yes, that was the rent paid by those families.

Q. That was the rent paid in point of fact. Is that typical for the man of medium skill earning about 32s. per week in the provinces or 35s. per week in London prior to the war?—(A.) Are you speaking of the rent?

Q. Of the Birmingham figures?—(A.) As a whole?

Q. Take them as a whole?—(A.) They are very nearly the same as the Board of Trade budget.

Q. Then we come to the third-class of budgets, namely, what has been called the Board of Trade budgets. Will you explain to my lord and the Court what they are?—(A.) They are a collection of budgets made by the Board of Trade in 1903, which have already, I believe, been discussed in Court; and for 1914 they were brought up to date both by the Board of Trade and also by Lord Sumner's Committee to allow for certain known

modifications in diet; but the alterations were trifling.

Q. The 1914 Board of Trade budget is shown, is it not, on page 11 of the Report of Lord Sumner's Committee?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Of course, as we know, you were a member of that Committee?—(A.) Yes, I was a member.

Q. Generally speaking, the Board of Trade budgets for 1914 given on page 11 of Lord Sumner's Report more or less closely correspond with the Birmingham budget for the healthy families which you have set out on Table H.4?—(A.) Yes. The correspondence is, of course, not exact.

Q. No?—(A.) The Board of Trade budget is for a larger family than the Birmingham budget as it is here printed.

Q. I do not know what the difference is in the size of the family in the two cases. Can you tell me?—(A.) The Birmingham case was exactly five persons—parents and three children. In the Board of Trade budget there are 5.6 persons, corresponding to two supplementary workers in each household. In these Board of Trade budgets there was quite frequently a second earner, a grown boy or girl.

The CHAIRMAN: What Sir Lynden is wanting, I think, is to compare like with like. You cannot compare like with like in a case where there are three children and in a case where there is an estimate of over three children, one or two of whom are earning an income, because the workers would demand greater calories, would they not?—(A.) In the first place, I took the Birmingham Budget to get over that difficulty. In the second place, that is completely rectified in the cost of living report, where the necessary allowance is made throughout.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you excuse me interposing, Sir Lynden?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am much obliged.

The CHAIRMAN: It is in order to bring this to a point. On page 11 of Lord Sumner's Report it says that the urban working class weekly family expenditure was 23s. 10d. in 1914.—(A.) Yes.

Q. What Sir Lynden is after is this: will you kindly reduce that 23s. 10d. to the family which we are investigating in this case, and which was the subject of the Rowntree and Birmingham figures?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am coming to that in a moment.

The CHAIRMAN: In your own way; but I thought there might be a shorter way.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord has raised an important point in connection with Lord Sumner's Committee, which you say was adjusted.—(A.) It was adjusted by taking as a basis an equivalent man, and the ultimate figures were first given per man, as physiologists have generally done, and then brought back to comparable families for the report and the final figures on page 7. On page 7 the families are absolutely comparable.

Q. It has been suggested earlier in these proceedings—I do not know whether you were here—that that adjustment had not been made.—(A.) The adjustment was made everywhere in the report where the comparison was made.

Q. I want you to go to the budget which you have drafted, and which has been put before the

* See Appendix No. 57.

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Court already and called Table H. 1. I want to be sure that you have the right table in front of you—(A.) Will you provide me with a copy?

(A copy was handed to the Witness.)

Q. First of all, you had drafted the budget on H. 1, which deals merely with food.—(A.) Yes.

Q. And then on the table which has gone in as H. 2 the other additions to the food item of the budget are made for the purpose of giving the total budget. Is your budget on H. 1 based upon an expenditure of 19s. 2d. on food in 1914?—(A.) Yes. Shall I explain why that sum is chosen?

Q. If you will, in your own words?—(A.) I took the Board of Trade budget in 1914 and reduced most of the items in accordance with the smaller family which we had to consider here, but I left the meat item unchanged in order to strengthen the diet above the average, and so I obtained 19s. 2d. as a stronger diet and more liberal diet than the Board of Trade average.

Q. Your Table H. 1 gives a stronger diet and more liberal diet compared with Mr. Rowntree's budget or the Birmingham budget which we have already mentioned?—(A.) That is so. It is perceptibly better than any of the budgets which you have named.

Q. For example, it gives 19s. 2d. for food in 1914, as compared with Mr. Rowntree's budget of 15s. 1d., and the Birmingham budget of 17s. 6d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then I think you have also, for purposes of comparison, prepared a budget which would be the best budget for example for a railway porter receiving a wage of 61s. per week in London under the now current railway settlement?—(A.) Yes. That is on another page.

Q. That appears on a table which we will call, I think, H. 5. We will now put this table before the Court. (*The same was handed in.) You arrive at your figure in respect of the railway porter in the right-hand column of page 5?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is to say the amount of 35s. 3d. per week at the present moment?—(A.) 35s. 3d. for food and 25s. 9d. for other expenses.

Q. We can particularise those later. Will you tell my Lord how you have arrived at the railway porter's budget? Is it by taking the Birmingham budget and adjusting it?—(A.) I have rather put the problem of how a family can live on 35s. expenditure on food. I took as a guide the Birmingham budget priced according to the prices of January, 1920, and I found that came to 38s. 7d. In order to get down to about 35s. certain modifications were made which are shown on the page under the word "modifications"—rather less meat, more margarine, less milk, more bread, less sugar, more jam. That is merely a suggestion as to how the 35s. could be spent, and was quite probably spent, in accordance with the custom which we had found. It is not in any way saying that no more ought to be spent, if I may say so.

Q. It is the best way in which, in your view, a railway porter in receipt of the current wage of 61s. per week in London would expend his income?—(A.) Not the best way, because I should not like to try to dictate, but I think it is the way in which it is likely to be spent, and it would produce the necessary nutriment, and also a reasonable variety.

Q. I want you to revert again for a moment to your budget H.1. How does your budget H.1 compare with the porter's budget which we have

just called H.5?—(A.) It gives 4s. 9d. per week more, and that supplies definite additional nutriment if it is spent on nutritive foods, or in other ways makes greater possibility of choice or of suiting tastes so far as about 5s. on 35s. will go.

The CHAIRMAN: That gets it up to 40s., does it?—(A.) Yes, 35s. for the one and 5s. more for the other.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Some comment was made by Mr. Bevin on the quantity of cheese which appears in your budget H.5. On the other hand we have records, have we not, of the amount of cheese actually consumed over a considerable period of years; I am referring now to the statistics given in the "People's Year Book"?—(A.) Yes. After the budget was made my attention was called to the "People's Year Book," and I found that what was believed by the Co-operative people to be the ordinary family weekly purchase of groceries agreed in almost every particular with the budget here given. The budget was not constructed from that result, it was constructed from other records, and this result is confirmative of it.

Q. As a matter of fact you did not know the records in the "People's Year Book" until after you had prepared your budget, and it had been submitted to his Lordship's Court?—(A.) I had seen it perhaps 18 months ago, but I have not got it in my mind at all.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: At this stage we will hand in a copy of the "People's Year Book." (*The same was handed in.) As your Lordship will see, that is a book which is published under the auspices of the Co-operative Wholesale Society's movement.

Q. So that if his Lordship turns to pages 58 and 59 of that book he will see the family grocery bill for 37 years based on the average weekly family order taken from the Co-operative Wholesale Society's official records? You have that book, have you not?—(A.) I have not got the book, but I do not think I need it.

Q. I think I should like you to follow it. (A copy was handed to the Witness.) That gives, does it not? the average weekly family order of groceries on the average of 37 years?—(A.) It gives the figures for 37 years.

Q. Yes, I am wrong.—(A.) The figures of what the Society regard to be an average budget of groceries.

Q. Taking these records, do you say that it confirms the items which you have inserted in respect of groceries in your budget H.1?—(A.) Except in the case of flour, which is here given as 12 lbs. I take it that that is entirely due to the prevalence of baking at home in Lancashire, Yorkshire, and Northumberland, where the Co-operative movement is especially strong. That replaces bread to some extent.

Q. Subject to that observation, does it confirm your groceries in your budget H.1?—(A.) Yes. It gives 8 ozs. of cheese, whereas we give 11 or 12 ozs.

Q. That is a point which I want to get.—(A.) That is 7/10ths of a lb. on H.1. It was corrected in Court the other day.

Q. I see also by a note at the bottom of page 58, designated by an asterisk, that it says: "In 1916, 1917, 1918, and 1919 the figures are based on the average of 1 lb. of butter and 1 lb. margarine instead of 2 lbs. butter?—(A.) Yes, that is so; and at the end of 1919 of course the 1 lb. of butter could not be obtained. May I now say a word about the exhibition of yesterday?

Q. Please. This is the time I think to do it.—(A.) I cannot conceive that any housekeeper hav-

* See Appendix No. 58.

* Not printed.

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ing 11 ozs. of cheese to deal with in the week would cut it into 7 equal portions, and divide them equally among the 5 members of the family. The records that we have show that where cheese is used to such a small extent it is used to help out the supper on one or two evenings in the week. Nor can I imagine that if there was going to be 1s. spent on vegetables, an equal amount of greens of one kind would be bought each day of the week or 6 days out of the 7, and again cut up into 5 equal parts.

Q. According to your experience and knowledge of statistics, was that a wholly artificial exhibition yesterday?—(A.) Not only artificial, but if I may venture to say so, it was extremely misleading and I should like to put in a cutting from to-day's paper which bears upon this, if I shall be in order in doing so.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the paper?—(A.) It is the "Daily News" of February 19, 1920. It is a photograph of the preparation of what is called "The Dockers' Meal," a quotation which implies that the docker was invited to eat this potato and greens and cheese as his principal meal without one-thirty-fifth part of the other items of the budget. I do not, of course, credit the Court with being misled or counsel with having intended to mislead, but this will get forward, and the words "The Dockers' Meal" and the photograph of the mouse's portion of cheese and the guinea-pig's portion of greens will go forward as being what counsel suggested as the docker's meal.

Mr. BEVIN: May I interpose here to say that we will be quite prepared to cook the whole daily budget in proportionate ingredients by the most scientific method of cooking, and submit it to your Lordship's Court, and then you can see the milk and everything, and see exactly what the family has to live on in a day; and I challenge Professor Bowley to live on it.

The WITNESS: May I take up that point now, or at some other time?

The CHAIRMAN: One thing at a time. You may take it from us that whatever a newspaper publishes about the evidence has no weight with us at all. We have a most excellent report of the evidence from day to day, and it is our duty to refer to that on any points that occur. You can make your mind quite easy about that. As to pictorial representation, of course we have no control over that; it depends upon the reader and the class of newspaper, and so on, as to what is thought to be the effect of it; but we are here as a Court to deal with the evidence.—(A.) I was thinking of the greater Court of the public, to which some of counsel's speech has been addressed, in the hope that one might stop some inaccuracy perhaps.

The CHAIRMAN: We do not think now as we thought when we were young, that everything that appeared in black and white must be true. We are far beyond that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think the unfortunate circumstance connected with the photograph was that not only was Mr. Bevin taking part in the featuring of it, but I think also a member of your Lordship's Court.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite right, too.

The CHAIRMAN: I am very sorry. I hope it was not myself, was it? May I say a single word about this, Sir Lynden? Do not let that, if you

can avoid it, be repeated. I quite understand what has been said, and it is quite sufficient that I should have made the pronouncement that I have made. The witness is now under your examination. You very respectfully treated all witnesses on the other side, and now they will very respectfully treat yours; but it is upon the footing of what is said here that we must lead the judgment of other people in such a way that we are not influenced in the slightest from the true course of judgment. I have no doubt that Mr. Bevin will exert influence upon those surrounding him to give equal treatment to all your witnesses. I understand that what you want is a verdict from this Court which shall have the mark of no prejudice upon it but pure justice.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Quite, my lord. Of course, that has been my object in conducting these proceedings.

The CHAIRMAN: I know. I was giving you the fullest credit for that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I can only say this: Of course, I should not be discharging my duty if I were not to criticise, I hope in a temperate and moderate way, the facts and figures put forward by the other side.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not only your right, but, as you say, it is your duty.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is my duty.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin is a good enough lawyer to appreciate that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am sure Mr. Bevin does. Now we will proceed with the witness.

The CHAIRMAN: We will now go forward, I think.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You have compared your budget H. 1 with the other budget in respect of food. I want you just to give the other items which are set out in H. 2.

The CHAIRMAN: You are leaving food now and going to the others, are you?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord.

Q. On H. 2 about half-way down the page, do you set out your budget under the heading "1920" and carry forward £2 in respect of food?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then you add 6s. 6d. in respect of rent; that is to say, you allow 6s. 6d. in provincial towns and 10s. in London?—(A.) Yes, for rent, including some travelling.

Q. And, as we know, the pre-war rent and the relationship of rent in one town to another town are shown in the Board of Trade document, Cd. 6,955 of 1913.—(A.) Yes, and the 6s. 6d. rent and the 6s. rent of Mr. Rowntree are, of course, in consonance with the 4 or 5-roomed house—generally a 5-roomed house—before the war. The additional 6d. is put down for additional rates. In some cases, of course, they are more, and in other cases, I think, they are less.

Q. In the budget which Mr. Sexton put in in respect of Liverpool he puts down 7s. 6d. per week for rent at Liverpool.—(A.) Yes.

Q. You will notice that in the shop assistants' 50s. budget which Mr. Bevin put in, the sum of

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6s. 6d. is allocated to rent.—(A.) Of course, it depends on the size of the house.

Q. I observe by the budget that Sir Leo Money put in, D. 35, rents and rates are put down at 7s. 6d.—(A.) Yes.

Q. Now I come to the other item, clothing. In H. 2 you include for the present budget a sum of 12s. 6d. in respect of clothing. That is right, is it not?—(A.) Yes. Shall I speak about that?

Q. Yes; I want to get your observations on that figure.—(A.) It is, of course, as you know, extremely difficult to make any estimate of clothing at the present time. Different articles of clothing have increased at very different rates, and the durability of clothing is, of course, different, and no one really knows, I think, what it costs to clothe anybody at the present. The "Labour Gazette" figures show that clothing has quadrupled during the war, but the only explanation they give to their method is that they take quality for quality, and I have never been able to find out what that phrase means, nor how to interpret it. What I am quite confident about is that there is a very wide range of prices at the present moment in the different markets, and to a limited extent it is a matter of choice how much anyone spends; but in putting the 12s. 6d., I am not suggesting that that would be enough for this year if the present prices continue. I do not know what would be enough; I do not think that there is enough clothing in the country for an adequate supply in any case.

Q. That again brings us back to one of your preliminary observations, that, in respect of living, the primary point is supply, and not the amount of the wages?—(A.) The supply must dominate it. The additional wages cannot purchase the goods if they are not coming forward.

Q. That make it all the more important, does it not, that this Court should do what can be done to expedite the passage of goods and imports of all kinds through the ports?—(A.) Especially the wool in this case.

Q. As bearing out what you say in respect of clothing, do you draw attention to the fact that neither Mr. Bevin nor Mr. Sexton, nor, it appears, Sir Leo Money, agree as to what should be included in to-day's budget in respect of clothing?

The CHAIRMAN: Is that so?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSETY: That is so, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you give them to me for convenience?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSETY: Sir Leo Money's budget is D. 35.

The CHAIRMAN: How much is clothing there?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSETY: Mr. Bevin put in Table C. 7 £1 5s. 0d. for clothing. Sir Leo Money put in, in Table D. 35, 17s. 6d. for clothing, and Mr. Sexton puts in, on Table F. B. 1, 6s. They would appear to be out, Professor.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sexton's figure is for more than clothing; it is for clothes, boots, and minor house furnishing.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSETY: Yes, and it is 6s.

Q. Then, to deal with the other items of your Table H. 2, you come to the question of fuel, and that you put at 4s. 8d.—(A.) That is for firing of about 85 per cent. of the pre-war estimate. That

is, of course, a rather low expense, on the assumption of one fire in the household, or gas, as would be more often the case in the South of England during the greater part of the year. It is based on Mr. Rowntree's inquiries, and what was actually used.

Q. There again you go on the basis of Mr. Rowntree's experience and what was actually used in fact when he prepared his budget?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You did bring in, too, in H. 2 the sum of 3s. 4d. in respect of household expenditure?—(A.) Yes. Of course, that sum cannot be estimated exactly.

Q. That is your estimate?—(A.) That, I think, compares fairly well with the 1s. 8d. put down in 1914, assuming the kind of economy and care that one has to exert when goods are so scarce and dear.

Q. Then you finally add a sum of 6s. 6d. in respect of personal expenditure?—(A.) Again, there can be no estimate there. It is the sum that is over on this wage for the items not already included.

Q. That again would compare with the sum of 5s. which Mr. Rowntree put in in respect of that item in his budget?—(A.) Not completely, I think. The 5s. that Mr. Rowntree put in his budget is what has been generally found available, or estimated. I am not in any way saying it is too high. Of this 5s., some part is spent on insurance and subscriptions, which have not increased as yet in the same proportion that other things have.

Q. I was going to put that to you. It is 6s. 6d. against Mr. Rowntree's 5s., and, as you say, Mr. Rowntree's 5s. is in excess of any previous record of expenditure under that head?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Adding all those figures together, you get the total budget of £3 13s. 6d. on the basis of living in towns, excluding London?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you added 3s. 6d. for rent and extra travelling in London, bringing the budget, so far as London is concerned, to £3 17s. 0d.—(A.) Yes, and putting it now backwards, I say that is the suggestion as to how £3 17s. 0d. would be likely to be spent, and the result it would lead to.

Q. And you compare that with the way in which the railway porters' wages of 61s. would be spent, and with the way in which it was found by the Board of Trade budgets, and by the Birmingham budgets, and by Mr. Rowntree's budgets, the sum represented by those budgets was in fact spent before the war?—(A.) The same general method of expenditure, some substitution where goods are scarce, and a certain extreme economy in clothing; otherwise the standard is definitely higher than in the other budgets put in.

Q. Just one final question: in preparing these figures, have you been guided by your experience during the war and by your special researches into the cost of living, and by the social phenomena before the war?—(A.) That is so. I have been in touch with the question during the whole of the war, and, of course, one has watched one's own expenditure as well as the official records.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You began to explain, in your opening statement, that bacon had much more calorific value than eggs?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you also pointed out that eggs were very difficult to get?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So bacon had to be substituted in your budget—more bacon and meat?—(A.) There has been no definite substitute for eggs in any special case; the whole budget has been so arranged as to provide a substitute taken as a whole.

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Q. You complained about the exhibition, that you would not cook it that way. Would you say that the people would eat that bacon a little bit each day for breakfast; that would be fairly natural, would not it?—(A.) It is not unnatural, but it is by no means always done. The fish item might help for one morning.

Q. I will come to fish in a moment, and allow a day or two for that. You allow 1 lb. of bacon, do not you, for the week, for five people?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Since you rejected my exhibition, I have sent out and I have got the daily portion of bacon to divide between a man and a woman. (*Producing exhibit.*) That is the actual weight, and I have the certificate of weight. We are dealing with dockers and not scientists. I am asking you whether you think that portion—or assuming he ate one-third of it, or two-thirds of it, and left that bit to the wife, and nothing for the children, is sufficient for a breakfast for a man to go and discharge ships and carry heavy grain and the rest of it?—(A.) You do not mean that he would eat bacon and nothing else?

Q. Assuming he ate the bread with it. You have said you allow a bigger meat diet. I will come to the actual portion of meat to the man. I want to demonstrate it by ocular demonstration; I am willing to cook it, and when that is cooked I want to ask any employer, or you, or the Court, whether a Cambridge professor is a competent judge of a docker's breakfast. (*Laughter.*) Do not laugh, please; I am quite serious on this, because the point is this, that we have to examine it in the light of a man, and not of a gentleman who sits down to see how little we can live on. I want to emphasise this question.

The CHAIRMAN: You are quite within your right.

Mr. BEVIN: I claim the right that a working man has a right to a piece of bacon as well as the rich, and I want to ask whether that is a fair breakfast for a man and wife, to say nothing of the little bit of fat that is left for the children. I have the actual certificate of weight, which I am prepared to hand in.

The CHAIRMAN: You hear Mr. Bevin's question, Professor. Will you please answer him?—(A.) With the bacon one would picture, of course, the bread, margarine, some milk, possibly porridge, and, in fact, what would be the whole diet, not a selected and unattractive looking portion of bacon. Then I should say that, not my own work in the study, but the recorded observations of working-class life, show that that is the kind of food which, in fact, they have, and on which they can be, in fact, adequately fed.

Mr. BEVIN: This country has gone through a war, and 96 per cent. of the men who went over the top were our class; and do you go into the box to prove that the conditions that existed before the war are to be now perpetuated for ever? Is that your object?—(A.) That is not my object; I am not saying that anything ought to be perpetuated, I have tried to show—

Q. Then would you let me put this question to you:—

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Let him answer, please.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to get this answered: Do you say that the budget on which you have based it is satisfactory—

The CHAIRMAN: Take one thing at a time. Will

you give your answer, Professor?—(A.) May I have the question again?

Mr. BEVIN: The question was, Do you suggest that the whole thing, this low standard of life before the war, should be perpetuated for ever, and all future standard of life be just based upon that—on increased prices?—(A.) No.

Q. What do you suggest?—(A.) For the moment I suggest that the existing supplies do not provide more for the population as a whole than some slight excess of what is there given.

Q. Then, if the supplies are short, should the ration for every member of the community be the same, or those who work hardest have the most, and those who do least the less, in proportion to those supplies?—(A.) It depends on how much of the shortage in the time of war was necessary; at the present time it is a matter of policy as to which will give the best results in bringing forward food.

Q. Let me get you back to the point. You say that increased wages were of no use to get supplies distributed to the common people, because the supplies were not there. Does not that, in fact, assume a famine state, or a partial famine state?—(A.) A partial famine in the sense that there is no free market for food.

Q. If there is a partial famine state in Great Britain at the moment, ought not the country, if it is to rehabilitate itself, be feeding at a high standard those who are doing the hard manual work, and that those who do nothing should be getting the least?—(A.) The actual method in which the food is brought to the people who need it most is, I think, a doubtful matter of policy; but the amount of these necessities of life which are consumed by the rich must be so small as not to seriously affect the question; and the middle class is probably living on a lower standard than is now put forward.

Q. I have a menu in my hand to which an ordinary ship-owner, whom we are asking for a living wage, would go to the Savoy to have to-day at 7s. What is the calorific value of that when he had eaten it. I would like to hand that up to you. (*Handing a document.*) You allow for five persons 40s. a week for food, and that is 7s. for one person at one lunch?—(A.) There are some fifty items here; I do not know which the ship-owner ate.

Q. That is quite easy, but I am pointing out the comparison. As a scientist, have you entered into a careful diagnosis of what the rich live on, compared with the poor; and have you worked out a budget for them?—(A.) Information as to the rich, and even the middle class, dietary, is difficult to get, but though I do not lunch at 7s., my experience would be that the luxuries which the rich consume in this sort of way have very little relation to necessities. The dearest food you could get before the war was lobster.

Q. That is possible. Do you live on 40s. 0d. worth of food?—(A.) My existing budget for the last three weeks I took out on Saturday, after this was all prepared. My family is larger than the docker's family, and contains three children under thirteen, and also we have some help. My expenditure in the last three weeks on food alone was 47s. 0d. per week; adding a certain amount of garden produce, 52s. 0d.; if it were reduced to the family on that paper, 46s. 0d. The 6s. 0d. difference is due to a larger allowance of milk. There has been no butter in my house for three months. We bought three eggs during those three weeks in the case of illness. Our consumption of meat is

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less, and that amount of bacon is rather less than I myself use in the morning.

Q. And you have made a study of food values, so as to have knowledge for the selection of the food likely to give the most calorific value?—(A.) I have made that study, but it is open to common experience to know, and it is the experience of mankind to know, what kinds of foods are the most nourishing; the scientists have only confirmed experience and measured it.

Q. Do you suggest that a woman when she goes into a grocer's shop in the East End, knows the calorific value of everything she is buying, so as to make the right selection, or is she governed by taste?—(A.) She is governed partly by experience of what does satisfy her family and nourish them, and partly, so far as her purse goes, by her taste and the family's taste; no one need know the calorific values.

Q. Does your budget assume perfect digestive organs, and the extraction by the body of the full calorific value of every particle of food that enters the stomach?—(A.) The physiologists, so far as I have understood their work, have taken for the value what actually is of use to a man, what he gets out of the food for nourishment.

Q. Supposing he is slightly dyspeptic?—(A.) Then he would have to change his diet, or take the necessary medicines.

Q. Supposing he cannot afford to change his diet, owing to the 40s. Od., or the necessary diet ordered by the doctor is unobtainable?—(A.) Then he would be short for that week, or some other weeks, or he would have to make some economy.

Q. And possibly die?—(A.) An invalid's diet is not necessarily expensive; of course, illness must act as a source of trouble in any case to any household that is not thoroughly rich.

Q. And you complained about my exhibition. Do you suggest that the 1s. Od. worth of vegetables ought not to be divided between six days, but that there should be some days that the workpeople, in order to oblige their kind employers, should not taste a vegetable at all. Is that what is in your mind?—(A.) At the present time I have not got a garden that is properly productive. My family has to take green vegetables about twice a week; that is, I should think, an ordinary thing in the winter. It is rather remarkable, I think, that we can get fresh green vegetables through the winter anywhere.

Q. Supposing for greens you substitute roots: do you get exactly the same proportion with the present prices that you could with the greens, when you buy them in the shop?—(A.) I do not think it is any serious hardship that there should not be two vegetables every day in the week. It is quite a common thing in middle-class families.

Q. But they have all sorts of food that the workers do not get?—(A.) Not the middle class.

Q. What do you describe as "middle class"?—(A.) For example, the budget that was put in on your side by clerks and shop assistants.

Q. They are not middle class, are they? They are known as sweated workers, because they are putting a Trade Board down for those trades. Take the shop assistant, whose budget was put in, living in three rooms at a rent of 6s.—I took that from a newspaper. You would not call him middle class, would you? I should call him the bottom dog.—(A.) The middle class families I should have in mind would be the small professional or clerical families—civil servants, if you like, who have from £400 to £500 and £600 a year, and considerable expenses. I have not their actual budget at the moment, there are some being collected now, but I should very much doubt

whether you would find that two vegetables for every day in the week is at all common.

Q. Is not there very great complaint of the tremendous economic pressure from the war profiteers on that class of people at the moment?—(A.) There is.

Q. Do you suggest because the profiteers have succeeded in crushing the professional classes, that therefore a budget should be provided which admits the crushing of us as well?—(A.) I am speaking of my experience of what the middle class, with a moderate income, has for its diet at present, and has had, in my experience again, for a considerable period in the winter.

Q. It is unsatisfactory, judging by the letters to the Press, is it not?—(A.) The present pressure is unsatisfactory for certain things, undoubtedly, but the diet I am speaking of is not a war diet, but is an ordinary winter diet for people with moderate means—or narrow means, if you will.

Q. Then the middle classes would have had a little better education, would not they, than it has been our privilege to enjoy?—(A.) I do not quite know how to answer that question.

Q. It is a question of general knowledge, is not it?—(A.) They have had more opportunities for education, yes.

Q. And therefore it would be expected that they would more scientifically cook, and have greater opportunities for cooking, than the working classes, say, where the woman had to go to work to assist the man and come home to cook to the best of her ability?—(A.) The education of the middle class women does not fit them specially for cooking, or even for purchasing; they have to learn their experience as they go along.

Q. But they have the facilities, have not they?—(A.) The facilities for what?

Q. For cooking and for learning?—(A.) Facilities for cooking in the house, yes; they have moderate facilities generally.

Q. Where the people are living in a congested area, like a dock neighbourhood, it is rather difficult to scientifically cook all the food, is not it?—(A.) With an ordinary range in an ordinary room it is possible to cook well, I understand; I am not a cook myself.

Q. If you have not tested this cooking and weight yourself, by what means have you arrived at your decision?—(A.) Which weight?

Q. If you have not tested the weights of meat before cooking, and after cooking, and tested its calorific value then, how have you arrived at these budgets? How do you arrive at your judgment?—(A.) From the reports of the specialists, the scientific men, who have made the experiments and published the results, so that they have been thoroughly well known for ten or twenty years.

Q. How did they make the experiment? For instance, I have heard Mr. Rowntree quoted. Has Mr. Rowntree, for instance, tested this actual budget in his daily life, spread over a period of six months. Mr. Rowntree is a wealthy man?—(A.) I cannot tell you that, I do not know Mr. Rowntree's habits sufficiently.

Q. Surely you would not, as a Professor at Cambridge, give your imprimatur to a budget unless you ascertained exactly how the scientists, either by experiment or by some other means, came to their conclusion that this amount of food was satisfactory, would you?—(A.) I should no doubt accept the verdict of competent scientific men, and, so far as satisfaction is concerned, I have within my own household tested what can be obtained for the money, and, I may add to that, at the date of the Cost of Living Committee I,

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and one other member, or person connected with the Committee—perhaps it would not be fair to mention his name—found our household expenditure was exactly the average household expenditure in the budget. It is true that the cooking was not done in a four-roomed cottage; I must admit that.

Q. You must admit that; that is my point, and you were a food specialist, and the influence of your study must have been felt in your home; it must have done.—(A.) I think not. I am not my own housekeeper.

Q. But there is a tendency when one is studying a problem to talk to other people about it, is there not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You would probably, even, produce a sort of environment of economy by your budgets?—(A.) I quite definitely aimed at that.

Q. That is my point. I noticed when you referred to the bacon, you said the workman would have a sort of three-course breakfast; he would have some oatmeal, and then this bacon to follow. You allow 1 lb. of oatmeal. His Lordship is a Scotchman; I do not know how that would satisfy a Scotch family of five, to be divided up for a week. How much oatmeal would that give each person each morning?—(A.) 1 lb. of oatmeal would provide a dish twice a week.

Q. Only twice a week?—(A.) Yes, I think so.

Q. The Scotch dockers are included in this claim.—(A.) Then they, possibly, would buy more oatmeal and less of something else.

Q. Less bacon than that?—(A.) In apportioning the £2 for the weekly expenditure the housekeeper in making her purchases would consider her money, consider the things available, and consider the tastes of her household.

Q. But there would not be much scope for variety, would there, on £2?—(A.) If you compare this budget with the Birmingham budget you will find that there is a certain scope for variety.

Q. You have called attention to Mr. Rowntree's budget, which was based on things as they were, was it not, and not on things as they might be?—(A.) Yes, things as they were.

Q. If this budget is based on things as they were, which is largely unsatisfactory, that is building upon that unsatisfactory foundation.—(A.) The things that were are accepted as a standard of the partly skilled man who had a wage, I believe, higher than the wage in the London docks, at any rate, prior to 1911, and the budget is now somewhat above. As I pointed out just now, the budget for the partly skilled man with a pre-war wage of 30s. 0d. to 35s. 0d. a week (Mr. Rowntree's budget) is the lowest on which he believes that efficiency could be supported at all.

Q. Are you aware that Mr. Rowntree collected the whole of this information in York?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are you aware that his works are in York?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are you aware that when he wrote this book the wage he was paying as a minimum was less than this?—(A.) Which book?

Q. "The Human Needs of Labour."—(A.) I do not know his wages. I remember after his previous investigations in 1901 he raised the minimum wage to the whole of his factory to correspond with what he had ascertained, but what he did after this I cannot tell you.

Q. Is it not a fairly natural assumption that if the information is collected in a district in which works are situate with regard to which a Trade Board had just been put down at that time because

of it being a sweated trade—I am speaking of the sugar, confectionery, and chocolate trade, for which a Trade Board had just been put down—is it not a natural assumption that a man would be largely influenced by the wages that he was paying himself in the town where he collected the information?—(A.) Yes, if the man had not a scientific spirit, but Mr. Rowntree has done a great deal of work of this kind. Many people are familiar with his writings, and must form their own opinion as to the accuracy and want of business bias in his methods. Of course, I cannot defend Mr. Rowntree.

Q. Would you be surprised to know that Mr. Rowntree has recently written a book in which he gives figures saying that the minimum should be £4, while in his own factory the minimum wage is only £3 2s. 6d.?—(A.) I have not seen that book.

Q. I saw it in a Birmingham paper the other night.—(A.) Yes; newspaper reports are a little bit inaccurate sometimes. As regards the minimum, it is quite possible that the £3 2s. 6d. is a minimum for an unmarried man. I remember Messrs. Rowntree's minimum was different for the unmarried and the married.

Q. It was the highest rate that I could get out of him as the negotiator on the other side of the table as a minimum rate for the unskilled men. I had to conduct the negotiations in that trade.—(A.) You are speaking of something that I am not familiar with.

Q. You suggest that butter is impossible, and that margarine should be substituted for it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it a fact that under the Ministry of Food scale, when margarine was issued under the rationing order 20 per cent. of that margarine had to be composed of animal fat?—(A.) I will take that from you; I was not aware of it.

Q. Is it a fact that the whole of the margarine to-day, since it has been de-controlled, is composed purely of vegetable fats?—(A.) I believe a great deal is; I do not know whether the whole is or not.

Q. Will not that alter the calorific value?—(A.) I do not think it alters the calorific value, but it alters another thing which has to be compensated for: it alters the amount of fatty substance.

Q. So that the 2 lbs. of margarine would have to be increased?—(A.) The 2 lbs. of margarine could remain where they were, but it would have to be seen to that there was enough fatty substance in the budget as a whole.

Q. I notice in the Birmingham budget you allow 6d. a week for fish, and you have suggested that you should substitute for a family of five some fish on one morning in the week for this large amount of bacon. How much fish do you get for 6d., do you suggest?—(A.) In 1914?

Q. No, now. In your table at the end you have six pennyworth of fish for a family of five for a whole week.—(A.) I can tell you what could be obtained in Canning Town or in Poplar on Tuesday: cod, 6d. a lb.—so-called cod; herrings, 6d. a lb.; bloaters, 7d.; kippers, 8d. or 7d. That is what could be obtained.

Q. But you had fish, 6d., in 1914, did you not, in the Birmingham budget on page 5?—(A.) Yes. It is a matter of choice what food one gets. That 6d. should very likely be 1s. in 1919 to correspond.

Q. That increases your total.—(A.) That increases that Birmingham budget which is not used to-day for this purpose. On the budget put

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in by Counsel, I think fish is merged with other things.

Q. It would be difficult to recognise in any case, would it not?—(A.) Not the kippers.

Q. Judging by your budgets all they would get would be the smell. I notice in your own budget you give "Sausages, etc., and fish, 3s. a week."—(A.) Yes.

Q. Under "Sausages, etc.," do you allow for all the little variety of tastes that they may have during that week?—(A.) The 3s. is intended for the kind of meat that is bought rather at the grocer's than at the butcher's. The other money is for butcher's meat, as it is ordinarily called, and the 3s. is for other products.

Q. What would they get in weight for it?—(A.) That depends how they spend it, and on what.

Q. But I notice you have allowed about 2,400 calorific value for it.—(A.) That allows an equivalent of 2 lbs. of meat. That is assuming that the value in calories is about the same as if you were buying meat.

Q. If you take the butcher's meat, you say you have allowed for a bigger proportion. Here is 6 lbs. of meat for 7s. 9d.—(A.) Yes.

Q. So to arrive at that you would have to have what we call the scrag as well as the best, would you not?—(A.) You have a middle range of joints, neither the best nor the worst, at 1s. 3d. a lb.

Q. But you would have some bone with it, would you not?—(A.) I think so. If it were a leg of mutton you would have bone.

Q. That is difficult to eat, is it not?—(A.) It has a certain use.

Q. If you reduced this down to per day for a family of five, how much each would they get? I have shown the bacon, now I want to add the meat to it.—(A.) It gives about 14 ounces a day, does it not, per family?

Q. That has to be divided between five?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What does it lose in cooking?—(A.) I do not know. It depends upon how it is cooked.

Q. Would it be right to say that if you take half a lb. out of 6 lbs. for the bone that would be reasonable?—(A.) I do not know the ordinary proportion.

Q. But my dear Professor, you have drawn up a budget after scientific investigation?—(A.) The results in calories are obtained by those people who have made a special study of it, taking the various kinds of meats and finding what the result is. There were some experiments conducted under the auspices of the Ministry of Food in its early days, I believe, as well as many others in many places.

Q. But what I want to get at is why a gentleman in your position should give your imprint to a budget that you have not acquainted yourself with before submitting it, even though some other scientific investigator said that it was right?—(A.) I have acquainted myself with it in so far as I have lived on it, which is perhaps the best test.

Q. In your life have you ever stowed a ship?—(A.) No, nothing bigger than a 5-ton yacht.

Q. You have never carried 5-cwt. bags on your back for eight hours continuously?—(A.) No.

Q. Do you think that possibly you would need more physical energy if you had that arduous task to perform?—(A.) I should need a different supply of food, and I should need somewhat more.

Q. Then assuming you needed some more of a different supply of food, supposing you found yourself feeding fairly well one day and then you

ate very little the next day owing to not having the money to buy it, and then had to work the next day, what amount of food would be necessary then to regain the energy after that very low drop?—(A.) I think a reconstitution of purchasing would be needed then to spread the money out.

Q. Supposing you had not got the money to spread out?—(A.) Supposing there is less than this money we are speaking of—this 40s.?

Q. Yes, supposing there is much less?—(A.) Then I do not see how it is to be done; but 40s. is the sum suggested.

Q. There are some people who sometimes fancy a thing to make soup and that kind of thing, like a sheep's head or a pig's face, which is a common food: what would be the comparative calorific value of a sheep's head and a potato, or something of that kind? Could you average that out?—(A.) I think I can tell you, not on my own authority, of course, but on the authority that I have put in: a sheep's head is 290 calories per lb., that is to say, about one-third to one-fourth of meat weight for weight; it is about one-fourth of rump steak.

Q. If rump steak, which is the highest priced meat, is too dear and our people have to turn to sheep's head and pig's face and things of that kind to feed their families upon, they are, in fact, getting a much lower calorific value?—(A.) It depends on the price.

Q. Is it not the fact that since food has been decontrolled the kind of meat that was bought has gone up much more in proportion than rump steak?—(A.) I do not think that would be the case as a general statement. I do not know about sheep's head.

Q. Take neck of mutton?—(A.) The cheapest kind of neck of mutton has gone up more than the dearer kinds.

Q. Is it not a fact that before the war such food as scrag of mutton for boiling was a very predominant food bought by the working classes for winter meals?—(A.) I cannot answer that in detail, but if it is to the point my information from outside is that the first meat asked for by the working classes in the East End of London is that at 1s. 10d., and if they find that the 1s. 10d. is not there they take a lower rate.

Q. I am talking about before the war. The working classes who really do the work of the world should have the best, should they not?—(A.) What do you mean by the best?

Q. The best joints—the most nutritious?—(A.) I am not assenting to that as a general proposition. It depends what you mean by "the work of the world."

Q. I am talking about either professional people or those who contribute to the common wealth as against those who do nothing but take profits?—(A.) Then I am not assenting to it. I am neither denying it nor affirming it.

Q. I want to put another very important question to you. You have allocated a certain standard for a woman, and you have taken a period when the children are either being born or are young?—(A.) Under 14.

Q. That would be what his Lordship described the other day as one of the most difficult periods in a working class home—as the little ones are coming along?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Would there be extra calories needed during the difficult period of maternity?—(A.) During the actual period of maternity no doubt there would.

Q. Have you allowed for it in your budget in milk or anything? The proportion for a woman as against a man in the budget in H.5. I think; the 2,900 as against 3,700, is higher than

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the proportion in the budget which you put in!—
(A.) I have not put in anything on calories

Q. You put a woman as two-thirds of a man in lbs., and I put it as over two-thirds in calories, following Mr. Rowntree. Is it not a fact that at those periods there is extra provision of milk needed?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How much milk have you allowed for a family of five per week, young people included?—
(A.) I have allowed eight pints for the average family.

Q. How much is that per person per day?—(A.) It is a pint and a seventh a day.

Q. Divide that between five people, three of them young children?—(A.) Not young children necessarily—under fourteen.

Q. Possibly.—(A.) Possibly.

Q. What does the Ministry of Health suggest as the allowance for necessitous mothers that municipalities should give?—(A.) I am not sure.

Q. Is it not a pint a day for a child?—(A.) I should think that would be very reasonable.

Q. You allow a pint and a seventh between five people per day?—(A.) This budget is for the minimum docker's wage, and the money, if it depends on this budget, would be paid to every docker, married or unmarried, whether his children are under three or under fourteen, or if he has none. If it is a question of supplying milk to children who have need of it, and to nursing mothers, I am thoroughly with any scheme that can be devised, but to pay all the dockers money to buy milk would not necessarily bring the milk where it was wanted, or, at any rate, all of it.

Q. I understood you were in the box as an expert in food, and not in dockers' wages. If it comes to dockers' wages, I shall have to cross-examine you on a different line, but Counsel did not put any question to you about wages at all. I want to find out what an ordinary family of five, upon which your budget is based, needs, not whether they are single dockers or married dockers. That, I suggest, we have to hammer out presently. But I want to find out this: I am assuming, because I think I remember reading it in the notes as being put by Counsel, that his budget was based on three young children—I believe, under six, but the notes will show.—(A.) Excuse me, not under six—three dependent children.

Mr. BEVIN: I was referring to Sir Lynden Macassey's remarks when he was putting it in; I am speaking from memory.

The CHAIRMAN: I think that is right, but, even if you allow a year or two more, up to eight or nine, it would make substantially little difference.

Q. The family is based upon a man, his wife, and three children, who may be one year, two years, or three years old—at any rate, under six years old.—(A.) As I interpret the budget, it is children who have not yet left school. That is what I understand by "dependent children."

Q. You admit, do you not, in that respect, that if it is three children who need milk, the amount you have allowed in the budget is totally inadequate?—(A.) But the amount of bread is then too much.

Q. We will deal with the bread. We have seen the bacon, we have imagined the meat, and we have smelt the kipper, now we will get to the bread. The bread that you allow in H.1 is 3 lbs. per day to be divided between five people. With a hearty docker, who cannot have vegetables more than two days a week, which would probably be Sunday and one other day, and must

have bread with his meat for his mid-day meal at his work every other day, do you suggest that that man can manage on a fifth of 3 lbs.?—(A.) I do not suggest that a docker would eat the same amount of bread as his young children.

Q. I do hope before you draw up another budget that you will spend some time in the docks and see how they have to live. I do make this suggestion, that if people are going to be experts there is nothing like a test of the actual work to find out exactly what is necessary.—(A.) That test has been made, not by myself but by other folk.

Q. Will you tell me who has made it, because I should like to see him in the box?—(A.) I am afraid you cannot call them into the box, because at the moment some are dead and some are in America. I can put in a statement, if his Lordship wishes, of the experts on this question, and of the kind of studies they have made. I have got this on the authority of people who have made it a special study.

Q. Can you tell us by what means they decided it? I want to know how they arrived at this judgment. Can you put in the name of an expert who went down to the London Docks and worked for three months as an ordinary docker, and had experience of it?—(A.) No, I cannot.

Q. Is not that the real test?—(A.) That would be a real test, but to work in some other way, or to watch other men working and measure what they eat, and how it affected their health, is an equally real test.

Q. Can you measure the real health of another when you cannot feel? Do you think that is really possible?—(A.) I think doctors can test very fairly well the adequacy of a man's health.

Q. Do they not, in fact, in compensation cases, often admit their absolute inability even to diagnose?—(A.) Diagnosis for illness is not the same as testing a man's general condition, as for an insurance office.

Q. You will admit that very often a doctor passes a sentence of death upon a man who may live for a long time?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you admit that sometimes he says we are healthy, and we die fairly soon?—(A.) That may be.

Q. Does not that prove that a doctor is not always accurate from sight or test?—(A.) No doctor would profess to be always right.

Q. Then the real and practical test would be my first suggestion.—(A.) I think it is not practical. I think a man who is a doctor would probably not have had experience of dockers' work, and unless he took up the work and stuck to it for three months or so it would be a very difficult test to apply effectually.

Q. In the budget that I submitted I allowed 9d. a meal for a man, taking the four meals in the day; one meal is taken, as a rule, away from home, the man having to buy it in a coffee-house or somewhere. Do you regard that as unreasonable?—(A.) I accept that in the London Docks that is the way it is generally done, but, of course, in a great many instances in labour the food is carried with them by the men.

Q. Do you suggest that 9d. per meal is too much for taking food from home sufficient to keep him going for the day?—(A.) I should like the experience of an engine-driver on that, who habitually takes his food with him.

Q. But an engine-driver is regularly employed, and he does not do it under 3s. a day. I am willing to call one who travels into the box if you like. What will be better, I think, is to get a few of the workmen's wives, whom we have on our list,

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to test your point of view.—(A.) If I may say so, I quite agree. If only the people had been more willing to answer the kind of questions which the Government Departments tried to get at, we should have been on much sounder ground.

Q. I am coming to Lord Sumner's investigation in a moment. I allow four meals at 9d. per meal. The extent of the man's daily food under present prices is 3s. Our men are lifting heavy weights, some of them carrying 280 lbs. of grain on their backs continuously, some stowing goods in ships' holds weighing anything from 1 ton up to 10 or 20 tons, according to the class of the cargo. Do you seriously suggest that 9d. a meal is unreasonable?—(A.) First of all, if I may get at the interpretation, is this kind of work you name done on the minimum wage or does it carry a differential with it?

Q. I am asking you whether 9d. per meal for that class of work is unreasonable. What wages they get I do not think has anything to do with it. I want to know whether 9d. a meal for men on that class of work is unreasonable?—(A.) I can only answer that the amount I have put down here is suitable for a man on what is known as moderately heavy work. If it is more than moderately heavy work it is insufficient.

Q. And on the assumption, I presume, that a man lives a very regular life?—(A.) I do not know that that affects it. He must have regular money.

Q. Every week in the year?—(A.) He must have this sum regularly every week—unless he makes more some weeks than others.

Q. He must not have less than this every week in the year?—(A.) No. If I understand your question aright, if he makes more at one time of the year, he can carry that over to the other time when he is not making so much.

Q. Taking the year as fifty-two weeks, if a man has £104 a year, you say that is enough for food?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But with regard to the class of work which is above what you would call moderately heavy work—that is, heavy work and irregular work—is 9d. a meal too much?—(A.) I think a man could spend it very well; but I must say quite clearly on the whole of this question it depends whether a man is using a bread diet or a meat diet. I do not know the custom in the docks, and I do not know the custom all over the world.

Q. Has he an opportunity to decide what he will eat?—(A.) He can decide whether he will eat bread or meat, if he can afford the meat.

Q. I thought you said supplies were limited, and he does not have much choice?—(A.) With regard to bread, during the period of short rations arrangements should be made so that there should be moderately cheap and sufficient bread throughout the country.

Q. Supposing a man in the London Docks goes to a coffee-house when he is working overtime, and he fancies a particular kind of food, do you think he can always get it?—I do not know the coffee-houses in East London.

Q. Then you could not be regarded as an expert to decide whether 9d. is a reasonable allowance or not, not knowing the conditions?—(A.) I do not know what 9d. a meal, bought outside the docks, would provide in East London in the coffee-houses, nor at the canteens.

Q. I have put down for clothing, which includes everything—furniture, bedding, and all kinds of things outside food—£1 5s. per week on present prices. Do you think that unreasonable for a family of five?—(A.) Yes, I do.

Q. How many suits of clothes do you think a docker would have per year on dirty work, with the present price of clothes?—(A.) I cannot tell you that.

Q. Then how can you say it is too much, or arrive at your 12s. 6d. if you do not know the facts?—(A.) Because I know what £65 a year would buy, and it would buy more rough suits than a docker would have any occasion to use, I should judge.

Q. Let us test it. Supposing I said it was three suits a year to work in the docks. You would agree, I suppose, that a docker would be entitled to one evening and Sunday suit to look clean?—(A.) Not necessarily to buy one every year.

Q. Do you think the quality of clothes is so good that it would last him more than a year just now?—(A.) I think if a man wears a suit on Sunday and evenings, with moderately careful wear it would last him more than a year.

Q. I was at an arbitration with Sir Lynden Macassey a little while ago, the Tramway case, which Sir Lynden will remember, and I want to ask you if you think this is reasonable. Sir Lynden submitted that the uniform of a tramwayman, which is two suits a year and one overcoat every two years and a cap, cost the company at wholesale prices, bought in large quantities, 4s. a week.

SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not know that I can accept that.

MR. BEVIN: I will hand the Minutes in in the morning.

SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY: My recollection is that there were more things in it than that. However, it does not bear on this case.

MR. BEVIN: It would be fair to assume, would it not, that if a huge company could buy clothing at that price, in the shops now, with the wholesale and retail profits which the profiteering committees are revealing, it would be 100 per cent. higher?—(A.) It would be higher.

Q. Would not you think 100 per cent. reasonable?—(A.) I do not know what it would be.

Q. How many pairs of boots do you think a workman would wear out in a year?—(A.) It would depend on his work.

Q. But did you, before you said 12s. 6d., make any inquiries as to what work the docker did, and what it cost?—(A.) When I entered the 12s. 6d. you will remember half an hour ago I said it was a very doubtful figure, and depended on whether the present price of goods came down or not.

Q. Or the nature of the work?—(A.) Or the nature of the work to a point. I had some part of that in my mind.

Q. So that the 12s. 6d. is an absolutely unreliable figure?—(A.) I should not say that.

Q. Not very reliable?—(A.) It is not very reliable: it is a figure which wants confirmation and examination, and I should be thoroughly prepared to abide by a group of people who actually bought the clothes to decide what was wanted.

Q. What did you include in the 12s. 6d.; how many boots, how many clothes, how many underclothes, and what should the wife and children wear?—(A.) The kind of basis I had was the basis of clothing set out in Mr. Rowntree's book on the experience of a number of families in York.

Q. All you have done is to take what was there and add so much per cent. without any investigation as to quality or anything else?—(A.) Not

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entirely without investigation as to quality or anything else. There was an investigation in 1918, and I have made enquiries since then, and I sent down specially to East London to enquire what was being paid a few days ago.

Q. You do not tell us now what actually you think the person should buy per week for 12s. 6d. Suppose I allow 12s. 6d. per week out of my wages, and there is a family of five, and I have to go from time to time to the shops, first to buy boots, then to buy clothing, then a hat, tie, collars, shirts, underclothing, and my wife would want a decent skirt and clothing to wear, and the children would want to be dressed decently, could I keep it going on 12s. 6d. a week? Have you made that close investigation?—(A.) I have not made a close investigation, but my answer is that you could not at the present prices. If these prices continue, 12s. 6d. is, in my opinion, definitely too low, but what it ought to be I have not formed a judgment.

Q. But 25s. you think is too high?—(A.) Yes, I think it lies between the two.

The CHAIRMAN: On this point may I interpose one question? In putting down your figure of 12s. 6d. I noted your answer to be: "I cannot say what would be a large enough figure." If that be your attitude of mind, what induced you to put a

figure of 12s. 6d.?—(A.) Some such train of reasoning as follows. I judged that a man's clothes, partly from my own experience, and partly from what I have watched, had doubled in price, if rather careful purchases were made. I judged that women's and children's clothes, especially children's shoes, had trebled in price, if fairly careful purchases were made. I then took a figure in between the two, always with the intention of explaining that the figure needed further investigation, and would not be valid if the present prices continued; and I am glad to have been able to explain that.

Q. In taking those things into account in your mind, were you fortified or the reverse by your investigation of the cost as per the co-operative table?—(A.) The co-operative tables do not deal with clothing.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you ask him, Mr. Bevin, to-morrow morning why he has no co-operative table with regard to clothing?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord.

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning at 10.30 o'clock.)

NINTH DAY.

Friday, February 20th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Professor ARTHUR LYON BOWLEY, recalled.

Cross-examination by Mr. BEVIN (continued).

Q. I was asking you a question when we adjourned last evening with regard to clothing. If you found it possible to test your food income by the co-operative movement, could you not also have ascertained from the same source, before putting down 12s. 6d., what was the average cost of clothing, including bedding and all other forms of clothing?—(A.) No, we were not able to. In the Cost of Living Committee, when we had a distinguished and well-known co-operator on the Committee, we went very carefully into the question, and the Co-operative Societies were quite unable to state what was the ordinary yearly purchase of any group of people whatever.

Q. Dealing with the Co-operative Societies, I take it you would admit that the co-operative movement was originally inaugurated by working people?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And that it was inaugurated for the purpose of a kind of defence organisation against the overcharging of private enterprise?—(A.) Yes, and to obtain purity of goods.

Q. Quite. By reason of the working class organisation in a co-operative movement they have possibly by their thrift and effort reduced or kept down the cost of living?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you think it is quite right now, after all that working-class enterprise, that advantage should be taken of that thrift to keep down their wages when working for private enterprise?—(A.) No, not if it were the case; but I am not admitting that it is the case.

Q. But you based your budget on, and quoted, the Year Book which is taken from a Co-operative Society, the Co-operative Wholesale Society, which is the result, not of any genius or brains on the part of private enterprise at all, but an actual working-class organisation to protect themselves and to help themselves. You based your budget, upon which it is suggested the wages of workmen should be paid, on a basis which is the result of the thrift of the workmen?—(A.) I quoted no prices from the Co-operative Stores. I quoted the quantities which the working classes were buying.

Q. But in fact your budget, if anything, is slightly less than the Co-operative prices, having regard to the whole of the items, is it not?—(A.) I did not compare it with the Co-operative prices; I made it independently of them.

Q. I would be glad if you would. You said, too, in your evidence yesterday, that you had lived on this dietary of food for three weeks, and that you had estimated your expenditure for three weeks. What would it work out at over a year?—(A.) 52 times the average for the week.

Q. Do you suggest that before this budget was being prepared you had lived all the year on this very simple diet?—(A.) I looked at the figures of last year's expenditure, and I found that they were within 2s. or 3s. per week of the food expenditure figures which I gave to the Court. Last year my household was a little bit larger.

Q. You gave a paper before the Royal Statistical Society in May, 1919, did you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There was a discussion following it, I think, was there not?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. You have no objection to that Report going in. I take it?—(A.) It is public property.

Q. I do not want to quote it, but I think it might help the Court if the paper and the whole discussion were in. This is the only copy I have:

it is the Journal of the Royal Statistical Society of May, 1919. (*The same was handed in.)—(A.) I can provide you with another if you would like it.

Q. I have only one.

The CHAIRMAN: If you have one, I would be very glad to have one, and then Mr. Bevin will get back his copy.—(A.) I can send you one, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: You said yesterday that you rather complained of the amount of food allowed in your budget being exhibited in the way in which I exhibited it; and when I put up the bacon, which was the quantity, assuming that the working classes would like a little bit of bacon each morning—I think one well-known writer has said that an Englishman's breakfast is bacon and eggs for six months and eggs and bacon for the other six months—you suggested that the workman would have more bacon one morning and then he would have some fish another morning?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then I looked at your budget; and you allowed 6d. for fish?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I do not want to make an exhibition of the Court, but I do want the Court to see exactly what you allow for each family. (*A portion of fish was produced*). That is sixpennyworth of fish bought at a cheap stall in Canning Town last night, which was selling off to prevent waste. That is sixpennyworth bought and cooked, and that is to be divided as a breakfast between a family of 5. Do you think that that is sufficient for a docker to go to work upon, handling heavy cargo, with the bread? I am prepared to put into the box the people who bought that fish, and to prove the fact that the people from whom it was bought did not know the purpose for which it was being bought. You have allowed 6d. for fish for one morning when there is no bacon; and the docker has to go and probably be carrying sugar all day long, and to give output for 4 hours before he gets his next meal; and that is to be divided between a family of 5.—(A.) It depends entirely upon how much bread is eaten, and whether the children eat the fish or whether they eat bread and margarine.

Q. We tested your bread and margarine. The man has to take bread to work; because you only allow him a vegetable dinner two days a week, so he has to have a bread dinner every other day.—(A.) I do not remember allowing him a vegetable dinner at all.

Q. Take a shilling's-worth of vegetables at the present moment. You complained about my dividing it up into 7 portions for every day, and you said that in all probability he would have vegetables twice a week.—(A.) That is to say, vegetables other than potatoes.

Q. If he has vegetables other than potatoes, taking his bread and potatoes for the day, do you think 4 meals unreasonable for a man who may work a day and perhaps 2 or 3 hours' overtime?—(A.) I think you have left out the meat.

Q. I am coming to the meat in a moment. I want to take you through your menu, as I have to test it by the subsistence level for a man who has to work—physically work. That is the test I want to get, because you are an expert.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I point out that you are on the wrong budget? You are on the Birmingham budget.

Mr. BEVIN: That is higher than the other.

* Not printed.

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Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, the 6d. for fish is in the Birmingham budget; it is not in Professor Bowley's budget.

Mr. BEVIN: Then he did not allow any fish at all?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, if you look at his budget you will see.

Mr. BEVIN: Sausages and fish. Yesterday I think the Professor said that it would equal about 1 lb. of meat, which would be 1s. 3½d. It comes nearly to the same thing; it is ½d. less for fish.—(A.) The 3s. I said equalled 2 lbs. of meat—that is, the 3s. allowed for sausages, fish, and other kinds of meat not generally bought at the butchers.

Q. I will give you the benefit of both lots of fish, that is 1s., and then test it. I do not care how you take your budget; test it in any way you like.—(A.) I tested it by the total nutritive value in the week.

Q. The Court is asked to decide what is a subsistence level as a minimum for men who have to work hard; and I think the only way to test a Professor's advice is to see it in actual fact. Let us test the bread, if you like.—(A.) I cannot test the bread apart from the other foods. It makes nonsense of the thing.

Q. Let us take the whole thing together.—(A.) Very well.

Q. Take fish; how much bread would a man eat with his breakfast of fish, dividing up this lot between the family of five?—(A.) I think the family consumption for the week is 32 lbs., is it not? I have not got the budget in my hand at the moment.

Q. H.1 shows 21 lbs.; that is 11 lbs. difference.—(A.) He divides it up in any way he pleases in the week.

Q. Would they eat bread for each meal?—(A.) I should think so.

Q. That would give 3 lbs. of bread between five people per day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is right, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Would you say that four meals a day would be reasonable for a workman?—(A.) It depends on what you count as a meal. If you count four dinners a day it would be unreasonable. If you count three fairly good hearty meals and one light meal, then, I presume, that is what a workman at an ordinary time eats.

Q. I have to take your budget as a whole and try to analyse it. You allow practically no cake. You allow only 7 lbs. of flour, which has to be transformed into pastry or something else; and you allow 1 lb. of fat to the 7 lbs. of flour. I presume you allow nothing to be used for frying anything. You allow 1 lb. of lard, suet, or dripping to the 7 lbs. of flour. The flour, I presume, is to be transformed into cake?—(A.) Yes, it is to be cooked, of course, in one way or another.

Q. You said yesterday that you had never done any cooking, did you not?—(A.) I have not done enough to make it worth counting.

Q. If you had to work in 1 lb. of fat with 7 lbs. of flour, do you think that the cake you made would be very digestible?—(A.) I should think if you put the whole 1 lb. of fat in the 7 lbs. of flour it would be rather a bad cake, but, as I say, I am not a cook.

Q. How much do you put to a lb. of flour to get a really nutritious cake?—(A.) I do not know.

Q. Would it not be wise before you draft budgets to find these things out?—(A.) As I said yesterday, if I may repeat it, I went on two

plans: one was to take the figures as recorded by careful investigators of working classes expenditure, and the other was to find out what nutriment according to the physiologists that budget gave. As to the detailed working out of the 40s., that is, of course, within the power of the housekeeper.

Q. Do you know that in the ordinary cake made in the workman's home as a rule there is never less than 3 ounces of fat to 1 lb. of flour, and, as a rule, 4 ounces?—(A.) I do not think it matters whether you put the fat in the cake or somewhere else, so long as the children use it.

Q. If you did not put fat in the cake you would not get the children to fancy the cake, would you?—(A.) I think on this budget, as a whole, you could give the children quite satisfactory food.

Q. There is this difference between you and me, if I may submit it, that I tested all this cooking before I made out my budget.—(A.) I think I explained yesterday that I have tested it for three weeks, and now you have got me to say that I tested it for twelve months.

Q. What have you done in that three weeks in the way of manual work?—(A.) A certain amount of gardening.

Q. How many hours a day?—(A.) When I can get time, and that is not very much.

Q. It would be just as a little pleasure?—(A.) It is fairly hard work.

Q. But it is not very long; you take up the gardening tools when you fancy you will, and you drop them when you fancy you will?—(A.) I do not think that is quite the case. If I could show you what I have done in the last month, I think you would take a very different view. It is stiff clay, I may tell you, in the garden that I am digging.

Q. But you have not done eight hours' digging right off, have you?—(A.) No.

Q. And you have not had somebody come and say to you at the end of eight hours, "Now work on for another four hours"?—(A.) No, not on the gardening work.

Q. Dockers do.—(A.) If they work on for another four hours of course they have more money, and they can buy a lot more of any of these things.

Q. Do you suggest that a workman should have to work overtime, and out of his overtime money provide sustenance?—(A.) I did not suggest that. I suggested that for the overtime worked he should provide his sustenance out of the overtime money.

Q. I am glad that Sir Alfred Booth, at any rate, as an employer, differs from you. Now with regard to this bread. If you take four meals a day it works out at 9 ounces per person.—(A.) I do not think young children would eat 9 ounces of bread four times a day.

Q. It is 3 lbs. per day, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is three times 16 ounces?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That has to be divided between five people.—(A.) Not equally.

Q. And the man, out of that, at least has to make one whole meal of bread with margarine or something on it?—(A.) Yes; margarine or something.

Q. Let us test the meat. 5½ lbs. would be a fair average to get from 6 lbs. of meat, including the bone, would it not?—(A.) I will take that from you. I do not remember those figures.

Q. Then you cook it. You have no idea how much the meat loses in cooking, have you?—(A.) It loses some weight, and it gives a considerable amount of fat.

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Q. When the man has the meat on his plate it would be reduced by at least 25 per cent., would it not, in quantity?—(A.) I do not know what figure one would get there.

Q. Yet you have decided that this is enough for a docker, and you have not tested a single thing of it?—(A.) I have tested the nutriment value of the meat as bought according to the physiologists' estimate.

Q. Then do you assume that every 6 lbs. of meat a man buys is of an equal value?—(A.) Not at all; it depends on the price. I put in 7s. 9d.

Q. You have averaged the price?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Assuming I buy steak to-day and some more steak to-morrow, am I certain that each animal is producing the same calorific value in the meat?—(A.) No, you are not.

Q. But you are.—(A.) I am assuming that the meat is purchased and you get this amount of nutriment.

Q. Based on the highest calorific value of meat, I understand?—(A.) I think not, but I will find the figures in a moment. The highest calorific value that I can see for the moment for butchers' meat is ribs at 1,450 to the lb., then comes neck of mutton 1,420, steak 1,325, and I see loin of mutton is 1,815, so that is the highest. I have taken as an average 1,040.

Q. Then you have not allowed for the bone?—(A.) Yes, that does allow for bone. That is the meat as cooked. I am prepared to substitute for those figures Professor Wood's figures. After all, he is in England, and, if necessary, no doubt he could be called. Beef here is: cheaper cuts 1,000 calories, sirloin, 1,100, rump steak, 1,110, mutton chops 1,575, leg 900, neck, scrag end, 1,055; and the calorific value is to some extent expressed in the price; that is to say, the less the nutriment the lower the price per lb., to some extent.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not want to interrupt you, and we will leave it entirely in your discretion, Mr. Bevin, but you have in the course of your cross-examination assailed (and I will pronounce no opinion upon it) one or two of the items in this budget, notably fish, meat, and bread. You know the result of a successful assault on an item, and it is for you to consider whether you should pursue this to the bitter end. You have already assailed the gross total. I am saying this not in any sense antagonistically to the case you are making, understand: but now please consider that we do not want to interrupt you, and we want to leave the case entirely in your hands, but there is such a thing as over-labouring a particular point. We are not making any adverse comment.

Mr. BEVIN: I have tried to take the whole budget point by point.

The CHAIRMAN: You are taking the budget as a whole, and you have crossed the witness on that. You have taken some of the main elements, and you have crossed the witness on those, and it is now for you to consider whether you have not sufficiently destroyed the budget.

Mr. BEVIN: Then I will turn to the sundries in the household. (*To the Witness*): Apart from food, I notice in the budget, which you have based on Mr. Rowntree's, that you allow 3s. 4d. What items do you include in that 3s. 4d.?—(A.) Sundries.

Q. What are they?—(A.) The things that are not included elsewhere.

Q. You did not arrive at the figure of 3s. 4d.

without having some items in your mind. Did you include soap for washing?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Did you include soda?—(A.) That would include washing materials.

Q. That would include all the washing materials?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is the price of soap per lb. now?—(A.) I do not know.

Q. You put down 3s. 4d. without testing what the price of the commodities was?—(A.) I took Mr. Rowntree's estimate of 1s. 8d. and I judged

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS: Perhaps Mr. Rowntree's people put their washing out.

Mr. BEVIN (*to the Witness*): I want to find out exactly what it includes. Does the 3s. 4d. include such things as replacing domestic articles?—(A.) I think I must refer for what it includes to Mr. Rowntree's discussion on his budget. I can find the place.

Q. Then the fact is that you have made no personal investigation as to whether Mr. Rowntree was right, but you have simply taken what Mr. Rowntree said and added so much on?—(A.) I have done somewhat more than that, because some years after Mr. Rowntree published his first set of budgets in about 1900 I made some rather extensive investigations among the working classes of poor towns as regards their income and the amount of expenditure.

Q. Soap, for instance, before the war was 1d. a lb., and to-day it is 1s. You did not know that?—(A.) No.

The CHAIRMAN: Under which item is soap included?

Mr. BEVIN: In the 3s. 4d. a week, my Lord, and all forms of domestic utensils.

The CHAIRMAN (*to the Witness*): Supposing you find that an item such as soap, which is so essential to a household, has increased to 12 times the price, does that incline you to alter your figure of 3s. 4d.?—(A.) I should treat these sundries in the same general way as I explained yesterday I was treating clothes, that is to say, I did not think one could base this budget solely on existing prices, but one could assume that those things that were specially expensive would go down. If, in fact, they go up instead of going down, or even if they remain level, then some of those items would, I expect, have to be raised.

The CHAIRMAN: Just press that, Mr. Bevin. Ask him, taking soap into consideration and the price at the present day, to find out what this figure would come to so as to make a decent living for a decent man.

Mr. BEVIN (*to the Witness*): You have heard the question: will you answer it?—(A.) The difficulty is that in spite of the efforts I have been making for eighteen months, I find it quite impossible to get adequate material for answering that question.

Q. Then, in view of the fact of your being unable to arrive at a conclusion, this figure may be regarded as unreliable at the moment?—(A.) That figure may be regarded as almost a pure estimate, an estimate based on the general idea that prices have doubled.

Q. But not on any ascertained fact?—(A.) Not on ascertained fact.

Q. Then it will be unreliable. Now I want to

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ask you whether you have examined the cost of domestic articles at all in the form of replacements.—(A.) I have some little personal experience.

Q. For instance, take the plate that that fish was on: What would you suggest would be the price of that plate, which is what is called in Canning Town a throwout; that is to say, it is not a perfect plate. It is the commonest kind of plate that the workpeople can buy. What would you suggest that plate would cost?—(A.) I am not sure, but I should think it would probably cost 6d.

Q. What would it be before the war?—(A.) I should think very likely 1d., but I do not know.

Q. It was ½d. Now, assuming a family where they break some of these plates, you had no regard to those facts in arriving at your 3s. 4d., had you?—(A.) Yes, but I do not suppose they break the whole lot every week.

Q. You are making a weekly allowance.—(A.) In those items it must be regarded as an annual allowance. If you multiply it by fifty-two you get it for the year.

Q. If I may take you back to the clothing for a minute, did you include in the 12s. 6d. which you admitted yesterday was not a reliable figure for clothing, household clothing, such as bedding, curtains, and so on?—(A.) No, it was personal clothing.

Q. In my 25s. I included all forms of clothing. You include the sheets, blankets, curtains, and everything required for a home in the 3s. 4d. a week allowance, do you?—(A.) I include the renewals in £8 10s. a year.

Q. How much can you get in a home for £8 10s. 0d.? Take sheets, blankets, curtains, table-cloths, little domestic amenities, crockery-ware, possibly a little ornament, a little rug, a doormat, a saucepan, and all that kind of thing: How much are you going to get for £8 10s. a year?—(A.) You are not going to furnish a house completely on £8 10s. 0d.

Q. Are you going to keep the house up to its pre-war level on £8 10s. 0d.?—(A.) If at the present moment the blankets in the household are worn out, then it would be a serious item, but blankets are not bought every week, or even every month.

Q. I want to follow that up. Is it not a fact that for the first three or four years of the war, due to the constant appeals which were made, the restriction of supplies, and the increase in the prices of food, the continued replacing of these things was prevented, and people went without a lot of the things and are now compelled to replace them?—(A.) That is so, because I find it so myself, and I am not replacing them at the present prices.

Q. Supposing there is a little child that needs to be kept warm with a blanket, would it be wise on the ground of economy to allow that little child to die because you would not replace at the present prices?—(A.) If there was such a shortage of blankets as that, of course one would buy one if one had to work overtime, or do any mortal thing for it, but you are putting an extreme case.

Q. In view of the wealth of the country, as shown by profits at present, is there any reason why our class should be singled out to go without?—(A.) In view of the amount of woollen blankets and other wool manufactures in this country, no class has any business to buy any woollen goods which are not necessary. I am not singling out your class at all.

Q. Then you would agree with rationing of

woollen supplies and regulating the price, would you not?—(A.) No, I would not. I do not think rationing is a good way to do these things, nor price regulation.

Q. Take the big millionaire's house, with a huge number of beds with blankets on them that are never slept between, and the people in the East End of London having difficulty to replace them; yet in the wealthy houses they go on buying. How would you prevent the blankets going into the wealthy houses instead of being used for the working classes that need them?—(A.) I should first need to have proof that millionaires did keep blankets on many beds in large houses which were never used, and, secondly, that the working classes were really so short of blankets, and then I should do a little arithmetic and see how far the millionaires' blankets would go round Limehouse.

Q. And you would come to the same conclusion as you have in your budget: that the rich man should keep what he has got and the working class should go without?—(A.) I have not come to that conclusion.

Q. The next is personal. You allow 6s. 6d. a week for a family of five for all the little pleasures, alcohol, and every other form of little luxury that may be taken?—(A.) I did not hear your question.

Q. You allow 6s. 6d. a week for all the little luxuries, a holiday in the summer probably, a Sunday-school outing for the children, picture shows, books, tobacco, and every form of little amenity that I think everyone is entitled to. You allow 6s. 6d. a week for it?—(A.) I think I may put it that this balance is supposed to be the minimum wage that would produce necessaries and moderate comforts. In framing a budget I did not understand that it was a question of producing everything that a man wanted, whatever his wage.

Q. Do you suggest that there are ordinary moderate comforts in this? Let us test it. It includes insurance and everything, does it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Take his trade union contribution to begin with; what do you suggest the trade contribution of a docker is?—(A.) Would that be regarded as a necessity?

Mr. BEVIN: Judging by the efforts to get a rise at this Inquiry it is an imperative necessity.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You put your entrance fee up to a larger sum lately.

Mr. BEVIN: We have not put our entrance fee up, Sir Lynden Macassey.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you put your question again, or the shorthand-writer will repeat the question as it was put.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to ask if the Professor has any idea of what is the trade union contribution at the moment. I want to test how that 6s. 6d. is to be spent.

The WITNESS: I do not know what the dockers' trade union contribution is.

Mr. BEVIN: I will tell you. Some are 6d. and some are 9d.—(A.) I had in view a sum of 6d. I had in view 2s. for all the insurances.

Q. Let us test your 2s. Take insurance: what do you suggest would be the weekly insurance

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against death for a family of 5?—(A.) Only one being at work?

Q. Only one being at work.—(A.) Is that 8d. I am not sure to a penny.

Q. I want to get your estimate?—(A.) The estimate on which I took 2s. is practically that given on page 26 of the Report of the Cost of Living Committee, and I did not modify it for the dookers' case, and I do not know whether it needs modification.

Q. Do you know that owing to the very heavily increased cost of our return to the soil when we are dead workpeople have been compelled nearly to double their payment to provide for that?—(A.) No, I did not know the payments. I do admit, of course, that in fact that provision is made weekly. I do not know whether one ought to estimate that that is so.

Q. Assuming that a person is insured for, say, £10 at death, working people are now compelled, are they not, to insure for £20?—(A.) They are not compelled to insure weekly.

Q. I mean as an economic necessity?—(A.) It is a very expensive way of providing for this contingency.

Q. You get an annual salary, and therefore you, and so can I, in fact, insure much cheaper probably than my members; but to the workman, who is uncertain from week to week, is there any other method open but that of paying weekly as he receives his wages?—(A.) I think at the moment there may be no other method, though I still think that it is a very wasteful method. I think if the matter were properly considered and organised (and I am not certain that the State ought not to take it up) that this very heavy tax on the working class through the burial societies might be reduced. It is far beyond a necessary expense.

Q. Now we are dealing at the moment with the only avenue open to the working classes, are not we, not with what may happen with regard to legislation?—(A.) It is the only one I know myself, and I must take it from you there is no other.

Q. We have reached on your estimate 1s. 2d., which I suggest to you, owing to new business, as shown in the insurance companies' returns, as indicated in the Pearl strike recently, has to be increased; I want to call your attention to it, and ask you whether you read that the directors argued that new business in the Pearl Society had increased during the war and not the premium per £ benefit. Did you read that?—(A.) No, I have not read that.

Q. But probably you will accept my statement that it was the fact?—A. Yes.

Q. And that indicated, did it not, that the working people, having regard to the possible expenses they would have to incur at the death of one of the members of the family, had taken up increased insurance to meet that possible contingency?—(A.) That some of the working classes had, yes.

Q. I take it you would encourage those who try to make the best provision, would not you?—(A.) If you ask me quite frankly, I think the whole provision on this ground is done on an extravagant basis; this payment of this weekly sum to get a contingent benefit is, I believe, an extraordinarily wasteful way of doing it, unless there is a Society which, at the end of a certain amount of premiums, closes the books and says that the insurance is complete.

Q. I think we are quite agreed on that; we agree that it is a wasteful method, and I should like his Lordship to call the Government's attention to it, because we are trying to promote legis-

lation in that direction, but still we are dealing with facts as they are. We put the increased insurance at 50 per cent. at least, which would make your 8d. one shilling?—(A.) That is the increased burial insurance?

Q. Yes?—(A.) I must take your figures from you, I am not quite following them, I am sorry to say.

Q. Then let us test the friendly societies. First of all, let us test what is called the slate club. What is the contribution to a slate club for the annual dividend at Christmas?—(A.) I do not know, but the amount I have included for friendly societies is 7d. a week.

Q. I would like to know where you got that figure of 7d. from, and what societies, and what benefits?—(A.) The Cost of Living Committee obtained a considerable amount of information from societies, and they obtained a considerable amount of information as to what the working classes, in fact, paid, and 7d. was the average found. You will find it on page 26 of the Cost of Living Report.

Q. Have you allowed for the State Insurance?—(A.) I thought you had included that.

Q. Do you include that in the 7d.? I am talking about the 4d. which we call "Lloyd George." Have you allowed for that, the National Health Insurance?—(A.) In the 2s. we allow for National Health Insurance, yes.

Q. We have got to 1s. 2d., and 7d. is 1s. 9d. Now there is 4d. to account for?—(A.) That makes 2s. 1d.

Q. And then we get the added amount that the men have taken up to provide for this contingency of death, which puts another 4d. on, which is 2s. 5d.?—(A.) I think that may be; I have not been able to follow the items.

Q. Do the working people ever want doctors?—(A.) For their families, yes; for themselves, they are insured.

Q. What have you allowed for that?—(A.) I am afraid that is again under the sundries.

Q. That is under the 3s. 4d., or under the personal?—(A.) Under the personal sundries, I should take that to be.

The CHAIRMAN: The 6s. 6d.?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: What do you suggest is the medical club fee for a family, if a doctor takes us by the club, which is not very satisfactory?—(A.) For the four members other than the worker?

Q. Yes, having regard to a growing family, and children being born, and all the expenses associated with a developing family, what do you allow for medical expenses?—(A.) I have not figured that out.

Q. It is in your 6s. 6d.?—(A.) Yes, but I do not regard the probability that there will be children born every year in every family, you know.

Mr. BEVIN: I am taking the basis my Lord, that you laid down as being the true period that you suggest we ought to rather direct our attention to.

The CHAIRMAN: You see, Professor Bowley, when you strike a general item such as your 3s. 4d. for household, and your 6s. 6d. for personal, you mean that to be a comprehensive item, do not you?—(A.) Yes, and, of course, if I may say so, there must be generalisation in it; one cannot make it up of the various items.

Q. The point that is put to you is: surely a

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prudent householder would make some provision for medical attendance?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And where there are young children, and others coming, that would be a serious consideration for the householder; and the point that Mr. Bevin wants to get at is, what, in money, do you allow for it, one case with another. That is your point, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes?—(A.) As regards the expense of new-born children, there is, of course, the maternity allowance.

Q. Really how far does 30s. 0d. go, in paying for that—how much of that 30s. 0d. goes to the nurse?

A. Of course the 30s. 0d. is not the complete account; we must bring in the 30s. 0d. on this side of the account as money towards this special emergency.

Q. Take the maternity period and the 30s. 0d. allowed; who gets that 30s. 0d.?—(A.) I hope the mother.

Q. It all goes to the nurse; I assure you every penny of it is the nurse's fee.—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then the doctor is in addition to that?—(A.) Yes. My point there is, in giving a figure of 6s. 6d., or whatever figure you wish to take instead, you cannot regard this as a thing that is to be allowed in every week's expenditure. The children for whom my budget at any rate was made, are children under 14—three children under 14—and this contingency should therefore only be allowed for on the average of about once in four or five years. If you want special sums for this particular thing, they must be granted, otherwise they must be saved out of the sundries, or paid back after the event, also out of the sundries. One cannot provide for this contingency every week, or even every year.

Q. You said just now that the Friendly Society was 7d. I have had figures handed to me from all parts of the Court with regard to societies my own friends are in, and they range all round 1s. 3d. to provide £1 per week sick pay and £10 at death, from Friendly Societies?—(A.) The 7d., of course, was the average of what we found people were actually paying.

Q. I want to turn to the Sumner Report for a moment. You were a member of that Committee, as you have already pointed out. Have you a copy of the form that was sent out?—(A.) Yes, it is printed in the Report.

Q. They were simply sent broadcast, were they not, a Government form?—(A.) They were not sent broadcast, if you will excuse me apparently contradicting you; they were distributed in some cases to Trade Unions (I think the majority of them), particularly the General Labourers' Union and the other workers' Associations, and to other people who for one reason or another had contact with workpeople.

Q. There was no oral evidence taken, was there?—(A.) There was considerable oral evidence. We sat many meetings for the purpose of examining all the witnesses who appeared.

Q. Who appeared principally?—(A.) I am afraid I must ask for notice of that question; I could not give you the names. It was a time when everybody was extraordinarily busy, and we laboured under great difficulty in getting evidence, but we got a good deal.

Q. That is my point: you could not carry out a thorough examination town by town, as was done in 1912?—(A.) No, our Inquiry was rather to be compared with that which was made in 1904, which is the basis of the budgets which are generally used

Q. I think you said this, in your final paragraph at the Royal Statistical Society meeting: "I am very conscious that this Paper, dealing as it does with niceties of method, may seem inappropriate at a time when so many decisions depend upon the broad results of the movement of prices, and it is not a fair contribution to the solution of practical questions to indicate that the data are insufficient and the methods open to question." That is taken from your speech at the Royal Statistical Society?—(A.) Yes, it sounds like it.

Q. In addition to summing up your conclusions there, which are based largely on the Sumner Report, that would also rather sum up the Sumner Report, would it not?—(A.) I think my conclusions in that Paper are not based largely on the Sumner Report; they are based primarily on a certain algebraical analysis.

Q. But it was after the Sumner Report?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then if it was two years or a year after the Sumner Report and you agree that it is not a very satisfactory Paper a year after the Sumner Report, would that make the Sumner Report more satisfactory, which was done a year before, with less consideration?—(A.) The Sumner Report, dated in the summer of 1918, was a much more definite Report than could be made in the following year, because at that date very careful inquiry was made as to prices and consumption by this Committee, with the help of the Ministry of Food, and when I read that paper a year ago to the Statistical Society there had been no inquiry to bring those things up to date; all one knew was that things had modified. The Sumner Report offered a much better ground than the material I had when I read my Paper.

Q. Now is not your theory this, that if the working classes' wages go down, and therefore they cannot purchase, the cost of living goes down too?—(A.) No. Where do you think you find that theory?

Q. In your tables. I take the Birmingham Table; you have modified it against the pre-war one, and you have allowed less and made your total come out different.—(A.) I should like you to state my theory again, because I think I do not recognise it.

Q. In your Birmingham one, you see meat was allowed at 7½ lbs.; your modification is to 6 lbs.—(A.) That is for the porter's budget, is it not?

Q. The Birmingham budget priced in 1920, showing the actual quantities purchased in 1914; it is H.5; will you take the first column and the second column and see your modifications to arrive at your 35s. 3d.?—(A.) That modification is as to what the railway porter would have to buy if he lived on 35s. 3d. a week food expenditure. It is no theory at all. It is an interpretation, as I think it, of the Railway Award to that particular grade.

Q. Then that means this, that actually the railway porter, on his low wage of 1914, would purchase 7½ lbs. of meat. Is that what you mean?—(A.) No.

Q. And now on his 61s. would purchase 6 lbs.?—(A.) No, that I think is not the deduction. I put it very carefully again and again yesterday that the Birmingham budget was for middle skilled workmen, whose income was between 30s. and 35s. The goods porter in Birmingham at that date was not getting 30s. or 35s., and was not therefore living on that budget.

Q. But if an ordinary semi-skilled man in Birmingham took 7½ lbs. of meat, does it not just indicate this—and that was really the poverty line at that time, according to Mr. Rowntree, or just

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on the borders of it; less, according to Sir Leo Money's table—does not that prove just this, that to modify the porter's purchases now as against the semi-skilled, is a perpetuation of a semi-starvation condition?—(A.) I think that one cannot say, and no one would after consideration, I think, say that the Birmingham man at 30s. to 35s. a week in 1914 was in a state of semi-starvation. I am not speaking of the Birmingham labourer.

Q. I am speaking of the porter.—(A.) Excuse me, you put it that the Birmingham man in 1914 was close to the poverty line, and you asked me if a state of semi-starvation should be perpetuated.

Q. What I said was: the semi-skilled man, according to Mr. Rowntree's budget with his 35s. 0d., and your budget in Birmingham for semi-skilled men is 38s. 7d.—that is correct, is it not?—(A.) 38s. 7d. for food in 1920, if you allow 35s. 0d. for all expenses in 1914. They are not comparable in any way; they are two different things.

Q. To arrive at your budget and the Sumner Report, you have in fact presumed a modification of the requirements of a working-class home by a considerable percentage?—(A.) May I take the two things separately, as they are absolutely separate. On the Schedule H.5, to which you allude, I make the modification which I think is necessary to bring the diet of the middle skilled artisan of 1914, when supplies were normal, to that which I think would be purchased by a goods porter in London at its present rate. If you ask me whether that wage is adequate for a goods porter, that is another question, and a separate question which I will answer if you will.

Q. That is what I am trying to ascertain.—(A.) But it is nothing to do with the budget for dockers. The budget for dockers is not this; the budget for a docker is 4s. 10d. more. It is put in here to show that the Government award for a goods porter was, in fact, lower than this budget which has been sketched out for the present Inquiry. That was the purpose of it.

Q. And in your judgment it is much too low?—(A.) No.

Q. Do you suggest that the budget for a goods porter is satisfactory?—(A.) A goods porter, if I understand rightly, and no doubt there are many people here who could correct me, is the lowest grade—not absolutely the lowest grade, but very nearly the lowest grade, and he has two avenues of promotion open to him where the money rises to 70s. 0d. I take it if the man is married and has three children, and he is in the bottom grade of the service where he can rise, it is up to him to rise.

Q. Would you starve him while he is waiting to rise?—(A.) My hypothesis is that he would not be married and have three children when he started as a goods porter in the lowest grade as a young man.

Q. Professor Bowley, may I ask you to make some more investigations?; there are thousands of goods porters in London, married and with long families, believe me.—(A.) I am not entitled to question you, so I must put my former answer; I think it is for a man on the 61s. 0d. scale to try and get on to his next grade.

Q. There is just one other point I want to ask, and I will conclude. What is the mortality of the East End compared with the West End?—(A.) That question I think must be addressed to the Registrar-General—of course, I do not keep these figures in my head—or to the officials. You do not expect me to keep all these statistics in my head.

Q. I am leading to this point; you, at the re-

quest of people who live in the West End, have drafted a budget for us to live on in the East End, based upon our pre-war conditions, and I want to ask you if you have had regard to the fact that on the budget upon which you have built there was a heavy mortality amongst our people, greater than amongst those who have requested you to make this budget?—(A.) This budget is not the same as the pre-war budget, but is a substantial advance on it.

Q. Would you mind answering my question?—(A.) I think yours was a statement, not a question.

Q. My question is: Did you have regard, in basing your budget, to the longevity of the two classes?—(A.) No.

Q. Did you have regard to the infantile mortality among the two classes when you put down this eight pints of milk?—(A.) In putting down the eight pints of milk I was ready to make the statement I made yesterday, that I should very much wish to see a distribution of milk that should be directed actually to the children and nursing mothers who need it; and in that sense I did regard the necessities of infants and young children.

Q. But you have not provided for that in your budget.—(A.) I think that is not a good way of providing for milk for children, to put it on a minimum wage for people whether they have children or not.

Q. You are not arguing with Lloyd George now, Professor; this is a Court of Inquiry as to dockers' wages. I presume this Court has no right of legislation on the distribution of milk, therefore the only way to provide for it at all is through the income of the father.—(A.) Excuse me, through the Borough Council.

Q. But as a matter of fact the Borough Councils are already overburdened, and are not doing it.—(A.) I think that point should be addressed to the Borough Councils. The Borough Council of Holborn are in fact providing milk, I am told.

Mr. BEVIN: That is all I desire to ask.

Re-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Have you seen the tables that Mr. Bevin put in, with his budget on, C.7?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you notice that all Mr. Bevin does in that table is to write down certain items at certain prices, without giving any details whatever for criticism?—(A.) That is so, he puts the things all together.

Q. For example, do you see that if you take the first three items, which are the items for food, those three sums make a total of £3 3s. 6d., without any details of how they are arrived at which would enable you to criticise it?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Do you notice that in respect of the item marked "clothing" it says "clothing including everything, £1 5s."?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Without anything to enable you to criticise how that sum is made up?—(A.) That is the difficulty in handling this budget.

Q. Do you notice that under the item "Insurance," "Trade Union Contributions, Friendly Societies, Health Insurance, Medical Fees, etc.," are put down at the sum of 4s. without any information as to how that item is made up?—(A.) There is no information.

Q. Take, for example, the item "Miscellaneous, Limited Luxuries, Tobacco, Literature, Recreation, etc., etc.," put down at a round sum of 10s. without any information to enable you to criticise that item?—(A.) That is so.

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Q. With your experience, is that the sort of budget which you really can examine with regard to the conditions of the persons for whom the budget is intended?—(A.) So far as the food is concerned, it gives one no clue at all. In any budget there must be a miscellaneous entry which must cover those things not expressly provided for, but here there seem to be five or six miscellaneous entries.

Q. Turning to your budget, you have put in a detailed budget of food on the table H.1?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Mr. Bevin criticises you in saying that you had no regard to the way the food is cooked, or the way the food is used, in working-class houses?—(A.) I think he did.

Q. You heard him put those criticisms to you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Did you, before you prepared your budget, have regard to the Birmingham investigation?—(A.) No. I looked at that afterwards; it was confirmatory.

Q. Take, first of all, the Birmingham investigations, were those investigations which showed how, in point of fact, according to the custom in working-class houses, food was actually used and the different characters of food which were used?—(A.) In the Birmingham investigation, the householder was watched with the consent, and, indeed, the pleasure, of the householder in every detail throughout the week. One of the investigators at Birmingham took special charge of each household, and made a very careful observation the whole way through, so that no details escaped.

Q. And by that means was accurate observation kept upon the custom in respect of living in working-class houses?—(A.) I should judge a very accurate observation. I can only judge from the Report, and the account that is there given of how the investigation was carried out.

Q. Now take the budgets that were sent out by Lord Sumner's Committee; they were budgets which were collected, were they not, from working-class houses?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do they therefore reflect the custom according to which food was used, and the proportions in which foods were used, in working-class houses?—(A.) Yes, at that date.

Q. Have you, therefore, compared your budget which you have prepared in H.1, with those two sets of observations?—(A.) Yes, and with the previous set which were connected with the Inquiry of 1904.

Q. And you have also compared them with similar observations made by the Board of Trade in 1904?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And do those observations made in 1904 show the custom prevalent in working-class houses in respect to the consumption of food, and the kinds of foods that were in fact used?—(A.) Undoubtedly they do of that class which the budgets reached, or from whom they were received.

Q. Therefore, so far as accurately reflecting the customs of working-class houses, does your budget proceed on the same lines as those three sets of independent inquiries?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But do you go further, and have you substantially increased your budget?—(A.) I have taken the budget up from the unskilled, or low-paid class, to the level of the middle-skilled class before the war.

Q. So that you have distinctly lifted the level of your budget from the unskilled class to the middle-skilled class?—(A.) Yes, that is on the assumption, which may or may not be true, that the dock labourer was living on the wages of the

unskilled class, in which case it is an improvement on his budget.

Q. Anyhow, you have definitely placed him on the same standard of life as the semi-skilled class?—(A.) That has been my intention.

Q. If any attempt at a scientific estimation of a budget is to be made, covering generally a big section of the community, is any other means available than the means you have adopted?—(A.) Not for the actual custom and details; there was in 1918, at any rate, a general control from the thorough knowledge of the Ministry of Food; but there is no other means that I am acquainted with of getting details, that any other investigator has taken.

Q. Or of adjusting details to the customs of the particular section of the community for which you are preparing a budget?—(A.) The information must be obtained first-hand from the household.

Q. That was so obtained by the Board of Trade and the Birmingham investigation, and under Lord Sumner's investigation?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Mr. Bevin has rather criticised you, and suggested you have regarded the dockers, and their application for an increase of wage, from an unsympathetic standpoint?—(A.) Apparently.

Q. Are you the author of the book entitled "Livelihood and Poverty"?—(A.) I am one of the authors.

Q. Did you write this on page 42 of the book: "It can hardly be too emphatically stated that of all the causes of misery and poverty which have been brought to our notice, low wages are by far the most important. We would go further, and say that to raise the wages of the worst-paid workers is the most pressing social task with which the country is concerned to-day."—(A.) That I wrote, and those are my views.

Q. Are those your views to-day?—(A.) I am not certain that the rise has not taken place.

Q. Holding those views, did you sit down to draft this budget which you have put in as H.1?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And, holding those views, and with your experience, do you say that that is a fair budget to put before the Court?—(A.) In my opinion it is, and I may perhaps say that I would not have put my name to a budget which was on the basis of the former unskilled labourer's budget. I would have criticised and not defended it.

Q. You would not have put your name to a budget on the basis of the former unskilled labourer's budget?—(A.) No.

Q. And you have lifted the budget here into the definitely higher grade of the semi-skilled labourer?—(A.) Yes, and that is also the general average, and also, in my opinion, it at present corresponds to the available supplies of things which these—of all things, in fact.

Q. To illustrate your budget in comparison with other budgets, did you prepare a budget for a railway porter in receipt of the recently agreed wage in London of 61s.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is your budget in this case substantially above that budget?—(A.) Yes, it is 4s. 9d. above in the food, and correspondingly above in the residue.

Q. And, as we know, that is the wage which has just been agreed between the Government and the National Union of Railwaymen?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have stated that, at the moment, supplies of necessary commodities are short?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If supplies are short, does an increase of wage provide the means for better distribution of those supplies to the people that need them?—(A.)

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It makes for more competition for the goods that are available.

Q. Does that reflect itself in increasing the prices of the goods in question?—(A.) Yes, either an increase in the prices, or, if they are controlled, it leads to queues, if there is not enough to go round.

Q. Therefore, as long as supplies are short, and as long as supplies are not efficiently distributed, will increasing wages improve the material condition of those who are to receive the increase of wage?—(A.) It will improve the position of those who get the rise first; then all the others will be in a worse position until they also can get the rise; then they will be at the same level as before.

Q. Those who get the rise are in a better position, and the others, who do not get the rise, are in a worse position?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then it reflects in the general increase of prices when all concerned are in a worse position?—(A.) Yes—all concerned are in the old position.

Q. Is that the economic effect of the process I have put to you?—(A.) That is, I judge, the most probable course of events which takes place, and I think there have been many instances of it.

Q. Have you considered the question of a sliding scale in connection with the cost of living?—(A.) Yes, I have considered it. I have read the arguments in the cases in which it has been accepted or rejected.

Q. It is suggested, apparently, that an objection to the sliding scale is that the worker would reduce the price by increased production, and the benefit would go to some person else. Is that really what happens?—(A.) That depends on many circumstances.

Q. Is it not largely the bounty of Nature which increases supplies, reduces prices, and lowers the cost of living?—(A.) I have not quite got your line of reasoning.

Q. The point I was putting to you was the question of assuming a sliding scale of wages fixed now under abnormal conditions—you have considered that proposition?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What are your views upon it?—(A.) I am not prepared either to advocate it or reject it.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a frank statement. If the witness is not prepared to either advocate it or reject it, do you think you ought to go into it, Sir Lynden?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, my Lord, I will not go into it further. That is all I need ask Professor Bowley.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you mean exactly by talking of the unskilled and middle-skilled class, in reference to the Inquiry we are engaged in as to the minimum wage?—(A.) By the unskilled class one understands those who were in receipt of wages before the war in the towns of 25s. Od., or thereabouts; by the skilled class, those men who have definitely served an apprenticeship, or otherwise trained themselves; by the middle-skilled class, those men who are not definitely trained men, but are getting a wage in the neighbourhood of 30s. Od.

Q. Then is the basis of the distinction between unskilled and middle-skilled, or skilled, the distinction as to what they receive, or the distinction as to what they require?—(A.) It is a combination of the two.

Q. Then I will ask you with regard to the latter, as to what they require. I understand that statisticians, like yourself, do think that a serious and fundamental factor with regard to the susten-

ance of the worker is the amount of calories, required by him for efficiency, in his food budget. Is that so?—(A.) That is a governing, or limiting factor.

Q. And a very important one?—(A.) An essential one.

Q. With regard to the unskilled and middle-skilled, worker, roughly speaking, the unskilled man is the man with the heaviest labour?—(A.) Not in any way exclusively, my Lord. There is much unskilled work that is extremely easy—but not docking.

Q. You proceed on a general footing throughout, and we must understand where we stand. Is it your view that the unskilled labour is not heavier labour than the other?—(A.) Some is, and some is not.

Q. Again, on the question of average, take a docker?—(A.) In the case of a docker, the food necessities are put higher than in the case of other unskilled labour, where the work is quite easy.

Q. That is to say, the docker stands on the unskilled ticket, and yet he stands upon a ticket which requires greater sustenance for effectiveness?—(A.) That is so, together with, of course, other things.

Q. If that be so, will you now explain to this Court what the introduction of the difference between unskilled and middle-skilled has to do with a case of this kind?—(A.) The budget which is put forward, and which we have been discussing, the 40s. Od. budget, not only provides the essential nutriment of 3,700 calories a day, but also pays regard to the choice of ways in which that nutriment can be obtained, and brings that choice of variety to the higher standard of the middle-skilled man before the war.

Q. Would you tell me, is there any distinction between the calories required for these different categories of labour?—(A.) Yes, for light, middle and heavy labour, there is a recognised distinction.

Q. Is that what you call skilled, middle-skilled, and unskilled?—(A.) No, the classification cuts right across.

Q. With regard to unskilled labour, and skilled labour, is there no distinction of calories at all between them?—(A.) It is entirely an occupational distinction, according to what the man is doing, and not according to his degree of skill.

Q. We are engaged in a special Inquiry, and we want your help, and it is about dockers. There may be distinctions with regard to labour, but you agree, do not you, that the dock labourer, as a whole, must be taken as a labourer demanding the most calories for human sustenance?—(A.) You put the superlative?

Q. Yes?—(A.) Not the most of any work there is, but more than the medium.

Q. That is to say, the heaviest category, that is what I mean?—(A.) I think it does not come into the heaviest category.

Q. I am not going to allow this Inquiry to go away upon words; and you surely know what I am meaning?—(A.) May I put it into figures?

Q. No, I would like you to answer me first. I want you to answer me in this way. Is not it, broadly speaking, the fact that a dock labourer is in an occupation which demands a large, instead of a middle, or a small, number of calories, for his effective sustenance?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Again I am wanting you to help me on our Inquiry. Our Inquiry—and I beg of you to consider this in the answers which you now give me—is not what kind of a life he has lived in the past with wages and surroundings which leave much to be desired, but our Inquiry is: What would be a

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fair thing for a decent man to live a decent life? That is putting it broadly; it may not be scientific.

Sir JOSEPH BRODBANK: A healthy life.

The **CHAIRMAN:** A decent and healthy life. In that view do you think it of any advantage to cite statistics which may have been conditioned by the amount the man may have received in the past, and therefore by his having to square his living bill to what he received?—(A.) Yes, I think it of great advantage.

Q. In that view you value the Sumner Report, do you?—(A.) Not particularly the Sumner Report.

Q. Do you value it generally?—(A.) In that particular view it is not the Sumner Report to which I should turn, it is to the known method of expenditure of the working class prior to the war.

Q. But you understand my position. Naturally I value and would attach great weight to anything bearing Lord Sumner's name, but I beg of you to look with me at what Lord Sumner said. (*A copy of the Report was handed to the Witness.*) In paragraph 5 he says: "It was not part of our reference to consider whether the standard of living attained in 1914 or 1918 was, or is, inadequate, sufficient or excessive." Now, Professor Bowley, let us be quite frank about it: A Report which excluded that cannot be of much help to us in our Inquiry, in which these things are the very things into which we are inquiring—namely, its inadequacy, sufficiency or excess.—(A.) I am not saying that the Report is of value to this Inquiry, but may I point out one thing which is left out in that paragraph? We were considering the relative position at the two dates.

Q. I am not, and I am putting this to you quite frankly, because I am no conjurer, but I can see very great statistical elements in this Report, and have an idea where they came from. May I put to you this further paragraph, paragraph 13?—"Certain omissions were deliberately made. We did not ask how much the wage-earners received." No one is blaming you or those distinguished men who were associated with you, but for the purpose of our Inquiry do you not think that it would be of value to know how much the workers received alongside of how much they were spending?—(A.) It was with very great regret that the Committee came to the conclusion that they could not collect that material.

Q. You do think it would have been of value?—(A.) We spent meeting after meeting seeing whether there was any prospect of our getting adequate statistics, and we came to the conclusion that it would wreck the Inquiry to try it.

Q. In that view I think we may pass from the Sumner Report. The next thing I want to ask you, if you would be so kind as to answer, is: Was not the Birmingham Report in similar conditions, that it did not inquire, when it was asking the actual cost of living, what were the receipts of the household which bore the cost?—(A.) It did inquire, and it gave in every case the income of the household.

Q. What was the average income?—(A.) In the cases which I took, from 30s. 0d. to 35s. 0d., with an average of 32s. 0d.

Q. And what was the total expenditure?—(A.) I think it was not ascertained whether there was any saving at the particular dates.

Q. But I am asking you the expenditure?—(A.) The expenditure is given on food and on rent, and the rest is left as a margin.

Q. What was the expenditure on food and rent?—(A.) That is on H.4.

Q. What was the expenditure on food and

rent?—(A.) It is stated on H.4 that the food was 17s. 6d., the rent 6s. 0d., and the margin 8s. 8d.

Q. Between the actual receipts?—(A.) Between the receipts and the expenditure on food and rent.

Q. That is a margin of about 1s. 2d. a day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In a family of five?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What do you include in that margin?—(A.) Everything that the family spent. There is no detail given there.

Q. No, but might we ask from our point of view what would be required in that margin?—(A.) Clothes would be the principal item.

Q. The 6s. 0d. to 8s. 0d. did not include clothes at all?—(A.) The clothes must come out of the other expenses, which are 8s. 8d.

Q. What else besides clothes?—(A.) Insurance and all other expenditure not already enumerated.

Q. Fuel?—(A.) Fuel, yes.

Q. Lighting?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Taxation?—(A.) If any.

Q. Doctors' fees?—(A.) If any.

Q. Renewals?—(A.) Yes.

Q. These are the main items. There may be a hundred-and-one things besides that, but the 6s. 0d. to 8s. 0d., I think, is the figure that includes all that?—(A.) It is the 8s. 8d. which includes that.

Q. Do you think it right, in a family of five, to hold 8s. 8d. as adequate to cover fuel, repairs, lighting and all these other elements, including clothing, to which you have just referred?—(A.) In what sense does your Lordship use the word "right"?

Q. I mean that it is right that people should have enough to live in comparative comfort and health?—(A.) The Report, which is in considerable detail, gives me the impression that these people were living in health, and there is no indication that they were not living in comfort.

Q. Then I may take it from you that standing upon that Report you would say that 8s. 8d. per week was sufficient for all those items?—(A.) Those families, in fact, were maintaining a fair standard on that sum.

Q. And therefore in your opinion it is sufficient?—(A.) Yes; but I am not saying that I should not like to see more.

Q. I am not saying that either; I am only asking your view. As a statistician you maintain that 8s. 8d. is a sufficient figure for a family of five to be provided with?—(A.) Was in Birmingham in 1914 sufficient to keep up an adequate standard, with all the family in complete health.

Q. What would you raise that figure of 8s. 8d. to now?—(A.) I have very great difficulty, as I have explained, in putting any figures in these very exceptional times for the sundry items.

Q. I have seven heads here which will be included in the Birmingham 8s. 8d. There may be many others, but I think these we agreed were rather important—clothing, fuel, renewals, doctors, insurance, societies, and lighting. You say that you have not been able to put a figure. I must ask you if you would be so very good as to help us, as a statistician, with such a figure?—(A.) You ask, my Lord, for the figure for sundries, 8s. 8d. May I refer you to the paper put in, H.1, where an estimate is given for the docker's budget for 1920. These items there come to 27s.

Q. Would that stand as against the 8s. 8d.?—(A.) I think it is an increase.

Q. What was the date of the Birmingham budget?—(A.) 1914.

Q. Does not that suggest to you that that 8s. 8d. was too limited a figure?—(A.) In what sense too limited?

Q. In the sense I have described: for a decent family under decent conditions.—(A.) No, because

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the report—it is under the authority of the Medical Officer of Health of Birmingham—is that the children were all well-developed; and, I cannot give you the details without careful search, but my impression is that in those households the household utensils and the general household were up to the kind of standard we will find in a careful working-class household.

Q. I may be wrong—I may not be sufficiently statistical—but it suggests to my mind that their expenditure was pretty much regulated by what came in?—(A.) That, I take it, everybody's expenditure is.

Q. I am not sure of that. It depends upon whether they are thrifty or not.—(A.) These families, I should judge, were probably careful families.

Q. Have they anything to lay aside out of that?—(A.) Some persons lay aside money out of very limited sums, but I think there is no evidence of how much they saved, if any.

Q. I want to get at the facts about it. These very same families to which the budget applied would find their expenses upon these very elements to which we have referred increased by no less than £1 per week, or 18s. 6d. per week. Is that so?—(A.) I have tried to explain that it is really impossible to give a substantial figure for the change in this type of expense, but the sum put down in the dockers' budget for 1920 for these items is 27s.

Q. I do not think I need detain you much longer, except that I wanted to ask you about calorific values. Was it you who referred yesterday to the 1 lb. of meat having calorific value equal to 14 eggs?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And 1 lb. of bacon having a calorific value to 13 eggs?—(A.) Thirty-six eggs. That is given on the authority of Professor Wood.

Q. I want to ask you, particularly in view of the children of the families, on the subject of oatmeal and milk. What is the expense of 1 lb. of meat which you use as a datum?—(A.) At the present day?

Q. Yes.—(A.) 1s. 3½d.

Q. What is the expense of 1 lb. of oatmeal?—(A.) 4d. or 5d.

Q. Shall we say 4½d.—(A.) I think the un-doctored oatmeal is 4d.—rolled oats and that kind of thing is 5d.

Q. Will you tell me the calorific value applicable to oatmeal?—(A.) Oatmeal is 1860 to the pound avoirdupois.

Q. 1860 calories out of 1 lb. ?—(A.) Out of 1 lb. of oatmeal.

Q. And out of 1 lb. of meat at 1s. 3½d. ?—(A.) I have taken that as 1040. It depends on the joint.

Q. Therefore 2½d. worth of oatmeal would give as much calorific energy as 1 lb. of meat?—(A.) Approximately.

Q. And where the habit of taking oatmeal prevails the children, and the men and women too, are therefore nourished at much less cost if the habits of the people have induced them to have that common sense. Is not that so?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You think that, I presume, is of great value, particularly for the infant life?—(A.) Yes. May I say that wheat flour at the present price is an even better investment in calories.

Q. Wheat flour is an even better investment?—(A.) At the present price. It is subsidised, and oatmeal is not, I believe.

Q. About the milk: milk is a very serious problem at the present time, you are aware?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How does it compare in cost with the 1914 standard?—(A.) In cost it has come from under 4d. to a little under 1s. It is nearly three times the price. It depends on the district.

Q. You allow 8 pints of milk, do you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you think that is enough?—(A.) I think that where there are three children under six it is not the best diet. I should myself, as I said in the Court, certainly do anything I could to get the milk for children under six or eight.

Q. If you gave enough instead of a pinched allowance, what would you give?—(A.) In my own household I use 22 pints of milk. That I think is as much as anybody can possibly claim to use. That, I think, is the best answer I can give you. I have three children; they are somewhat older, but I am feeding them, as I am able fortunately to afford it, on what we believe to be a good diet.

Q. Can you answer this question, which seems to sum up a good deal of the case. Take a good retail market, like Chrisp Street in Poplar, and take a decent working man's decent working wife going in to make her market day: do you think that she could buy the necessary supplies for the figure which you have stated?—(A.) I can only say that I think so, because I have never been to Poplar, and the people I sent there did not report on the prices of foods of which, I believe, we knew the figures from the Ministry of Food and the "Labour Gazette."

Q. What makes me ask you that is this: how can you say that you think so if, as you have already sworn, you say that the household expenses of 3s. 4d. which you have allowed is an item which cannot be estimated, and if you also say that the clothing allowance of 12s. 6d. is an amount which you cannot say would be enough? These are your phrases.—(A.) I understood your question as to shopping in Poplar to refer to food, and I answered in that sense.

Q. No. Take a retail market at which they would get clothing and bed ticks, and, shortly, household supplies. In short, does it not come to this, that there are elements of very considerable uncertainty, even entering into your budget, notably the household element of 3s. 4d. and the clothing element of 12s. 6d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is perfectly frank and proper. I am asked to put this question in supplement: In Birmingham, when you mentioned that the classes from whom the budget was derived were in comfort and health, did you have any standard of health with other classes of society in Birmingham?—(A.) May I read you what is said?

Q. Please?—(A.) "All the children are up to an average standard of development for their respective ages." That is the statement.

Q. Was there any standard with reference to other classes of society?—(A.) I think the standard taken by the Medical Officer of Health is not in any way specially working-class; it is an average development of a well-formed child.

Q. Do the standards of mortality apply to classes?—(A.) In the reports of mortality the death rates are given once in ten years for a great number of classes separately.

Q. How did that stand in Birmingham?—(A.) I cannot answer that question. I believe the information is obtainable in the report, but I am not certain that it is given for separate towns.

Q. Might I ask you this question, as a statistician, before you leave us: Is not the standard of mortality among children who die under one year a very crucial test as to the adequacy of wages?—(A.) Not only of the adequacy of wages, but of the skill and attention of the mother and the environment.

Q. And also the environment, and also the habits of the parents?—(A.) All those factors enter.

Q. But the importance with regard to feeding is rather notably visible, is it not, on the mortality

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statistics for children under twelve months?—(A.) I do not know that the figures distinguish what are the causes—whether they are injudicious food, too little food, environment, accident, or what.

Q. That may be; and there may be pre-natal conditions, of course?—(A.) Apropos, if I may add to that, I am informed that the children under one year in Vienna are almost the only class who do not show excessive mortality. I suppose they are not weaned.

Q. That does not apply to now, does it?—(A.) That was Sir William Beveridge's remark to me immediately after his return from Vienna a month ago.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: We now propose to call Mr. Ross Johnson, the General Manager and Secretary of the Bristol and Avonmouth Docks.

Mr. D. ROSS JOHNSON, Sworn.

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are the General Manager and Secretary of the Bristol Docks?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The Port, I think, consists of the City Docks, the Avonmouth Docks and the Portishead Docks?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think the principal trade there consists of grain, petroleum and spirit, timber and general cargo?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is the Dock Authority at Bristol?—(A.) The Corporation of the City of Bristol owns the Dock, and the management is by a Committee of the Corporation.

Q. What does the Committee consist of? How many members are there?—(A.) Eleven members.

Q. Is there any labour representation upon that Committee?—(A.) Yes. At the present time there are two Labour members among the eleven. There has always, in my time, been one, and the second one was added after the last election.

Q. I think the labourage charges at Bristol are not subject to any statutory maxima, are they?—(A.) That is so. The dues are subject to statutory maxima, but not the charge for labourage operations.

Q. Are your dues at present up to the pre-war maximum?—(A.) They are up to the pre-war statutory maximum, and in a few insignificant cases above it. Since then, of course, we have obtained higher statutory powers.

Q. Have you got permanent statutory powers, or just temporary powers under the Defence of the Realm Act?—(A.) No, we have got permanent powers under an Act of Parliament.

Q. And you have not exercised those up to the full yet?—(A.) Not up to the full.

Q. Will you tell the Court who the principal employers of labour are at Bristol and Avonmouth?—(A.) The Docks Committee itself employs a large number of men; probably they are the largest single employer. The bulk of the rest of the employment at Avonmouth is in the hands of one firm of stevedores, Messrs. King and Co. At the City Docks the Docks Committee does not do much of the work; it is done by various shipowners. There the employment is direct by various shipowners, master carters and merchants.

Q. Taking the whole of the Bristol area, in which I include Avonmouth and Portishead, what is the total number of casuals? Can you give a rough figure?—(A.) At Bristol, Avonmouth and the City Docks?

Q. Yes.—(A.) The total number registered is about 4,400.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the total of the names on the Register?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The total names on the Register.

Q. I think the three principal classes are the general cargo workers, the grain men and the timber men?—(A.) That is so, among the casuals.

Q. I want you to tell the Court, shortly, how the general cargo men work, and what the nature of the work is, with a view to showing how heavy the work is?—(A.) The general cargo men handle general cargo, which is of a very miscellaneous kind, chiefly provisions—boxes of cheese, boxes of bacon, boxes of Quaker Oats, and so on—and these are all brought across the quay by hand-trucks, which the men push. Grain, to the extent to which it is done by manual labour, is carried on men's shoulders in sacks. Timber, of course, is also carried on men's shoulders.

Q. Just to go back to the general cargo, I suppose you work a gang in the hold of the vessel and then it is brought up by the ship's gear on to the deck?—(A.) A gang works in the hold of the vessel and brings the cargo—packages generally—up by means of hand-trucks to the square of the hatch, where it is lifted, either by the ship's gear or by cranes on the quay, and put down on the quay, and it is there trucked by the shore-gang men to the place in the shed or in the railway truck, or to the shoot into the craft, according to how it has got to be disposed of.

Q. How many men are working on the ship in a gang?—(A.) That depends on the kind of cargo which is being handled and the conditions at the time.

Q. Take the unloading of boxes of bacon, for instance?—(A.) I would rather that you put that to the stevedores. I have not got in my head the actual complement of the gang for each particular kind of cargo. The stevedore who does the work will tell you that better than I can.

Q. Very well, I will put that to him. That is Mr. Cox?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you got a scheme of registration of transport workers at Bristol?—(A.) Yes. A scheme of registration was introduced about the year before last under the auspices of the Port Labour Committee. Perhaps I may be allowed to explain that the Port Labour Committee was originally brought into being in the early days of the war to deal with questions of exemption from military service, as was done in all the ports. It became a rather useful means of settling various minor matters between the employers and the Dockers' Union. It was continued at the request of the Ministry of Labour to deal with questions of demobilisation, and we continued it in being, having shed all the Government representatives of the various Government Departments from it, to manage this registration scheme; and we hope eventually to work up to a clearing house on the lines of Liverpool.

Q. With regard to this Bristol Port Labour Committee, have you got any copies of this card?—(A.) Yes, we have provided copies of the rules for registration.

Q. Can you hand some copies to the Court?—(A.) Yes, you have them there. (*A copy was handed in and marked H.6.)

Q. The Port Labour Committee now consists of representatives of the employers and of the men?—(A.) And of the Ministry of Labour.

Q. How many of each? I think the names are

* See Appendix No. 59

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given on the last page, page 4.—(A.) I am the Chairman. There are five representatives of different classes of employers and five representatives of the Dockers' Union. The Secretary is an official of the Ministry of Labour. The Divisional Labour Ministry Official is also a member, and comes very often.

Q. Does this Committee issue the tallies to the men?—(A.) This Committee issues the tallies through the Dockers' Union Offices to the men.

Q. Who really has the control of the issuing of the tallies?—(A.) The control of the issuing of the tallies to the casuals is done entirely by the Union officials.

Q. The rules provide, I think, for a sufficient number of tallies being issued in order to meet the demands at the docks?—(A.) Yes, and perhaps it would be convenient here if I explain that we meet temporary demands for an increase of labour by the issue of temporary tallies, the numbers being fixed in negotiation between my office and representatives of the Union.

Q. When a man is taken on he gives up his tally to his employer, does he not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And does the employer keep that tally until the whole job is finished?—(A.) Yes, and then returns it to him.

Q. So that the worker at Bristol, if he is once taken on to unload or to assist in unloading a vessel, is entitled to remain working on that vessel until the whole job is finished?—(A.) He is entitled, and he is also required to do it; it is a mutual obligation.

Q. While that job is going on the employer holds his tally, and he cannot get a job from another employer without producing his tally?—(A.) That is what the rules provide for.

Q. Now will you tell the Court whether it is fair to say that in normal times those men who want work at Bristol can, on the average, get five days a week?—(A.) Yes, in my judgment it is. That is the figure that was given by Mr. Bevin, and I accept it. We have tried very hard, but we have not yet succeeded in getting such a complete record as will enable us to say by statistics what employment every man has had. We can do it at Avonmouth, but that, of course, does not answer the question, because it is a moving total number. We have established a clearing house for engagement purposes at Bristol. We have had it going for a few months, but we have not yet got the men sufficiently into using it to enable us to get any complete record of the demand as compared with the supply from day to day.

Q. You have said that in your view those men who want work can on the average get five days in the week. Is it your view that a large part of the men do not want to work more than that five days?—(A.) A certain proportion of the men do not want regular employment. That is the general experience.

Q. And does a considerable number not want to work as much even as five days?—(A.) A certain number will not work for more than is just sufficient to earn the necessary money to keep them—I do not say a large proportion.

Q. Now, with regard to the best men, those who want to work every day they can possibly get work, is that class of men at Bristol able to get almost constant employment?—(A.) Yes, almost constant employment.

Q. Now upon this question of the amount of work there is for the men to do, I think that during the war the Port Labour Committee kept records of each man's work during the war?—(A.) That was so. As regards the men of military age—

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to raise a point here. With regard to the question of records during the war, there was a guarantee given to the men that that should be an absolutely private matter. It was in connection with the circumstances of the war. Having made that pledge to the men as being a part of that business, I do not think I can let this go on without raising an objection, without rather committing myself with the men as having gone back on my pledge.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If Mr. Bevin takes that objection, of course I shall not ask to be allowed to put the question, but I would remind the Court of this, that Mr. Farrah, who gave evidence from Hull yesterday, referred to these figures.

Mr. BEVIN: Not to Bristol, surely?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, not with regard to Bristol, but the Port Labour Committee's figures.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to point out that my objection only refers to Bristol. I gave a specific pledge to the Port Labour employees at Bristol at that time.

The CHAIRMAN: You must settle this amongst yourselves.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I think the most satisfactory way of settling it is for me to pass to another topic.

The WITNESS: I only wish to say, my Lord, that if the Court wants any information on this matter it is quite easy to confine my reply to figures which were published in the newspapers under the direction of the Port Labour Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you say to that, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: I do not object to a general figure, but I thought Counsel was going to cross-examine as to the whole question of keeping records, as to which I gave a pledge.

The CHAIRMAN: The witness explained that there was some certain publication in the newspapers. That, of course, is public property, and you would be entitled to go into that, Mr. Thomas, without any objection on Mr. Bevin's part.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Perhaps I may just ask you this first: You know the figure I was going to ask you about?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Has that appeared in the public Press?

The CHAIRMAN: I think I must disallow that question. Start him at the newspapers, and confine him to that, otherwise you may take the risk of getting something in which is objected to.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I do not want to go counter to any undertaking my friend may have given. Are you able to give any useful information to the Court on this subject which has appeared in the Press?—(A.) An analysis of the records of work done by the men who hold these books was made during the war. That was brought to a percentage of the possible work that they could have done, and that figure was communicated to the Press.

The CHAIRMAN: Give us that figure.—(A.) That figure was 85 per cent.

Mr. BEVIN: Was it possible work or possible

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time?—(A.) The possible time. It was 85 of the possible days they could have worked.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That was under war conditions?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And when the convoy system caused very great fluctuations in the demand for labour?—(A.) That was so.

Q. Have the records that were kept, and which enabled that figure to be got at, been continued since the war?—(A.) No.

Q. I think you have prepared a number* of Tables, and I think it will be convenient if we have them all handed in now as one bundle with one number?—(A.) Yes.

(*The bundle of Tables was handed in and marked H6.)

Q. It is called H6, and then there will be sub-headings which will be Bristol, A, B, C, and D. You have shown on that Table the pre-war and present rates of the general cargo-workers, who are time-workers, the grain-men, who are piece-workers, and the timber-men, who are also time-workers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. At the top of the Table you have shown what the pre-war and the present hours are?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In the middle of the Table you have got the rates of pay, and at the bottom you have got the overtime and Sunday pay?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will you just draw the Court's attention to the rates of pay at the City Docks before the war. That was 7s. a day, I think?—(A.) Yes, and 4s 8d. on Saturdays.

Q. It is now 14s. and 7s. on Saturdays?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And of course there has been the reduction in hours that we know of?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The grain men are piece-workers. What has been their increase?—(A.) Before the war, as is shown there, the grain piece-workers' rate was 4½d. per 100 bushels. Then there was no minimum, with the exception of one or two small insignificant things. There was no minimum for the bulk of the men. They were paid according to the work they performed. At the present time they are guaranteed a minimum wage of 14s. on week-days and 8s. on Saturdays. This was the result of negotiations entered into when we had to apply the National Agreement of April, 1919, the shorter hours agreement. It was intended, and we did not dispute it, that the men ought to be guaranteed if they did a fair day's work an earning at least equal to what the day-worker was getting, and, based on the pre-war output, an arrangement was made that the men should be guaranteed this 14s. for working 2,000 bushels, and that they should be paid so much for every 100 bushels, according to the class of grain, in excess of that quantity. The result of this was rather unfortunate. We found there was not sufficient inducement left for a man to exert himself, and the actual output fell substantially below that 2,000 bushels, or below what was the average output before the war. After considerable negotiations it was agreed that the men should get their guaranteed 14s. for a quantity of 1,600 bushels, as is shown in the Table, being paid extra for every 100 bushels in excess of the 1,600 which they worked.

The CHAIRMAN: How much were they paid per 100 bushels?—(A.) 8½d. is the general rate per 100 bushels. It varies with the different classes of grain.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I just want to ask you a question about this minimum, because I think my

* See Appendices Nos. 60, 61 and 62.

friend Mr. Bevin, in opening, put this forward as a classic example of where the introduction of the minimum resulted in substantially increased output. The minimum which was imposed here just after the 44-hour agreement, that is, in the spring of last year, was 2,000 bushels, was it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Was that below the pre-war average output?—(A.) After that was imposed the pre-war average output fell down considerably.

Q. But was the 2,000 bushels minimum less than the pre-war output?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That was the first minimum imposed?—(A.) The 2,000 was the first minimum arranged.

Q. When you imposed that minimum, what did the average output become?—(A.) Taken over a certain period on the whole quantity of work it fell down to 1,870 bushels.

Q. That output was very unsatisfactory to you, was it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you had to do something to try and raise it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What did you do?—(A.) We re-arranged the conditions so that the men got the guaranteed 14s. for doing 1,600 bushels instead of 2,000.

Q. You reduced the minimum from 2,000 to 1,600?—(A.) Yes, and kept the sum the same.

Q. Was the result of that that the output went up from 1,870 bushels to 2,672 bushels?—(A.) That was the result.

Q. Was that an expensive operation for the employers?—(A.) Yes, it materially increased the average cost of working.

Q. What were the figures? Give it us approximately?—(A.) It increased the cost per 100 bushels by about 20 per cent.

Q. We can go back to that later and correct it if it is found to be wrong. Now I want you to tell the Court of any particular advantages the men at Bristol have. I think you have mentioned one, and that is that if they begin a job they are entitled to be employed upon it until it is finished?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then they have the half-day minimum, which is in existence at every other port, and in some cases, I think at Bristol, there is a full day?—(A.) With certain classes of men it has been customary for a long time to give them the full day's pay for the shorter day on Saturday.

Q. Men following on employment are paid for time they do not work in certain circumstances—through rain, for instance?—(A.) When they are engaged on day work they are paid, although they are stopped for weather conditions or any other causes.

Q. Those are time-workers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Now with regard to the piece-workers, if they are delayed, what happens?—(A.) I have just explained how they are guaranteed their day's wage equal to the day-workers, under any circumstances, and in addition they get paid for any material delays in doing their work, if they are stopped for any cause and prevented doing a full day's work, generally calculated at 400 bushels per hour. If the men are stood down for an hour for any avoidable cause they are paid the equivalent of 400 bushels.

Q. But you do not pay for any delay which is less than one hour, I understand?—(A.) That is the general understanding.

Q. Do you pay for any delays in a day where the minimum is not reached?—(A.) No, because it is already paid for in the minimum.

Q. Then I think also where pieceworkers are delayed through waiting for barges or bringing in trucks or anything, that is covered by what you have already said?—(A.) Yes, by what I have just said.

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Q. I think you have prepared another table, the second one in the bundle which has been handed in marked B?—(A.) May I correct that figure I gave you about grain-workers?—Before the war the average cost of labour was 2s. 10d. per 100 bushels. While the 2,000 minimum was in force at, of course, the higher rate of pay, it was 5s. 5d. After the 1,600 bushels minimum was brought into force, with the conditions, it was raised to 7s. 7d.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that the present situation?—(A.) That is the present situation.

Q. What does that 7s. 7d. represent?—(A.) It represents the average output multiplied by the concrete rate per 100 bushels.

Q. It is not output I am asking about, it is cost. What does that 7s. 7d. represent?—(A.) It represents the cost of working 2,672 bushels on the payment of 14s. for the first 1,600 and 8½d. per 100 for the balance.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is the cost per 100 bushels?—(A.) Yes, according to the number of men in the gang, of course.

The CHAIRMAN: Just to make this clear, that 7s. 7d. represents how many hours work?—(A.) That 7s. 7d. represents 8 hours work by 8 men producing the average output of 2,672 bushels.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: So that what the 8 men get paid for those 8 hours is twenty-six 7s. 7d.'s?—(A.) No, it is 14s. and eleven 8½d.'s. It is a total of £1 2s. 3d.

The CHAIRMAN: Let me try my hand again. There is a man earns 7s. 7d. under that scheme?—(A.) No, my Lord; that 7s. 7d. represents the cost of the working 100 bushels of grain.

Q. 7s. 7d. a 100 bushels under the existing scheme?—(A.) Yes; not paid to one man.

Q. That is paid to the gang?—(A.) That is part of what is paid to the gang.

Q. Now I want it converted into the human element. What does a man get?—(A.) Each individual in that gang gets the 14s. for the first 1,600 bushels. He works 2,672, which is paid as 2,700—that is, 1,100 bushels at 8½d. a 100, which is 8s. 3d. That makes a total of £1 2s. 3d.

Q. Now convert that into a weekly wage.—(A.) You must really multiply that by 6 in order to get the fair weekly wage, because it is the average of the weekly output that is taken, so that would be £6 13s. 6d.—of course, on the understanding that he is doing it the whole week.

Q. I mean, on the scale of payment, if he worked a full week he would earn £6 13s. 6d.?—(A.) Yes, and another figure I get by taking rather different averages is that he gets £6 9s.

Q. Take your average man who does not work the full 6 days; what does the average man get upon that scale?—(A.) He will get the same per day, the £1 2s. 3d.

Q. Would the average man come 5 days a week into Bristol?—(A.) Yes, I accept 5 days as the average employment available all round. I ought to say that the grain-workers—the men we are talking of now, are, of course, the best class of docker, and, therefore, a bigger proportion of them would get permanent employment.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The grain-workers would be the men most regularly employed throughout the year?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: That comes to £5 11s. 3d. for 5 days?—(A.) Yes, taken on the average output.

Q. On the system now in vogue?—(A.) Exactly.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The second statement you have prepared is called "Bristol B." It is headed, "Statement of Existing and Pre-War Rates and Differentials." In the first table we have only dealt in detail with the three main classes of workers. This table in the first column shows the pre-war and present weekly rates, that is what they would earn if they worked the full week in a number of different grades. You have very considerable differentials in existence within the port at Bristol, have you not?—(A.) Yes, between the different grades of workmen.

Q. Have these differentials been maintained throughout the war, that is, upon the various increases being given have the differentials been maintained between the different classes?—(A.) The differentials have been maintained. They have not been exactly the same rate, in most cases the difference has been increased.

Q. The result of the war increases in Bristol has been to increase the differences which existed prior to the war, on the whole?—(A.) That is so, as is shown in that statement B.

Q. Now, will you just draw attention to that. The difference between the general cargo checkers and the general cargo men before the war was 3s. 3d. a week?—(A.) Yes, and it is now 10s.

Q. And I see in the case of trimming to dock elevator the differential has been increased from 3s. 3d. to £1 11s. per week?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And on the whole there has been substantial increases in the differentials?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I want you to tell the Court how these increases in the differentials came about. Under the 44-hour agreement it was not intended that there was to be any increase of wage, was it?—(A.) In the National Settlement the agreement was that the shorter hours were to be worked without any increase or reduction of wage. We were in the peculiar position at Bristol that we had different sets of hours being worked at the City Docks and at Avonmouth, and that the literal application of that rule would have meant that the men would have been working the same number of hours at the City Docks and at Avonmouth for widely different rates of pay, which, of course, was not reasonable, so an agreement (*Copy handed in and marked H/6A) was made to equate the rate of the two docks, on the basis that two men were working at Avonmouth for one man at the City Docks, we took two-thirds of the mean between the two rates, and agreed on 14s. a day to apply to the 8-hours' day at all the docks. That disposed of the general cargo workers. The result of that, of course, was that while the men in the City Docks got some reduction of their previous earnings, the men working at Avonmouth got an increase on their previous earnings.

Q. What was that in figures? The Bristol men, I think, went, as a result of that, to 14s., did they not?—(A.) The Bristol men went from 14s. 11d. to 14s.

Q. And the Avonmouth men went up from 12s. 4d. to 14s.?—(A.) Yes.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS (to the Witness): When we adjourned you were explaining to the Court these differentials, and how they had been increased in consequence of the 44-hour agreement. I do not want to take you through each one in detail, or at all, but I just want you to answer

* See Appendix No. 63.

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this one question: is it a fact that a considerable number of your time workers did, as a result of the 44-hour agreement, get an actual increase in pay?—(A.) Yes, as a result of the equation between the two docks which I was just explaining.

The CHAIRMAN: Between Avonmouth and the City?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: And increases were granted to piece workers as a result of that agreement, but I think it is only fair to state that that was in consequence of the rounding off of fractions?—(A.) It was; and a slight alteration in hours, owing to their giving up, or nominally giving up, the second allowance time.

Q. Now I want to take you to the question of the agreements which have been made with the Union from time to time. One of the principal matters of the 44-hour arrangement was the recommendation and the agreement that the hours worked should be eight full hours per day, was it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. What has been your experience upon that at Bristol? Is the time-keeping good or bad?—(A.) The time-keeping is very bad. From the beginning there was great resistance to the undertaking that men should be called on at 7.45 in order to be on their jobs at 8, and that they should work full up to 5 o'clock. There was also great resistance to the change of meal hours, so much so, that after three or four months' time, in August, 1919, the Union officials had to come to us and say that the men would not accept the 12 to 1 meal hour, and we finally had to agree to revert to the 1 to 2 o'clock meal hour, which meant of course an unequal division of the working day, five hours in the morning and three in the afternoon. As a consequence of that, the complaint about the refreshment was accentuated. The men said, quite rightly, that they could not work five hours continuously without a break, and, therefore, they went back to the old half-hour break-away in the middle of the morning period of work. The half-hour, instead of being a recognised 10 to 10.30 as before April, 1919, was a permission that one or two men at a time should go off for light refreshment, the work to be kept continuously going; but the result of that has been that you cannot keep timekeepers checking men when they are allowed to break away individually like that, and there has been great abuse of that allowance time: men are away for very long periods, and the result upon output has been most disastrous. Also I might add that the time-keeping in the evening has been very bad: instead of working until 5 o'clock men begin to break away at 4.40, and break away at intervals; and it is calculated that the loss of time over this is more than one hour per man per day out of the very short working day of eight hours.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that upon the footing that, although they are away one hour they are paid that hour that they are away?—(A.) Yes, they are paid; they are entitled to the full day's pay.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Upon the footing of one hour per day being lost in the manner you have described, have you estimated what that loss amounts to in money per annum at Bristol?—(A.) Yes; it has been estimated, and it is a very conservative estimate, that it represents £100,000 a year; and it is rather a coincidence, perhaps, but that is practically the same figure that we estimate would be the cost of the increased rates now asked for.

Q. You have dealt shortly with the time-keeping and the allowance time, and I think you have another witness here, your Assistant Traffic Manager, who has got very full details indeed upon that matter.—(A.) He will give the actual facts as to the time kept.

Q. With regard to overtime rates, have you had considerable difficulties there? Are the men willing to work overtime at the ordinary rates?—(A.) No; we have had great difficulty in getting overtime worked, and the Union officials have had great difficulty in helping us in that matter. They say they cannot insist upon men working overtime, and that it is a matter for the men's own option. That we do not dispute, although it is in the Agreement that overtime shall be worked, but what we do complain about is that the men do not say, "We do not want to work overtime to-day," but they come and say, "We will agree to work overtime if you will pay us £1 an hour," or any other figure outside the agreed rates for overtime.

Q. Again, full details of these matters can be given by your Assistant Traffic Manager?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Your agreements also provide, do they not, that in cases of dispute there is to be no stoppage?—(A.) They do. That clause is repeated in most of the agreements.

Q. What is your experience as to the observance of that? (A.) That the men are constantly stopping work, either while a claim is being investigated or sometimes before a claim is even put forward. Of course, I want it clearly understood that we quite know it is not the fault of the Union officials, and they always do their best to prevent that sort of thing happening, and to get the men to work. The trouble is that they cannot enforce discipline among their members.

Q. As you have told us, you now pay for stoppages for rain?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you find that that is abused?—(A.) That is the general impression; that men stop now for a very small amount of rain that they would never have thought of allowing to interfere with their work when it meant something coming out of their own pockets.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Now, my Lord, I am going to put to the witness a question upon output. Your Lordship said a day or two ago that you would determine when the evidence was tendered, whether that was a relevant matter or not.

The CHAIRMAN: I really do not think in practice that it will come to very much. Put your question, but there will not be any tight hold held on either party. I daresay, looking at it from a strict point of view, Mr. Bevin perhaps exceeded in some particulars, but it was in the interests of getting forward with the inquiry that we allowed that. Just go on, and we will see what happens.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS (to the witness): You have had prepared a statement marked "Bristol C." (A.) Yes.

Q. But first of all I will ask you generally this: You have opportunities, have you not, for judging of the work that is being done at the docks?—(A.) Yes, I get returns from which I am able to measure the work.

Q. Do you hold any opinion, based upon those returns, and upon the information that you acquire as general manager, of the present output as compared with the pre-war output?—(A.) Yes, it has very much deteriorated. Of course, the

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main test is the total tonnage of work passed through the docks when we know we are full, and have ships waiting to come in; and we are only getting approximately two-thirds of the work done in the docks that we were able to do in pre-war times. This is due, of course, to many causes.

Q. Is it your view or your experience that any portion of output is attributable to less effort on the part of the men?—(A.) Yes; that is the conclusion we have been compelled to come to.

Q. Have you had prepared this table which is marked "Bristol C." showing the output in tons per man per hour for a number of vessels in October, December, June and July in the years 1913 and 1914, comparing it with the output of the same or similar vessels in 1915, 1917, and 1919?—(A.) Yes. I may say we have had many discussions with the Union officials, as well as other people, about this reduced output—the fact is, of course, admitted by everybody concerned—and about what it is due to; and we have made here an effort to compare like with like. We have taken the same ships working under as nearly as possible similar conditions, unaffected by such difficulties as shortage of railway trucks, shortage of sacks, and so on, which have a considerable influence on the general figures. I consider that these are really comparable statements, and the result is that our output has been reduced from .71 tons per man per hour to .56 tons per man per hour, which is a reduction of approximately one-third. That, I am afraid, is due to less intensity of effort.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the witness is overstating this. If you will look in the column headed "Remarks," the loss is not one-third, but one-fifth.

The WITNESS: I beg your pardon, it is .21. It is carried out to .21 per cent., which is a little over one-fifth.

The CHAIRMAN: That is to say, put into ordinary vulgar fractions, it is one-fifth?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Are you able to explain this reduction in output in this comparison by anything other than less effort on the part of the worker?—(A.) No, we have tried to eliminate all other causes, because there is no question of shortage of trucks or congested sheds or anything coming in there. Of course, there are differences, but the average absorbs all those differences. You see you get a range of from 0.80 to 0.68 and from 0.68 to 0.52, and the general experience is that there are always some kind of obstructions and some kind of differences; but all that is absorbed in the average.

Q. Does the table bear out the opinion you have formed from your general knowledge of the work going on at Bristol Docks?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you ask the Witness, to save me interrupting afterwards, whether the description of cargo handled was substantially the same in each case?

The WITNESS: Yes, the ships were the same, doing the same trade and substantially the same kinds of goods.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Now a word on the rates at Bristol, which you have put in.

The CHAIRMAN: Is this on Table D?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, I was asking him a question on the first claim, the claim for 16s. minimum. (To the Witness): Are these rates in excess of those ruling in other comparable industries in the district?—(A.) To which rates are you referring?

Q. Present rates of 14s. a day or 7s. for the half-day?—(A.) Those are compared in this statement which has been put in marked "Bristol D," or "H.6." That compares the wages for various industries with those fixed for the general cargo worker of 14s. a day. In the building trade bricklayers and artisans are getting the same pay as our general cargo worker.

Q. Just to see that this table is clear, you have first got artisans: you group bricklayers, plumbers, and painters, and their weekly rate on the basis of 44 hours is £3 17s. ?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then opposite that you have got the general cargo rate, which means that that is the same as the general cargo rate?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then stone sawyers, £3 11s. 6d.—that is 5s. 6d. less than the general cargo rate at the docks, is it not?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. And so it goes down?—(A.) And if I may point out in the other industries, for instance, the bakers, they have a 48-hour week, and in the further column, the last column but two, that is brought to the basis of a 44-hour week.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes: that is really the column I was taking.

The CHAIRMAN: You say at the top of the column, "Rates on the basis of a 44-hour week"?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Then you have brought forward in the last column what the difference would be if the present demand of 16s. a day were granted?—(A.) That is so.

Q. On the next page you have compared them with the port authority's maintenance men first of all, and the general cargo worker gets 12s. 5d. a week more than a maintenance man?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You have taken the printing trade, and in almost all cases there is a substantial difference in favour of the dock labourer?—(A.) Except in the case of the skilled artisans.

Q. There are only two or three exceptions, I think. In the shipbuilding and ship-repairing trades skilled artisans get 5s. 8d. more, and fitters, joiners, and shipwrights. On my copy the figures against those three are rather faint; they should be pluses. In the fourth division it is plus 5s. 8d., minus 11s. 2d., plus 7s. 9d., plus 6s. 6d., plus 9s. 10d., and I think all the others should be minuses. There again, in the last column, you have shown what the result would be if the present demand were granted?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you any comments to make on these schedules, or do they speak for themselves?—(A.) They speak for themselves.

Q. On the last table, Table E, you have shown how you arrive at your estimate of the cost of conceding the present application for a wage increase?—(A.) Yes. Of course, it is very difficult to make an estimate, because it is impossible to say how the piece-work rates will, on any further grant on the recommendation of this Court to day workers, be adjusted. We have calculated this by taking the number of men employed and assuming an average increase of 11s. a week.

Q. That estimate is only the wage increase; it has no reference to anything it might cost you in

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the future if the overtime rates were altered?—
(A.) No, that is so.

Q. The present Bristol rates are generally considered to be high, are they not?—(A.) The rates of wages?

Q. Yes?—(A.) They are high. They are, with very few exceptions, the highest in the country for dock workers.

Mr. BEVIN: That is due to my assistance.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It is.

The WITNESS: Largely.

Q. Do you find that the workers at Bristol are accustomed to compare their wages with those at other ports?—(A.) That is our belief and understanding.

Q. What is your view of what the position would be at Bristol if, say, Sharpness were brought up to the level of Bristol?—(A.) My view is that, with all Mr. Bevin's powers of persuasion to his own members, he would not get the Bristol people to accept the same rate of wage—I do not care what it is, how high or how low—as is being paid at such a port as Sharpness. If that went up, the Bristol men would expect their wages to go up correspondingly. It can be only a matter of opinion, of course.

Q. I suppose certain causes (certainly not leaving out Mr. Bevin) have operated in the past to bring the Bristol rates up to their present level?—
(A.) Yes. There are very good reasons why a man at Bristol should be paid more than a man at Sharpness.

Q. What are those reasons?—(A.) House rent, loss of time in travelling, cost of travelling, all of which have a substantial influence on his weekly budget.

Q. Those are some of the causes that have operated in the past?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you think that in the future they will continue to operate?—(A.) I think they must.

Q. I was going to put a question to you upon the financial aspect of this claim, but I think I will put it very shortly. The cost of labourage operations at Bristol is now how much above the pre-war charge?—(A.) 145 per cent. on the pre-war schedule of charges.

Q. And those are the charges for performing services for the merchants?—(A.) Chiefly for merchants. We occasionally have to perform services for the shipowners under the same tariff, but the bulk of it is for the merchants.

Q. And the merchants, of course, paying the charges?—(A.) The merchants paying the charges.

Q. If the present demand were granted, would it involve raising those charges at least 180 per cent. above the pre-war level?—(A.) Yes, at least; probably rather more.

Q. Warehouse rents are payable by the merchants, are they not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How much higher are they to-day than in 1914?—(A.) 50 per cent.

Q. In some cases is it more than 50 per cent.?—
(A.) Yes, they vary a little. I think there is only one case in which it is more than 50 per cent.

Q. Very well, then, we will take 50 per cent. Is there a rate in aid levied at Bristol?—(A.) There is a rate in aid, which means the amount which the City has to make good for the interest on its loans for the construction of the docks by which our net revenue is short. That was £76,000 last year; the shortage was £76,000.

Q. There is one matter that I have missed. I want to draw attention to two paragraphs in your Annual Report upon the working of the

Docks Estate for the year ending 30th April, 1919. On pages 7 and 8, paragraphs 13 and 14, I think this Report was written before this Inquiry was contemplated.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that the Report to the Dock Authorities?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It is Mr. Ross-Johnson's Report to the Dock Authority?—(A.) Yes, it was written last August. It is actually dated 1st September, and, of course, it was written before there was any idea of this Inquiry.

Q. And you deal in paragraph 13 with the question of decasualisation of labour, to put it shortly, and in paragraph 14 with the question of output?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I should like you to read those two paragraphs, if you would.—(A.) “(13) When the Armistice was signed and it began to be realised that the progress of demobilisation was going to be protracted, while at the same time large numbers of unemployed began to swell the labour market, it became apparent that if some limitations were not imposed, an influx into dock labour would take place of men who had not previously worked on the docks, and who would be found in possession of the employment and in occupation of the available houses, to the displacement of the original workers upon their gradual demobilisation. This position was brought before the employers by the Ministry of Labour at meetings of representatives of Port Labour Committees, and at the same meetings were represented the evils of the pre-war system of the existence of a body of men under-employed and only inefficiently employable, hanging on the fringe of every port in excess of normal requirements, and for the most part only willing to work to the extent of earning a bare subsistence. These views necessarily received the sympathy of the employers, and as a result a system became established, differing in detail but the same in principle, at every port, providing that only registered men, members of the Union and identifiable by means of tallies or cards, should be eligible for employment in the Port. Thus in effect employment in the Ports has become a close preserve of the trades unions, who are enabled by restriction of membership to ensure that only such members shall be registered as shall be able to obtain a full measure of employment. The principle is unexceptionable, but it will be evident that the successful conduct of the operations must depend in the first place upon the adherence to the understanding on the part of the unions in registering sufficient members to meet the continuous requirements of trade, and in the second on the good faith and discipline of the members in according the full measure of their services. (14) An even more serious factor in our working costs is the diminished output obtained from labour. Early in the year a demand was made by the National Transport Workers' Federation for a reduction in hours, and the demand was referred to a negotiating committee, representing employers in all the ports and the several workers' unions, as a result of which an agreement was arrived at that there should be a uniform working week of 44 hours of actual work, excluding time occupied for engagement, walking, etc., with no reduction of existing earnings, and the workers' leaders undertook that in consideration of the reduced hours the work should be more efficient, and there should be no reduction in output. It has been explained above that under the system

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of registration of labour now prevailing the efficient carrying on of the work of the Port must depend in the first place upon the maintenance by the unions of a sufficient supply of labour to meet requirements, and in the second on the good faith of the members of the unions in according the full measure of their services. The result of the introduction of the shorter working week and of the efforts of the leaders to carry out their part of the undertaking has been disappointing. The time-keeping has very seriously deteriorated, while the intensity of effort during the extremely short working period obtained in practice has shown a most material reduction. There has been an increasing tendency also on the part of one section after another to take advantage of the high earnings and the artificial restrictions of the labour supply to refuse to work reasonable overtime, to make demands for increased wages and to decline arbitration, and if these demands are not immediately acceded to, and in some cases even before discussion, to stop work in disregard of the instructions of their leaders. Some of the demands it has been impossible to meet, and these unauthorised stoppages have not only had the result of depriving of employment other workers not directly concerned with the claim, but also have had a most detrimental effect on the revenue of the undertaking, lengthening the period of the turn-round of ships, and thereby preventing other ships from coming in to take their places, to the loss of their dues, adding to merchants' costs, and further addition to the cost and delay of getting the imported foodstuffs into the centres of consumption."

Q. Now that Report has been public property for nearly six months, I think, has it not?—(A.) Yes, more than six months.

Q. And it was laid before the Committee, I do not know whether it goes before the whole Council, or not?—(A.) Yes, it goes before the whole Council.

Q. Where there is a substantial representation of labour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Has it ever been criticised as containing any incorrect statements in that paragraph 14?—(A.) No, I was in hopes when I wrote it—I wrote it with the express hope—that it would rouse some attention on the part of the Labour members of the Council, and I was very disappointed when the Report was accepted and reported to the Council without any observation at all being made.

Mr. BEVIN: They did not bite, did they?—(A.) No, they did not bite.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: They apparently knew that it could not be harmed by biting?—(A.) I am afraid so.

Q. There are only one or two other questions. You have machinery at Bristol for settling any disputes that may arise, have you not?—(A.) Yes, we have a rather complicated machinery. We have a Joint Board of employers and officials in the different trades, such as the grain trade, the ship-owners, the timber trade, and so on, and we have the Port Labour Committee, which deals with general questions in connection with the registration of men, or the right of particular men to be employed, and improvements in our method of taking on, and questions of that sort.

Q. And it is to one or other of these Tribunals, consisting of employers and members of the Union, that any dispute is to be referred under your numerous agreements?—(A.) Yes.

Q. One of your complaints, that you have already made, is that the men do not adhere to that, but stop work?—(A.) There are a great deal too many cases of men striking, instead of waiting for their claims to be considered.

Q. Did you hear Mr. Garmston give evidence, I think it was the day before yesterday?—(A.) No, I am sorry to say I was called out; I did not know he was going into the box, but I have seen the notes of it.

Q. You have dealt with the question of the minimum for the grain workers, the 1,600 and the 2,000 minimum, Mr. Bevin's classic case of how the introduction of a minimum put up the output. I want you to say a word about the billy that was produced in Court, the wooden structure that a sack of grain is put upon. To what extent is grain handled at Bristol and the other docks by means of those billies?—(A.) I had the figures taken out the other day; I did not know the question was going to be raised in this Court; I took them out for another purpose, and I found this—that at Avonmouth about 10 per cent. were moved by the billy. At Portishead, where the sheds are of an older type, rather more nearer half the trade done there, which is only a small proportion of the trade of the port, is possibly done by the billy. Of course the men have the alternative, if they wish, of trucking up a running plank, when there is room to get that plank in and room for them to work.

Q. Do you anticipate that the use of the billy will entirely disappear?—(A.) Yes, certainly; some of our dock is very old, we have not been able to have it all modernised, and in the old sheds we still have to use rather primitive methods. In the case of the Wheat Commission's new sheds, which were referred to the other day, I should like to explain that that was entirely a war emergency measure. Those sheds were put up in a hurry by the Government under very great stress to obtain storage accommodation for wheat; and to have put those sheds with high platforms to suit modern methods of working, would have meant importing several thousand wagon-loads of filling for levelling up these sheds at a time when railway trucks and labour were exceedingly scarce. The Wheat Commissioners did their best to meet the conditions by providing machinery, excavators and pilers, as they are called, to cancel this. It is admittedly more laborious to work from ground level into trucks than when you are working on a floor which is on the wagon-floor level; but you cannot equip yourself with machinery for just the top of the curve of your demands, and it occasionally happens that the machinery is fully employed, and there is a demand for additional labour to use these hand means for loading more trucks.

Q. Wherever you have built new sheds have you provided a high level?—(A.) We have provided a high level. The usual plan in all modern sheds is, of course, to be on the quay floor on the wharf side, and to slope it gradually to wagon floor on the inside.

Q. I think something was said by Mr. Garmston about the new sheds of the Ministry of Shipping?—(A.) Those are what I was just referring to.

Q. Where the high level was not provided?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Did you, in fact, draw the attention of the Ministry of Shipping to the desirability of erecting a shed with the high level?—(A.) It was frequently referred to in the course of our discussions on the plans.

Q. And it was found impracticable at that time

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to do it?—(A.) It was decided to adopt another plan.

Q. Another matter that Mr. Garmston referred to was that there had been objections raised to the blower that had been provided. I think he said the men did not object to the use of the machine, but to the fact that the Docks Committee used the elevators for the cream of the work, and left the hardest and the scrappy jobs to the men. I think that was the effect of his evidence?—(A.) Perhaps I may explain; the blower is the dockers' name for a pneumatic grain elevator. We have not yet got a ship pneumatic grain elevator at work. It has been a sore subject of discussion for many years; we made a great effort, and a special Inquiry reported, and we were anxious to introduce this as long ago as 1912, and various objections were raised which postponed the getting of it until the War conditions obliged us to postpone it further. We have now got two of these machines under construction; one we bought from the Government and the other is being built by a contractor, and they are both now approaching completion, but they have not yet been put into work. We have had a small barge pneumatic elevator at work for some two or three years, and there has been no particular objection by the men to the use of that machine, which does all the work it is expected to do, clearing barges quite satisfactorily. I think there was some confusion in the evidence; I do not think Mr. Garmston's evidence really referred to the use of the blower, as he called it, but the method in which the bucket grain elevators were used. I might explain that we have not yet got these pneumatic elevators into use, but we have had for ten or twelve years past bucket grain elevators in use. The point made, as I understand, by Mr. Garmston in his evidence was that we took the cream of the work into our elevators and left the unpleasant part of the work, cleaning up odd corners and that sort of thing, to the men. My answer to that is that he is incorrectly informed. There has been an absolute understanding, from which, I think, to the best of my belief, there has been but one departure, that if a machine has been put into a hold, the machine has to finish the hold, and if the men are put into the hold the men have the right to finish the hold, and the machine must not go into it.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I do not propose to take you through the myriad of figures, because I think both of us know them fairly well. The first point I want to put to you is with regard to the differentials, or what Counsel called the differentials. Do you still adhere to your statement that there are more differential rates at Bristol now than, say, in 1911—more grades of rates?—(A.) No, I do not think I have said that.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: He did not say that.

Mr. BEVIN: You said there were more differentials?—(A.) I did not mean that, certainly, and I do not think I said it.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I think the statement Mr. Ross Johnson made was that the differentials had increased, not in number, but the actual differences were greater now as shown upon the second table that was put in. That was the point Mr. Ross Johnson was making?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: That would be due, would it not, to the re-classification of labour that has taken place since, to a very large extent?—(A.) It is chiefly due to the fact that when the time-workers got a penny an hour and all the war increases, the nearest corresponding figure that could be given to the piece-workers was a fraction of a penny, a farthing, or a halfpenny, as the case might be; but in practice that worked out to be more than the real equivalent, and so the difference got extended and increased by every war allowance. We tried to adjust it once, you may remember, by giving a farthing instead of a halfpenny.

Mr. BEVIN: You gave us the benefit of the doubt, I admit. I want to ask whether it is not the fact that the grades have been somewhat reduced in number in the last few years, and simplified compared to what they were before?—(A.) I have not in my mind any alteration. You will have Mr. Bubbear afterwards, but if you can give me the particular cases, I will be glad to answer them.

Q. I do not think it matters very much, only counsel is stressing that these differentials play a part in the minimum wage. In fact, on minimum wages in the first five days of the week there are more men, such as deal porters and general cargo men, who are on the same rate now, who used to be different; that is so, is not it?—(A.) I agree to that, only you must complete the statement by pointing out that the timber man, owing to his different rate on Saturday, gets a higher wage on the week.

Q. My point is this: I want to get the evolution, if I may, of the policy that has been followed. We have been during the last ten years reducing the number of different grades that existed in the port continually, until now the great block of men who handle deals and general cargo have been brought very near, to within a shilling or two, to a common rate?—(A.) You and I have been agreeing on the desirability of that process for the last ten years, but, honestly, I do not think we have made much progress in doing it.

Q. Take the first five days of the week (this is a very important point, I think), I realise there is a difference on the Saturday, due to an old custom, but take the first five days of the week; the general cargo man at Bristol and the general cargo man at Portishead and the general cargo man at Avonmouth, and the deal carriers of the three ports, were all paid different rates?—(A.) Before the 44-hour settlement, but they worked different time for it.

Q. But it actually worked out different rates per hour in the case of the timber?—(A.) In the case of the timber it did.

Q. Have not we levelled it for the first five days of the week to the 14s.?—(A.) Yes; as a result of the equalisation of hours in all the docks.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the point. Would you mind asking to what number of workers that equalisation applies?

Mr. BEVIN: The actual number of general cargo men, deal men, and others, who have been now placed on the 14s. and equalised?—(A.) I should say, roughly, that would apply to about 1,000 men.

Q. 4,400 men, you gave us this morning?—(A.) The total, I agree.

Q. The figure before me from your Port Labour Committee gives grain porters as 800, and the other sections number, I think, you may correct it by your papers, about 600; that is, 1,400, giving

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you a balance who would be working on casual general cargo; the difference between that number and 4,400 would be over 1,000 considerably!—(A.) That is an uncertain figure. I have, certainly, among our own people, 450 general cargo men and timber men, and King's have got 650; that gives you 1,100.

Q. That is at Avonmouth?—(A.) Yes; I think probably it would be 1,500 men, roughly.

Q. I think you will find it is just over 2,000, but it does not matter; it runs into nearly 50 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: You have made your point, that the equalisation did affect a very considerable body of men.

Mr. BEVIN: You suggest that I said, at any rate the men got five days a week all the year round. I think you slightly misunderstood me, but I averaged the cost on the assumption that the total dockers of the country would work five days per week.—(A.) I am sorry if I misunderstood you, because, as I have stated, we have not been able to arrive at any very useful estimate of what it is. I think it is between four and five days a week, but I cannot give figures.

Q. With reference to the registration scheme, I think the scheme was originally put up by the Union themselves, was not it?—(A.) I think it was. Of course, we have had many conversations about it.

Q. I think it is about eleven years ago since we tried to work it, and it took us about nine years to get it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With regard to this trouble over the 44-hours week, which appears to be made a lot of, and what is called the allowance time at Avonmouth, what time do the men leave Bristol in the morning to reach Avonmouth?—(A.) The men leave the railway station at 6.55.

Q. That is five minutes to 7 in the morning?—(A.) Yes, those of them who have to travel from Bristol.

Q. That is the majority of general cargo men, is not it?—(A.) The majority, yes.

Q. The very big majority of general cargo men; the housing is not available at Avonmouth yet, is it? They would have at least a good car ride to reach the station, would not they?—(A.) Yes. Of course, the 6.55 is from Templemeade, but they join at various other stations; and Hotwells, so that that is rather an extreme time. 6.55 to 7.15, I should say.

Q. On the average, it would mean that a man working in Avonmouth has to leave home at about 6 o'clock in the morning from the various parts of Bristol—from 6 to 6.30—to reach the various stations?—(A.) I would not contradict you, because you really ought to know better than I do, but if I were asked I should have said an hour to an hour and a-quarter from 6 o'clock.

Q. From his home?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But supposing a man lived at St. Georges, four miles away?—(A.) That is the exception.

Q. The bulk of them live in Stapleton Road there?—(A.) I think the bulk of them live on the Hotwells side, do they not?

Q. They are moving from there, thank Heaven. They are pulling down that district. It is a slum area, and it is a good job that they are getting further out. I want the Court to understand that when a man goes to Avonmouth the train to get eight miles on our modern railway takes forty minutes, does it not?—(A.) I will agree with you if you like, if it will cut it short, that the communications between Bristol and Avon-

mouth up to the present are bad. We are trying to improve them.

Q. Therefore a man gets to the call gate, and he is expected to go right on to his job?—(A.) Yes.

Q. By the time he gets there the call is on, is it not? He cannot get breakfast properly at that time, can he? He has to travel to Avonmouth and get to his work. Was not that the real cause of the difficulty in carrying out the continuous four hours?—(A.) No. There is a certain amount of weight to be given to that, and I have always admitted it, but that does not account for men taking more than their hour in the middle of the day, or for men breaking away in the evening. Of course, the real evil and the real cause of the men breaking away in the evening is that wretched system of the daily payment of wages.

Q. But you are not going to suggest that every man in Avonmouth Dock working on a ship on each working day leaves the ship at 4.40—every man?—(A.) I am not going to suggest that every man does, but the next witness—

Q. Can you get your hour per day unless they do?—(A.) Pardon me, I will explain it. The next witness is going to give you a list of cases, if it is worth while taking up the time of the Court with it, showing the actual times that the several gangs left day after day, and month after month.

The CHAIRMAN: The point we are anxious about as a Court is this. You have struck an average of a loss of one hour per day per man. What Mr. Bevin is wanting to know, is how you make out your average of one hour. That is what you are asking for, Mr. Bevin?—(A.) Shall I answer his Lordship's question now?

Q. Yes; just take it as from Mr. Bevin.—(A.) Instead of being on the ship at eight o'clock, none of the gangs are at work until 8.15 to 8.20. There is the first portion of the hour. As I explained, men taking their allowance exceed the allocated time by certainly ten minutes on the average, and that brings you close to half an hour. There is always five minutes to ten minutes lost before one o'clock, and five to eight or ten minutes lost after two o'clock in getting to work again; and then there is the final quarter of an hour on the average—I would rather call it a quarter of an hour than twenty minutes—at the finish of the day's work.

Mr. BEVIN: How far is it from the dock gate to the extreme end of your dock?—(A.) To the extreme end, to the furthest ship, it is about a mile; but that is only one berth.

Q. You see they are called off at the gate, and there is a mile to walk then; and you cannot call two thousand men off in a minute, can you?—(A.) No, but there is only a berth at that extreme distance of a mile. I do not suppose you would ever have more than 300 or 400 men working at that distance, if as many.

Q. You suggested that the men did not all come to work every day, and that some refused to go to work.—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it not a fact that men sometimes refuse to go to work to-day, because they see the bigger penny coming to-morrow?—(A.) It is, certainly.

Q. Is not that, without any system of maintenance, human nature?—(A.) Yes, I think it is, largely.

Q. Can you expect the organisers of a human body of men to overcome that?—(A.) Not until you help them.

Q. Let me put it to you in another way. When you first became General Manager, I think you

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remember seeing me and asking whether I could do anything to break down the opposition of one class of men to going on to another class of work!—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have we helped in that direction!—(A.) Yes, very largely, since the war especially.

Q. Is there not greater mobility now!—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is not that due to the Union!—(A.) Yes.

Q. You would admit that your foremen and others could not have succeeded in accomplishing it!—(A.) Not without the help of the Union? I quite admit that. I can go a little further, if you will allow me: I say that we could render many great improvements with the help which we are getting from the Union, if we could only get the further point that the Union could control their men and get them to take their advice and recommendations.

Q. You know we are Britishers, and you cannot convert us into machines. As somebody said the other day—and I make this submission to the Court—with all the history behind the docker of all the casual labour, it has taken centuries to make him what he is, and it will take years, or a couple of generations, to make him what you want him to be.—(A.) I expect that is true.

Q. I want to submit that very strongly to the Court, because I feel it. I have a long list of reports here, but I am not going to hand them in. You have got a Committee which meets at Avonmouth every morning to consider the number of men employed and the shortages, with a view to making greater mobility!—(A.) Yes.

Q. Has that Committee been useful!—(A.) Very.

The CHAIRMAN: What Committee is that, the Port Labour Committee?

Mr. BEVIN: If your Lordship will permit me, I will explain it. As a result of the war—and we have carried it on in peace time—we arranged for the Port Labour Committees representative and the employer and our Union official to meet each morning to prevent the men being sent home from the dock before we were quite sure that all that possibly could be absorbed were absorbed.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand the Witness highly to approve of that arrangement.

The WITNESS: It has been most useful, yes, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: And you think that if some such organisation could be extended it would materially help generally, from your experience of it!—(A.) Most certainly. We have been trying, as you know, to extend it up to the City Docks.

Q. But in spite of that Committee, and in spite of the work of the Port Labour representative, it is true that a large number of men have paid their fares at given times to Avonmouth and have had to go home again with nothing!—(A.) It sometimes happens, yes.

Q. Avonmouth was largely under the control of the War Office during the war, was it not!—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think you will agree that in consequence there was a good deal of overlapping and muddle.—(A.) There was.

Q. I am not casting a slight on the War Office: it was war conditions, and I do not want to offend Mr. Churchill; but it is true, too, that during the war there was a general break-up of the ordinary discipline and method of the dock, was there not, and a great interference!—(A.) Yes. The dock

was largely used for different purposes, and there was the inevitable dislocation from the usual channels.

Q. And that led, by the taking of the men, to a break up of what we would call the family gang, did it not!—(A.) Yes, it did.

Q. It led to the introduction of a large number of men who would not have been on the dock in the ordinary way!—(A.) Yes.

Q. When you break up gangs in that way is it not a fact that it takes some time before you can get the same kind of method of working again in the ship's hold!—(A.) Yes. Of course, added to that was the fact that a good many men have gone away on military service and have been replaced by strangers.

Q. Is it not rather early, in view of that difficulty created by the breaking up of the gangs and the breaking up of the conditions and the discipline and the rest of it, to judge at all of the output!—(A.) No, I think we have been very patient, but really it had become time to try to get things into normal working again. I suggest that we really have been very patient, and have made every possible allowance for all these dislocating conditions.

Q. Do you really suggest that you can make a competent docker in such a short time!—(A.) No, but I suggest that in twelve months you can go a long way towards making a great many competent dockers.

Q. Is it a fact that the men who put on the men at Avonmouth pay no regard at all to the gang system now, and do not attempt to any great extent to utilise the same men together ship after ship who are accustomed to one another!—(A.) I think they do. I have had many talks with the foremen about it. Remember, the excuse used to be: "The employers import any kind of people, and we cannot control the men who work in the docks. We are obliged to make them members of our Union because we have got them there, but we cannot, therefore, be responsible for the behaviour of the men." All that has been got over by the registration scheme, which puts the right, and also the responsibility, of selecting men for employment in the docks practically in the hands of the Union: and we look to the Union, in return, to control those men, and to see that they give us proper men, and to see that the men keep discipline when they have got them.

Q. You said just now that the conditions for which you have thrown the responsibility upon us, or, at least, which we have accepted responsibility to alter, are the product of neglect and casual labour over years and years in the whole development of dock life. We have accepted that responsibility for one short year. Do you seriously suggest to the Court that we can wipe out all the results of all the misery and difficulty and bullying of all the past in one year!—(A.) I do not, but at the same time I am bound to place on record and to say in the box what the state of affairs is. I do not say for a moment that you could have made it a Utopia in one year.

Q. With reference to that report to the City Council, Counsel suggested, and you admitted, that you were disappointed that no one criticised it!—(A.) I did not mind whether they criticised it or not, but I was very disappointed that the labour leaders did not take it up and try to get an improvement, and I have been more disappointed to find no improvement resulting during the last six months.

Q. I do not know whether you are aware that it rather came to our notice that you were doing it rather to bait us, and we deliberately avoided touching it!—(A.) I certainly did not want to bait

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you, and I do not know on what justification it was suggested to you.

Q. At any rate, you see that was the result.

The CHAIRMAN: You have a free field now, Mr. Bevin. We shall be happy to hear how it goes.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to put this point to you. You said a moment ago that it would be very unwise, having regard to all the travelling difficulty, to make Sharpness the same rates as Bristol?—(A.) I do not think I said that. What I did say was that Bristol was higher, and there were certain reasons which justified its being higher, than Sharpness.

Q. You know that I happen to be a citizen of Bristol?—(A.) Yes. We are proud of you.

Q. And I have been actuated by a desire to see the dockers housed at Avonmouth?—(A.) And we all have had that. Of course, as you know, we have been doing our best to achieve that.

Q. I put it to you that the policy which the Union have followed for the last ten years has been to wipe out any difference of wages in amount per day between Bristol and Avonmouth. Supposing now we adopted your theory, that because the man was travelling he should be paid travelling money, would not that rather serve as a handicap on the future development of living conditions at Avonmouth?—(A.) Of course it would. That has been recognised in our discussions and in our fixing of policy for years past. There has always been in view the point of getting the houses close to the work; but, of course, men have the difficulty of travelling to the City Docks still. They are not in the condition, even in the City Dock of Sharpness, where a man lives alongside his work.

Q. If labour from the point of view of its citizenship has gone without what it obviously could have enforced by reason—travelling money, because the house was not there—with the hope that the housing conditions would be so developed and the men encouraged to live there some day when the Corporation can build them houses to live in, is it not reasonable to think that the rate at Sharpness, where there is no travelling, should be in like manner on the same basis, and that the travelling ought not to be the determining factor?—(A.) The travelling is only one of many items. There are a number of items which constitute the difference between the conditions of one particular locality and the conditions of another locality. I am afraid none of us can really determine a matter of that sort. It is an economic question, and it is settled by economic laws.

Q. Is it not the fact that all the grain merchants in Bristol have been badgering us as a Union for years to make Sharpness, Gloucester, and Cardiff pay the same rates as Bristol?—(A.) I think some of them at any rate have expressed that view.

Q. Is it not a fact that some of them have said that a farthing per quarter will divert a ship from Bristol to Sharpness?—(A.) Yes, that is a fact, we know.

Q. If a farthing per quarter on a labour charge will divert a ship, surely in the interests of the two ports that competitive factor ought to be done away with. Is not that a reasonable suggestion?—(A.) Yes. Of course, you must realise that Bristol is one of the highest-paid ports, and that directly Bristol stands to gain rather than to lose by any standardisation or uniformity of rates; but that would be a very narrow way of looking at it.

Q. But have you not pressed us in Bristol time after time, and has not the Chairman—I do not know whether he is the Mayor now?—(A.) The late Lord Mayor.

Q. Has not the late Lord Mayor used all his influence upon us as a Union to raise Sharpness and to raise Liverpool and Glasgow and those places because Bristol did not get a chance?—(A.) To maintain the margin, and not to allow the margin to be made wider against Bristol, has been what they continually pressed; but I have no recollection—and I made inquiry after you used that same argument to me some time ago—of it ever having been put forward that all ports were to be raised to a flat rate. To maintain the differences is another proposition.

Q. Let me ask you whether you remember attending a meeting of our own people with the Chairman of your Committee present, in the People's Palace, when he urged that he did not mind what the charges of Bristol were as long as we made competing ports pay similar?—(A.) Yes; but again at that meeting he did not say "pay the same," but "go up by a similar amount."

Q. I will send for the daily press; I think I have the exact quotation. There is only one other point I want to put to you, and that is with regard to machinery. You mentioned that there was considerable opposition in 1912 and onwards from the Union, myself in particular included, against the purchase out of public money of certain pneumatic elevators?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Was not the ground of that opposition that public money was being spent which would only benefit about one or two merchants, but without the provision of warehouse accommodation, and, in addition, compelling the merchant to pay the warehouse charges instead of their being paid by the ratepayers of Bristol, and to give up his ex ship delivery. Was not that the ground of opposition rather a public opposition and not the men's opposition?—(A.) I do not remember that last point at all about the City paying merchants' warehouse charges. It is a new point to me.

Q. Let me put it in this way: If you use the elevator and cannot give ex ship delivery, you work the grain through the warehouse free, do you not?—(A.) There is no difficulty in giving ex ship delivery from the elevator. It is quite true that instead of giving it alongside the ship you give it a little further off, but that does not alter the principle of the delivery.

Q. But you put the stuff through your public warehouse free for the merchant up to a given point?—(A.) I would not admit that I was putting it through the public warehouses. I have two methods of giving delivery—by machinery and by gangs. Under the one method I have railway trucks alongside the ship; under the other method I have the railway trucks a little further away from the ship. The second method costs me the less money of the two. It is just as much ex ship delivery to load into railway trucks a little further from the ship by the one method or into the trucks alongside the ship by the other method.

Q. But you could not at that time have made that elevator pay unless you had built considerable warehouse accommodation?—(A.) But our scheme was to build warehouse accommodation. We have built some, and we are hoping to build more.

Q. You proposed to buy the elevator before you built the warehouse and put in the conveyors?—(A.) We proposed to do both concurrently.

Q. Not at the time, I think?—(A.) We had the scheme forward. My complete report provides for both.

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Q. With regard to the elevators going into different holds, take the ships which you have quoted, the *Welahman*, the *Manxman*, and the other boats; is it not a fact that you put the Mitchell Elevators, as they are called, into the main holds?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you give the men the worst holds and the tanks to work?—(A.) In those particular boats it has always been the recognised custom; but if I understood you rightly, in your opening speech you made a different statement from that; you said that where there was a cargo of Persian Barley, which was dusty and very bad for the men's lungs, and another cargo of good Manitoba Wheat, which was clean, we deliberately put the machinery into the clean wheat and left the dirty barley to the men. I have made the best enquiry I could—it was last week that you said that—and I cannot find anything to substantiate that.

Q. I referred in my opening statement to the difficulty of the men opposing machinery, and I pointed out—it is true, I believe, of Sharpness with the blower, and it is true of the old City Docks—that before the war, if a Black Sea or Persian cargo came up to the harbour at Bristol, and a cargo of clean wheat came along, you would get the clean wheat put by the merchant under the elevator at Prince's Granary, and you would get the men put into the Black Sea or Persian cargo.—(A.) I can only say that I have done my best to verify that suggestion, and I have not been able to get any verification of it. If you will give me the names of the ships, or any details, I will go further into it, but I have not been able to substantiate that.

Q. But your officials from those granaries know that quite well.—(A.) I have enquired from them of course.

Q. Is it not a fact that for a good many years the merchants would not allow a dirty cargo of any kind to go to the elevator at Bristol?—(A.) I believe it was once, but that is a very long time ago. That was before my time.

Mr. BEVIN: It was because they lost so much money through the dirt. I think that is all I desire to ask.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. To-day there is no objection, and I understand that for many years there has been no objection, to putting the elevator into a dirty cargo?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Mr. Bevin asked you one or two questions about the allowance time in the morning. Your complaint, as I understand it, is not that the men take an allowance, but that they take an excessive time off in the morning?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. In your estimate of one hour for lost time you only include ten minutes, which is the excess over the proper allowance time?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I do not know whether I understood Mr. Bevin correctly, but it seemed to me that he was suggesting to you that the merchants at Bristol had proposed to him that the Gloucester or the Sharpness rates should be put up to the Bristol rates?—(A.) It would be a very natural suggestion for them to make. Of course, they would like to see the cost of working at competitive places increased, naturally.

Q. Are not the merchants at Sharpness the same grain people as at Bristol?—(A.) A good many of them are. Most of them are, I should think.

Q. So that they would not be likely to make that suggestion where they are carrying on their business in both places?—(A.) No.

The CHAIRMAN: We are a good deal concerned about certain statements which you have made and certain things which you have written on the casual question. Could you tell us, broadly speaking, what is the normal fringe of unemployed casual labour compared with the number of men in regular employ.—(A.) I could not attempt to put it into numbers. We used, before the war, to have a very bad class of casual—a man who was hardly fit to be called a docker at all. He used to come down to the dock to work on the banana boats, which came in once a week or once in ten days, and the rest of his time he was street-hawking, or doing nothing. We were on all sides very anxious to get rid of this evil. That does not exist now.

Q. With regard to that, the introduction of a register was certainly a most salutary proceeding?—(A.) The registration has had considerable effect, and the arrangement which we were able to make with the Union that when the banana boats are expected—because it is still the fact that the majority of the dockers will not do this work; they would rather go without work than handle bananas—we shall issue temporary tallies to men whom they will find for us. They find them from other branches of their Union outside dock workers' branches—men working on brickfields and working for farmers, and all sorts of odd jobs. They produce the men.

Q. They make a draft of outside available labour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is done by the Union in the interests of all concerned?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Still, that does not answer the difficulty which some of us feel. Inside the registration, so to speak, can you give us any assistance as to the number of casuals—that is to say, men who do not knock off, but men for whom there is not work?—(A.) No. I think you may take it that if the average employment is 4 to 5 days out of 5½, it follows that the average unemployment is 1 to 1½ days, or, say, 20 per cent.; but we have no registration system.

Q. With regard to the men on the register, is there any preference scheme?—(A.) No, except that of course a certain proportion of the men are actually permanently employed on the permanent staff.

Q. Really it is the selection of the foreman within the register?—(A.) Within the register.

Q. And even then you have this lamentable margin of men unemployed through no fault of their own?—(A.) Quite so; but I would not agree that it is such a big margin. It must be remembered that in fixing dockers' rates of wages, as compared with other industries, the casual nature of the work is taken into consideration, and it is recognised that a man is expected to earn in four or five days enough to keep himself and his family for the whole week; and that is recognised in fixing the rates.

Q. I think myself that it is a very vital matter, and no doubt does affect the question of the amount, but what I still want to know, if you can help me, is this: assuming the normal state of affairs to be that there is this fringe of 10 to 20 per cent. out of employment through no fault of

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their own, it is a convenience that that fringe should be there in case of a rush, is it not? It is a convenience to the port and to the industry. Then you have another difficulty, have you not, namely, that when you do employ the men they are not so mobile as you would like?—(A.) That is a difficulty. It has been improved, but it can never be eliminated, from the nature of the case.

Q. I know it may never be eliminated altogether; but suppose you had a maintenance allowance for the fringe unemployed through no fault of their own?—(A.) I entirely agree with the unemployment insurance; I am strongly in favour of it, although, if Mr. Bevin will allow me to say so, I would not finance it quite on the lines he suggests.

Q. That may be, but do you not think that with regard to these men who are on call, as it were, in that way, but are not paid, if they had a maintenance allowance the difficulties as to mobility of labour would be mitigated to a certain extent?—(A.) I think it would be mitigated to some extent, but it would be necessary to have very careful safeguards on a vital matter of that sort.

Q. You recognise, do you not, that we are in a very transitory stage with regard to arrangements after the war, with new problems emerging as between workmen and employers? Do you not think it would be an advantage to have a higher representation of men, even in regard to those things that are managed by the City Council?—(A.) There is a very considerable representation of labour as a whole through their votes as ratepayers on the City Council.

Q. I know, but the point is this: you see nothing intrinsically wrong, do you,—I am putting it in order to see if we can evolve any scheme out of it—for the City to appoint their Port Labour Committee as they do now, and to have power, whether statutory or otherwise, for Labour to appoint representatives from whom the City can choose a certain number to co-operate on its own committee?—(A.) I think under the circumstances of ours being a municipal undertaking the better scheme would be for the Labour members of the Committee to find their way there through the proper channel of election by the ratepayers into the Council, for this very important reason, that after all the Dockers' Union is not the only labour to be represented, and there is not entire unity amongst the different representatives of labour. My hardest task, as Chairman of the Port Labour Committee, is to hold the ring between the Dockers' and the Seamen and Firemen's Union.

Q. The fact has been referred to that we have the two protagonists, those who are exceedingly well skilled and those who are exceedingly sensible and conciliatory, and, of course, it is an advantage to have both sides well represented. With that compliment, let me just pursue this further inquiry. One knows there is the labour representation in the Town Council. That is a representation of all labour, but the City is particularly concerned with the Docks, because they are its property, and it carries on its docks as part of its municipal enterprise?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In that view, do you not think it would be an advantage to have the particular class of labour represented in the particular municipal undertakings?—(A.) May I say that one of our two present members is an official of the Dockers' Union, and has been a working docker.

Q. I am very glad to hear it.—(A.) With every respect, I believe fully in labour representation, but I still think the right way to get that

labour representation is through the ratepayers through the City Council, because after all there are conflicting duties, and the Councillor, as such, realises he has got a duty to the City as well as a duty to his fellow-workers. The representative appointed the other way is not so likely to realise that, and he will look upon his first duty as being to get more wages and better conditions for his fellow-workers, without being bound in the same way by the necessity of looking after the City's interests.

Q. Subject to this, I think you would admit that your experience of transactions with the Union officials at Bristol has been on the whole singularly in the interests of both parties?—(A.) In regard to labour matters and conditions, certainly. As I say, my trouble is not my negotiations with the Unions, but their carrying out of their agreements afterwards.

Q. You know the expression that causes go and effects linger. I think that is the strength of Mr. Bevin's position, is it not, that you cannot expect men who have the recollection of old unfortunate conditions altogether and at once to adapt themselves, even under the most enlightened leadership, to the new conditions. Is not that so?—(A.) That is so, I suppose.

Q. I want to ask you a question on the Table "Bristol B." I see the most striking rises as between the rates of pay in 1914 and the rates of pay in 1919 and 1920. The most striking rises are those of the grain men, day work and extras. They have risen from £2 7s. to £6 9s.—(A.) Yes.

Q. And on the same ratio on the rates per week, it would be from 11s. 9d. to £2 12s., would it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That is a very striking rise as compared with the others. Are these grain men, day work and extras, piece men?—(A.) Day work and extras is rather a local name. I suppose you might describe it as piece work with a guaranteed minimum. The man gets his day's pay, but he gets something extra for doing anything above a recognised standard.

Q. That is just the point; you have put your finger on it. A guaranteed minimum with piece work on top, so to speak, seems to have been recognised by the workmen in such a way that they are able to earn splendid wages?—(A.) But the whole point is how to adjust that minimum.

Q. I know, but granted that the principle of a minimum is adopted with piece work, still, with all its incitement alongside of it, that seems to produce a volume of labour which is satisfactory compared with the others.—(A.) So long as the principle is not abused, I would not quarrel with it, but I should like to say that that hardly explains this particular case that your Lordship has referred to. Those day workers in the grain trade were admittedly underpaid before the war in comparison with other grades, and when we had a conference we agreed that they were. Therefore, they were given a special push up before the uniform levelling-up process began.

Q. I will take one other item in order to test it. Will you kindly look at the general cargo on the tonnage work? There has been a very singular rise with regard to this from £3 15s. 2d. to £8 16s. 3d.—(A.) That is so.

Q. That is the present rate per week in Bristol; £8 16s. 3d. is drawn?—(A.) There is, of course, comparatively little of it, and it is very exceptional for a man to get a week's work at those tonnage rates. The rates have been forced up.

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Q. Is that piece work?—(A.) That is piece work.

Q. Is there a minimum in that case, or is it not required?—(A.) I do not think it is required. I do not think there is a minimum.

Q. Anyhow, the establishment of a minimum would not touch a case like that at all?—(A.) No, it would not.

Mr. BEVIN: There is a minimum on general cargo. It is dead-weight stuff, so many tons per day guaranteed.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to the adjustment during the war, I think you used the term "War Office muddle?"—(A.) I do not think I used the term; I think it was my cross-examiner who used it.

Q. Anyhow, it does not seem to be very actionable, it is so common; but I wanted to know, for our information as a Court, what was the shape of that muddle? Did they interfere with management?—(A.) Yes, they were obliged to interfere with management for some time. They did such things as take our transit sheds, and store goods in them, whereby they blocked them so that we could not discharge ships' cargo through them. They occupied our land and got in the way in various ways.

Q. What kind of men did all that: was it military men?—(A.) Military men who were actuated by the very best intentions.

Q. Anyhow, you express no regret that normal and, as you think, better management has been resumed?—(A.) Yes, we are very glad to get back to normal conditions again.

Q. There is still another thing I want to know, and that is, is it the fact, or anything like the fact, that workers coming from Bristol to Avonmouth come by train, and that the train takes 40 minutes to come 8 miles?—(A.) Yes, I am afraid the time is something like that. It stops at a great many stations in the interval. We are under great disadvantages with regard to the railway service.

Q. What railway service is it?—(A.) It is the Great Western Railway.

Q. What I want to know is, has the City which owns the Docks at Bristol, or any dock authority, made any approach to the railway by memorial or deputation, or otherwise, to get a better service?—(A.) Yes, there have been many conferences, and it is physically impossible as things are with the traffic that has to be moved over that railway, but that, I hope, is an evil which is very nearly approaching its end, because we are getting a level road along the bank of the river. Would your Lordship allow me to put in a plan of the dock showing the relative positions? (**Plan handed to the Court.*) You will see the City Docks, and you will see Avonmouth at the mouth of the River, and Portishead on the other side of the river. You will see the South-Western and Great Western Joint Railway extension. It is a very circuitous route to Avonmouth, and stopping at a great many stations. Our hope for the future is a road which is now actually in course of construction, and we hope to have it finished in a few months, more or less skirting the banks of the river and running straight to Avonmouth. That road will carry a tramway, and will give greatly improved means of communication between the two places. Also a large portion of that area which you see marked "Sea Mills" and the neighbourhood, and "Shirehampton Park" is being built over with

^{*} Not printed.

new houses, and all that will provide accommodation for the dockers very largely.

Q. It is on this question that I want to ask you something, and it is really in the interests of getting towards the light. One of the great difficulties of the situation is that the Union makes this bargain with regard to hours, but unfortunately in working it out there is this leakage of time on the part of the men, contrary to the Union's regulations. Will not that be mitigated to a considerable extent by better access to the docks?—(A.) One excuse for bad time-keeping will be taken away; but I am afraid it is too sanguine to hope that that will, by itself, improve the time-keeping without some stronger measures.

Q. The last question I want to put is this. Approximately you say there is only two-thirds of the work of pre-war time. I think you now admit that should be four-fifths?—(A.) Speaking generally, we are only getting about two-thirds of the tonnage through the port that we were before. I am sorry to say it, but it is too true.

Q. I thought you said that you attributed 21 per cent. of the less effort to the men now?—(A.) That is quite right, on that particular test which I gave.

Q. That is to say it is four-fifths of the work where it was full work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Of that 21 per cent. can you tell me how much is attributable to the reduction of hours?—(A.) None, because it is in terms per man per hour.

Q. It is worked out per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Assume that a minimum is fixed—I shall not say what it is—with all the arrangements, and the piecework may be alongside of or on top of it, as you like, and assume that minimum is not to go down by a sliding scale, are you not confirmed in the idea, by your experience of the piecework, that the moment the men realise that the increased output would reduce prices without reducing their wages there would be a motive to increase output?—(A.) I am very much afraid the reasoning is too distant for the average docker to grasp.

Q. It is too circuitous, you think?—(A.) It is too circuitous, I am afraid. I wish I could say yes.

Q. You agree that it ought to be so increased?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And that if the men were sufficiently enlightened it would be so?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I will now proceed to tell you how enlightened they are. The moment that has been put, the answer given to me by more than one witness, including Sir Leo Money, was that there could be no guarantee of increased output, because down would go the wages. When pulled up on that, and the proposition put to them that the wages would not go down, they have admitted on the workmen's side that that would be, when thoroughly understood, a considerable inducement to increased output.—(A.) It can only be a matter of opinion, my Lord. I wish I could agree with that. Honestly, I cannot.

Q. We are wanting to get, in the interests of the men, and in the interests of the port, and in the interests of the people, full work, but only on the basis of a good decent pay, solid and steady. Do you not agree that there is hope in that direction?—(A.) Yes, if you could apply it. I have been trying for years to get increased piece work, piece work for timber especially, in the port,

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but I have not been able to induce the workers to accept it.

Q. The figures you have given us are somewhat encouraging, that is to say, where you have a minimum of time work and piece work alongside of it, the increase has been very, very considerable?—(A.) I hope the Court realises the price that has been paid for it. There is a limit to the possible payment.

Q. Forgive me for putting the point to you, because I see how we are trying to benefit all round, and that is the usefulness of this Inquiry.—(A.) I am only too anxious to assist you.

Q. As to all these primitive methods that were referred to; that, I hope, is a transitory condition?—(A.) That is a transitory condition, but they have been hampered by the great conservatism of the dockers until recently; but they have been educated out of that, I think.

Mr. BEVIN: May I be allowed to put this one point? These returns of the Port and Transit Executive are made up at your office—the weekly returns?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I notice that on the 14th of February, which is a very late date, this return has come through: "Whether average rate of discharge normal or below normal under peace conditions." I notice the Bristol Docks' Committee return it as normal, and say there is no congestion. When I get down to trucks and sheets I find you reported "Very short." I would like his Lordship to look at that. It is the document returned by the Port and Transit Executive of the conditions at the port. It came to us last week.—(A.) I was here in London, so I am afraid I had to leave other people to make out that report.

Q. Here is one of the 13th of January, when you would be at Bristol, in which it says: "Whether average rate of discharge normal or below normal under peace conditions," and Bristol reports "Normal"; trucks and sheets "very short"; barges and carts "very short," which implied that output is affected by the shortage.—(A.) I am obliged to you for drawing my attention to it. It sounds rather a contradiction in terms. I should have to look it up before I could say.

Q. On the 24th of January it is reported that the conditions were normal, but you give delays as the reason; trucks and sheets "very short" and cartage "below normal," and a general complaint with regard to railways?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to hand those three returns in, to show the conditions reported from Bristol as to the cause of the lack of output.

(*The documents were handed to the Court and marked D/35A.)

The CHAIRMAN: If you look at the first column it says, with regard to the number of ships waiting for berths, 18 in London, 34 in Liverpool, 6 in Manchester, and 48 in Newcastle. That was at the week ending 14th February, 1920?—(A.) I am afraid I cannot answer for those ports.

Q. There are none at Bristol?—(A.) That would explain why we were able to work normally, with no pressure; we were rather slack last week.

Mr. BEVIN: It rather indicates that when things are normal you are getting the output.

The CHAIRMAN: There is extreme congestion noted at London, Liverpool, and Newcastle, but it does not apply to Bristol, where there are no ships waiting to berth.—(A.) At that particular time.

Q. Then how do the others apply there? Here is the 31st of January, a fortnight earlier, with the same thing practically. On the 24th of January there are worse: 35 ships waiting for berth in London, 22 in Liverpool, 42 in Newcastle, and in Bristol only one.—(A.) They have not been giving us our share of the trade, I am afraid.

Q. I was going to suggest that the management at Bristol is so excellent that you have been able to do your work in a businesslike way?—(A.) I am afraid we have not been getting the trade.

(Adjourned till Wednesday next, at 10.30 a.m.)

* See Appendix No. 41.

TENTH DAY.

Wednesday, February 25th, 1920.

Present :

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

MR. A. PUGH

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

MR. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

MR. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Now we are going to call another Witness from Bristol, Mr. Bubbear, who is the Assistant to the Traffic Manager.

Mr. HARRY KENNETH BUBBEAR, *Sworn*.

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. Are you the Chief Assistant to the Traffic Manager at the Bristol and Avonmouth Docks?—
(A.) Yes.

Q. You are familiar with the general working of the City Docks and the Avonmouth Docks, are you not?—(A.) Avonmouth only.

Q. Did you hear Mr. Ross Johnson on Friday last state that the average time lost per day was one hour?—(A.) Yes, and I can confirm that figure, too.

Q. Have you had a record taken of all the vessels and the working on all the hatches of all the vessels in the Avonmouth Docks for November and December of last year?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you produce a statement which shows the starting times and the finishing times on each hatch?—(A.) That is right, yes.

(*The statement was handed in and marked H. 8.)

Q. Have you a copy of that statement before you?—(A.) Yes, I have it.

Q. It contains every start and every finish at Avonmouth for those two months, does it not?—
(A.) Of every ship.

Q. And on every hatch?—(A.) And of each hatch.

Q. If one looks at it, one sees that it contains many hundreds of starts and many hundreds of finishes, does it not?—(A.) I have not counted them, but I should think there would be hundreds, yes.

Q. Is the very great majority of cases there starts which ought to have commenced at 8 o'clock in the morning?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. In fact, in November how many starts were there at 8 o'clock?—(A.) Throughout November there were eight.

Q. Of all the hundreds which ought to have started at 8 o'clock, in fact there were only eight starts?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. If one glances through this list one will see on how few occasions there was a finish at 5 o'clock; that is so, is it not?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. You do not suggest that in every case the start should have been at 8 o'clock?—(A.) No, not at all. There are some cases there where rain has prevented the start early in the morning.

Q. For instance, take the first sheet, page 1, November 3; the starts right through that date were delayed on account of rain?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Your Lordship will see that on November 3 the starts were at 11 o'clock, and there is a note there that it is on account of rain.

Mr. BEVIN: I should like to ask whether this has anything to do with fixing a minimum wage, or whether, in view of your ruling the other day, it is a question of organisation?

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Court is inclined to let this in for what it is worth at this stage.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I, on that point, just say this: From our point of view this evidence has this bearing, that, having regard to the existence of this condition of things, it is not possible to increase wages, as has been asked on the other side.

The CHAIRMAN: I understood that to be the case. That may or may not be a good argument, but, at all events, it is an argument which this Court is going to entertain.

Mr. BEVIN: On the other hand, I submit—

The CHAIRMAN: Of course you may say something else.

Mr. BEVIN: I only want to suggest that it is necessary for the Witness to give the times the trains arrive and everything in line with this.

The CHAIRMAN: I have no doubt that that will affect the line of your cross-examination.

Mr. BEVIN: I was going to suggest that if it were taken under organisation there could be an investigation of the figures.

The CHAIRMAN: You will put your points, please, because you may have judged from certain questions which I put to Mr. Ross Johnson about these trains that we think that point is also important.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Have you got a notice which was issued by the Port Labour Committee and which is signed by the workmen's representatives and the employers' representatives, which says something about good or bad timekeeping?—
(A.) Yes, I have.

Q. Will you just read what the relevant part of that notice says, and then hand it in?—(A.) It is a notice "To Transport and other Dock Workers, Avonmouth, Portishead, and Bristol."

The CHAIRMAN: What is the date of that?—
(A.) June, 1919. It reads: "The above Committee desire to make an urgent appeal to all the workers in the docks within the area of the Committee to make a very special effort to keep good time. The Committee appreciate the fact that the majority of workers are prepared to do well in this respect, but there are a number of cases in which bad time is being kept, particularly at meal hours. The Committee is endeavouring to secure increased traffic for the port, and appeals for the help of every dock worker in placing the matter of timekeeping beyond reproach." Then there is another notice which was issued. Do you want the other one.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, I think that will do. I think you have only one copy of that notice. That notice which you have just read is signed on behalf of both sides?—(A.) Both sides, yes.

(*The notice was handed in and marked H. 9.)

The CHAIRMAN: We had better go into that fully. It is not a notice to the transport workers issued by the one side, but it is issued by both sides?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: By both sides. We submit that that is evidence of a state of affairs which the men's side agreed ought to be corrected.

Q. Mr. Ross Johnson on Friday spoke of the number of stoppages that took place at Bristol when there were disputes as to prices to be paid for work and other matters, it being a clause in,

* See Appendix No. 64.

* See Appendix No. 65.

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I think, almost all your agreements that there is to be no stoppage when there is a dispute, but that it is to be referred through the usual channels to the Committee which is set up to deal with those matters?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Have you got a list of some cases where the men have stopped work pending and during negotiations on disputes and claims?—(A.) Yes, I have got a number of instances here.

Q. You put this list forward as containing examples of the sort of thing which is continually happening at Avonmouth?—(A.) Yes.

(*The list was handed in and marked H. 10.)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, I do not intend to take the Witness right through them, but I would like to call attention to just one. If your Lordship will turn to the second page you will see the Steamship "Custodian." (To the Witness): Have you a copy of that?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It says: "Two gangs working grain ex the tanks, No. 5 hold. A claim was made for an extra busheller on account of dust. A claim was afterwards made for extra pay on account of alleged smell in tanks. A stoppage of work took place from 9.10 a.m. Saturday, June 7, 1919, till 9 a.m. on Monday, June 16, 1919." Is that a matter which ought to have gone to the Committee which is set up to deal with these matters?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Is it contrary to the agreements that that stoppage should have taken place?—(A.) Yes, it is contrary. The agreement particularly deals with such cases as that.

Q. Then I see it goes on at the top of the next page, page 3: "The whole of the gangs on this ship stopped on account of the above claim from 1.45 p.m. Wednesday, June 11. The whole of the grain gangs on the dock stopped work from June 13, 1919, to 9 a.m. on June 16, owing to this dispute."—(A.) Yes, I would like to point out there that the whole of the gangs on the ship stopped from 1.45 p.m. to 2.25—you have not that in—and the whole of the grain gangs on the dock stopped work from June 13 to June 16.

Q. And this list contains other instances of similar matters?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I see there is one on the first page, the steamship "Dominion": "No. 4 hold working with two gangs on grain. On July 31, 1919, the men were told off for work. They refused to start unless paid 30s. per man per day and their ordinary pay"—(A.) No, not their ordinary pay; 30s. instead of their ordinary pay.

Q. As a result of that, work did not start until 11 a.m. that day?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. Have you also heard Mr. Ross Johnson state that exorbitant demands were continually being made by the men at Bristol and Avonmouth as a condition of working overtime?—(A.) Not always overtime; sometimes for day work.

Q. I think you heard him state that of course you cannot compel the men to work overtime, or to work on, but that what he objected to was that they should be willing to work provided some payment was made in excess of what is contained in the agreements?—(A.) That is correct, yes.

Q. Have you got out some illustrative cases where those demands have been made?—(A.) Yes, I have. I have a number here.

(†The list was handed in and marked H. 11.)

Q. I will just ask you to draw the attention of the Court to one or two of these instances. I will

* See Appendix No. 66.

† See Appendix No. 67.

take the first one on the list, the steamship "Hallside." That was a case where they were discharging a cargo of cotton seed?—(A.) Yes.

Q. On Saturday, January 3, 1920, at 12 noon, about 138 tons remained to be discharged. Did the men refuse to work overtime on Saturday afternoon in order to finish unless £1 was paid in addition to the amount earned under the rules?—(A.) Yes, £1, to each man.

Q. Was that sum paid?—(A.) No, it was not paid.

Q. Was the result of that that the ship was delayed two days?—(A.) Yes, Sunday and Monday.

Q. How long did it take on the Monday to clear the vessel?—(A.) 2½ hours.

Q. So that that vessel was delayed for two days because the men wanted £1 in excess of the proper sum to which they were entitled for 2½ hours' work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think that the next one I need not refer to; the facts are practically the same as in the case of the "Sagadahoc." I should like to draw attention to the case of the "Wolverton." There you were discharging on January 17, 1920, which was a Saturday, a cargo of manganese ore?—(A.) Yes.

Q. At 12 noon, which is the finishing time on the Saturday, there remained in No. 1 hold eight tons, and in No. 3 hold ten tons. What demand did the men make for finishing those two holds?—(A.) For No. 1 hold they asked for 15s. in lieu of the ordinary pay; for No. 3 hold they asked for £1 in addition to the amount they would earn under the Rules.

Q. In order to save delay were those sums paid?—(A.) Yes, they were.

Q. When did No. 1 hold finish?—(A.) It actually finished at 12.30, half an hour after the ordinary closing time.

Q. What would have been the sum earned under the Rules for that half-hour's work?—(A.) 2s. 2d.

Q. But, in fact, you were compelled to pay the men 15s. for that half-hour's work?—(A.) That is right, instead of 2s. 2d.

Q. With regard to No. 3 hold, where there were ten tons left, what time did they finish discharging that?—(A.) At 1.15.

Q. And what would have been the sum earned for that additional 1¼ hours' work under the Rules?—(A.) 2s. 8d. for each piecework man.

Q. And, in fact, you had to pay £1 2s. 8d. per man for one hour and fifteen minutes' work?—(A.) Yes, that is correct.

Q. I should like to refer to one other case, the "Grelfryda," on the top of the second sheet. This is also at the latter end of January. You were discharging pollards?—(A.) Yes.

Q. On Saturday, January 24, was it arranged to work on Sunday with a view to finishing the vessel by 4 o'clock on the Monday afternoon?

Mr. BEVIN: I strongly object to Sunday being taken into consideration in any evidence. Surely that is a man's own day.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Quite so.

Mr. BEVIN: I strongly object to it, and I want to submit to you, my Lord, that if the men are to be put in this position owing to anything that has happened on Saturday afternoons and Sundays, it is going to jeopardise the whole shipping interests of the country.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If my friend had only waited a moment, he would have seen that no

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question of working on Saturday or Sunday arises in this case. The complaint here which we are bringing to the attention of the Court is as to something which happened on Monday, but it was necessary to preface it with the arrangement that had been made for the working on the Sunday. No complaint is made here, and nothing is raised, about the work on the Sunday; we are coming to the complaint on the Monday.

Q. On the Monday I think the weather was stormy, was it not?—(A.) Yes, it was a stormy day.

Q. The men stood by until about 11 o'clock on account of the rain?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then the question of getting the vessel finished by 4 o'clock became critical, did it not?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. And you required the men to work, wet or fine?—(A.) We tried to come to some arrangement whereby the work should go on at that time.

Q. Did the men refuse to work unless they were paid £2 per man in ordinary working hours in addition to the amount they would earn under the Rules?—(A.) Yes, they asked for £2, but it is only fair there to say that for that £2 they were willing to continue the work, whether it rained or whether it was fine.

Q. There are other instances given here, and if my friend wishes to ask you about them, no doubt he will. Are those fair samples of what frequently occurs at Avonmouth?—(A.) Yes, they are.

Q. Does it often happen that the men slow down the work in order that the work may go over either into an overtime period or into another day?—(A.) That is what the figures show.

Q. Is that in your experience a common or an unusual occurrence?—(A.) It happens far too frequently, but it is not a thing that happens every day.

Q. Have you got a number of illustrations of that type of case here?—(A.) Yes, I have.

(*The list was put in and marked H. 12.)

Q. I want you to call the attention of the Court to one or two of these instances. I will take the first, the steamship "Baygola," which is the second vessel on the first sheet. This is November 5, 1919. You were discharging flour, I think?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. From 8.15 a.m. until 4 p.m. 107 tons were landed. Is that so?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Allowing one hour for dinner, does that make an average of 15.8 tons per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In that No. 3 hold on the following day were there only thirty tons remaining to be landed?—(A.) It was not the following day; it was the day after the following day. On the following day there was no work at that hold.

Q. On the next working day there remained only thirty tons to be landed?—(A.) That is right.

Q. Did the men commence working at 8.10 a.m.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. At what time did they complete landing the thirty tons?—(A.) At 12.30 p.m.

Q. What did the average fall to during those working hours?—(A.) Seven tons per hour.

Q. Seven tons per hour as against 15.8 tons on the previous working day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The result of going over 12 o'clock to 12.30 was that the men became entitled to a half-day's pay for the thirty minutes?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. Whereas had they kept up anything like the average output on the previous working day the work would have been completed long before 12

o'clock?—(A.) Yes; but I would just like to point out that necessarily the work is not so fast in the bottom of the hold when you come to finishing up, but not to the extent of the average dropping from 15 tons to 7. It would necessarily be somewhat less, but not to that extent.

Q. In your view, ought that work to have been finished well before 12 o'clock?—(A.) It could have been finished before 12 o'clock, yes.

Q. I will turn to the "Elmsport"; there you were discharging a general cargo from hold No. 5 on November 10, 1919?—(A.) Yes.

Q. On that date, between 8.30 a.m. and 5.20 p.m., allowing one hour for dinner, were 90 tons landed?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And is that an average per hour of 11.8 tons?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. On the following day, at the same hold, 25 tons were landed?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The time taken for landing that 25 tons was from 8.10 till 12.50 p.m.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Again 50 minutes over the half day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Was the average there 5.4 tons per working hour?—(A.) Yes, 5.4.

Q. The previous average having been 11.8?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In your view, ought that work to have been finished substantially before 12 noon?—(A.) Yes, it should have been finished before 12.

Q. The next instance is on the same vessel, discharging spelter at hold No. 2 on November 20; at that hold was the average 10 tons per working hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And on the morning of the 21st, were there only 10 tons left in the hold to be landed?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. How long did the men take to land that 10 tons?—(A.) Until 10 minutes past 12.

Q. The result being that for that additional 10 minutes they got a half-day's pay; and their average, on that morning, dropped from 10 tons per hour to 2.6 tons per hour. Is that correct?—(A.) That is quite correct.

Q. Is that a case also where the work ought to have been finished long before 12 o'clock?—(A.) Yes, it should have been finished early in the morning.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I want first to ask you whether your office ever appealed to the Dockers' Union officials to get ships away and prevent these conditions?—(A.) To the local officials, yes.

Q. Have the local officials assisted the Avonmouth Management on several occasions?—(A.) They have. They have done everything that is possible; they have worked hard to do it.

Q. Have they succeeded in many cases?—(A.) Yes, in some cases they have succeeded.

Q. You want your evidence to be fair, do not you?—(A.) Quite fair.

Q. Would it not have been fairer to the Court if you had put in comparative statements showing the number of ships that had been got away under overtime conditions with the aid of the Union?—(A.) I do not know that I could tell them; I do not think we have a record.

Q. If you have been able to keep a record of when the men did not do it, would not it have been easy to have kept a record of when they did it?—(A.) No, that comes in the ordinary records.

Q. You only pick out black spots against the men, never the white ones?—(A.) No, not at all.

Q. Is not that a rather unfortunate attitude towards the men?

* See Appendix No. 68.

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Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: He does not agree.

The WITNESS: I say the Union does help us, and has helped us on occasions.

Mr. BEVIN: I submit, if over this period you have been able to keep a record in the docks of a few cases comparatively, I think cases of stoppages amounting to about six over a number of ships which have come into the port of hundreds in that period—you have picked out about six or seven items of which you have kept a record, and you have failed to submit to the Court the number of cases that have been settled without a stoppage. Is that a fair comparison?—(A.) I have not picked out the whole of the cases. We have only picked out instances as illustrations of what has happened.

Q. I put it to you now, as an official of the Bristol Corporation, and you are on your oath, would it have been a difficult matter to go to the Secretary of the Association and get a return of every ship that had been worked without a stoppage, and which had been settled by arbitration, and set them out in order against the few cases that you have here to paint the men black?—(A.) Yes; but there are many cases in which the local officials help us by settling cases without going to arbitration.

Q. They are settled in your office every morning?—(A.) They are settled, yes, during the day.

Q. And a record is kept?—(A.) No, I do not know; I could not identify it.

Q. Let me put it to you: does not your Mr. Barrington, and other officials, confirm every settlement to our office that is made every morning in your office?—(A.) Yes, there is a record kept of that.

Q. If there is a record kept by sending a letter to our office, could not a statement from that record have been set out as a set-off against these few cases?—(A.) Yes, but that does not necessarily mean that no ships go to sea without being delayed, because it is a common occurrence for them to put up a claim that is met.

Q. I am not asking you the effect of it. You have set out here—to try and blacken the men in the eyes of the Court and the public—a few cases over a period of several months. In that same period you have confirmed settlements running to hundreds without a stoppage, without a dispute, by negotiation, either with our permanent officials in your office every morning, or through an Arbitration Board; and I put it to you whether or not it is an easy matter to put every settlement that has been effected without a stoppage against these few stoppages, so that the Court may be able to competently judge as to the merits of our grievance?—(A.) We could take out a list of the cases that have been settled, certainly.

Q. Why have not you done it; what was the reason for that attitude of mind? Why had not you done it?—(A.) These are simply illustrations of what happens on occasion. I do not say that there are not many cases in which the settlement is made.

Q. I want to get to the root of this business. I want to get from you the reason why a representative of a public body has picked out about half-a-dozen cases, in order to try and influence the Court, and has not put in a single case which reflects to the credit of the Union and the men, when you have got the details and data in your office?—(A.) These are simply illustrations of what happens.

Q. I put it to you that you have deliberately picked out these cases and deliberately avoided the others?—(A.) No, I have not.

Q. Then why have you done it?—(A.) Simply because these are illustrations of what we have to put up with on occasion. I freely admit that there are others in which the settlement is made, and the work goes on.

Q. I will let the Court draw its own conclusion from this, in view of that admission. I put it to you that in piecework and in the variety of conditions of employment that arise on a dock there are matters of difference every day?—(A.) And there is a proper procedure laid down for dealing with it.

Q. I am asking you to answer my question: there are differences every day?—(A.) Yes, questions arise.

Q. And there has been a system developed for negotiating regularly with your officials?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And can you deny that that has reduced the margin of disputes, especially during the last three months, down to an absolute minimum compared with the pre-minimum days?—(A.) They have been reduced, but still exist to a very great extent.

Q. Still, they have been reduced?—(A.) They have been reduced, yes.

Q. Now I put the next question to you: has it been by the moral influence of the Union, and the agreements, that they have been reduced?—(A.) That is a matter of opinion, is not it? In my opinion —

Q. Let me put it in another way.

The CHAIRMAN: I think he was going to say, in his opinion — something. Get his opinion.—(A.) Yes, in my opinion it is due to those means.

Mr. BEVIN: Before this arrangement existed there were continual stoppages, were not there?—(A.) But this arrangement has existed for some time.

Q. But it has not been so perfected as up to the point of granting the minimum, has it?—(A.) The agreement existed before the granting of the minimum.

Q. But I put it to you that when the method advocated by leading counsel on the other side, that a man should be compensated for time delayed by so many hundred bushels, existed, you had more disputes than you have now?—(A.) The men have put up claims even since they have been granted that.

Q. Will you answer my question, please. I am not denying that there may be claims put up now. What I am asking you is: has the effect of the change reduced the number of disputes?—(A.) Yes, certainly.

Q. No one is going, I hope, to get rid of disputes between men, or else the world would not be worth living in.—(A.) I think the point is that the men do not proceed on the lines laid down; that is the point.

Q. Has not there also been, from the Union, many complaints with you personally as an official, if we cared to get out a record against you?—(A.) I do not think so.

Q. Have not I been in your office and threatened to hold up the dock because I have been unable to get you to move on one occasion?—(A.) I do not remember it, Mr. Bevin.

Q. Just rack your memory a bit?—(A.) Can you give me when?

Q. I think it is about three years ago, when disputes were outstanding to such an extent, owing to your own personal delays in your office, I had to threaten to hold up the work myself, in order

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to get a solution of the troubles.—(A.) Three years ago?

Q. Between two and three years ago; I have not been there much since.—(A.) I can only say I do not remember it; if you can tell me something about it I might remember it.

Q. I will try and look up the date, and remind you. Let us get to some of the cases that were quoted.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Is that before the agreement?

Mr. BEVIN: Before the agreement; the agreement was largely the outcome of my own influence to try and get the officials to attend to the wants of the men.

The CHAIRMAN: What was the date of that agreement?

Mr. BEVIN: The first agreement was made in 1911. It was a loose kind of agreement, which did not work very well, and it was followed by a subsequent agreement after the war, but the agreement we are referring to now, which has tightened things up, if I may put it in that way, is an agreement, I believe, of September last. It has been a sort of gradual evolution from stage to stage.

The CHAIRMAN: The last working agreement is September, 1919.

Mr. BEVIN: August, 1919. August 11.

The CHAIRMAN: If it would suit your convenience, would you tell us, with the aid of the witness, what the provisions of that working agreement were?

Mr. BEVIN: I think we could tell you quite easily. It provided for a minimum guarantee, which has been described before, of 14s. per day; and then it reconstituted what is called the Grain Board, and on the basis of that agreement four of the workmen and four of the officials of the Docks Committee, not our friend in the box, but four other officials, grain experts, have worked out new rates for the grain trade; and by that means have reduced the number of disputes.

Q. Counsel called your attention to the "Custodian," on page 2 of H 10, in which it is stated that the claim arose in connection with the working of a cargo in tanks. What was the size of those tanks?—(A.) I cannot tell you. I do not know.

Q. But you have got out the data for the Court?—(A.) I have not got the size of the tanks.

Q. Was it a proper cargo-carrying space?—(A.) But the claim was made on account of the smell in the tanks.

Q. Was it a proper cargo-carrying space?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. You do not know the size of the tank?—(A.) No, I do not.

Q. You say it is a proper cargo-carrying space?—(A.) In the measurement of the ship, yes.

Q. How do you know, if you do not know the size of the tank? Do you know which tank it was?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What tank was it?—(A.) No. 5 hold.

Q. Why did not you put the elevator in?—(A.) Because we worked it by gangs.

Q. Was the elevator on that ship at all?—(A.) I cannot tell you now; I have not the record in front of me.

Q. Is it wise to put cases in evidence without you have all the facts of the case before you?—(A.) I do not know all the circumstances.

Q. But you got out all this data?—(A.) Yes, I have, in connection with this; but I have not in front of me the record to show whether the elevator was working there or not.

Q. If you want the Court to arrive at a judgment on your evidence, ought not you to take the trouble to prepare the facts?—(A.) I have prepared the facts so far as this case is concerned, but I have not the record whether the elevator was working or not.

Q. You admit you have not all the facts for the Court to determine?—(A.) In my opinion I have.

Q. In your opinion?—(A.) In my opinion, I have, I cannot tell you whether the elevator worked there, from memory.

Q. You cannot?—(A.) No.

Q. Was there gas in that hold?—(A.) An arbitration was held, and they found that there was no basis for a claim. That answers your question.

Q. Was there gas in the hold?—(A.) I am saying that the arbitration board found there was no basis for a claim.

Q. Did you go aboard the ship?—(A.) No, I did not; it was done by the arbitration board.

Q. You have simply taken this out from your own ex parte point of view of the case?—(A.) No, I have taken it out as a record of fact.

Q. Would not it have been wise to have had the minutes of the Arbitration Board of the discussion, if you were going to submit this?—(A.) No, I do not think so. I remember that the Arbitration Board found that there was no basis for a claim.

Q. Have you the decision of the Arbitration Board with you?—(A.) No, not in their words.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that the "Custodian" case?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: You have not the decision; we have only your statement now that they found that?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Go back to the "Dominion." What is the age of the "Dominion"?—(A.) I am sure I do not know.

Q. What class of ship is she?—(A.) She is a general cargo carrying ship in the North Atlantic trade.

Q. You do not know her age?—(A.) No, she is not a new one.

Q. You do not know her construction?—(A.) Yes; she is not a new one.

Q. Would she be 25 years old?—(A.) Probably.

Q. Was she taken off the Liverpool trade as not being suitable, and run to Bristol?—(A.) I do not know that.

Q. Is it the fact that that line is kept there by the White Star Company just as a matter of running to keep other lines off?—(A.) I do not know it, but the point about this is not so much whether there is a basis for a claim, or not, but simply that the men stopped working, pending those negotiations; that is the essence of the matter. It may be a case for an allowance, or it may not. That is immaterial.

Q. What was the men's point of view. Have you got it?—(A.) I know what the men's point of view was.

Q. Is it not a fact that when you are discharging a ship very often a dispute arises, and if the men went on working before it was investigated, the cause of the dispute would be removed and the

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employers then say there is no ground for a claim?
(A.) But—

Q. Would you answer my question?—(A.) No, I do not think it is so.

Q. Let me put it to you this way: supposing you have a parcel under a deck very awkward for the men to get at, an awkwardly constructed ship, or damaged cargo, or whatever you like, the men go on working, several hours elapse before the investigators arrive. When they arrive the men have worked out the cargo that is complained about; has it not been the practice in hundreds of cases—hundreds of cases—that the employers then argue that there is no case for a claim?—(A.) No, it is not so; we are always prepared to admit the facts that existed at the time the claim was made.

Q. You will agree that I was a member of the Bristol Ship Owners' Joint Board for five years?—(A.) Yes, if you say so; I do not know.

Q. You will admit I had to argue a good many of these cases?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you will agree that in many cases payment was not made for claims for two, three, or four months after it occurred?—(A.) How long ago is that?

Q. When I was a member of the Ship Owners' Board.—(A.) That is some time ago.

Q. Quite.—(A.) Recently claims have been met, and dealt with, and paid, except when it has to go to arbitration, when it must take its natural time.

Q. Is not there a difficulty in settling, especially on general cargo, by arbitration after the cargo is worked?—(A.) I do not know of any difficulty.

Q. Have there not been cases where we have had difficulty with the Docks Committee after an order has been made, in getting the money?—(A.) No, I am not aware of any such case.

Q. Let me remind you. Do you remember the ss. "Virgilia." Did you take a record of that case?—(A.) I remember that ship, yes.

Q. Do you remember that the men were entitled to certain things by rule that you refused to pay?—(A.) No, I do not.

Q. If you do not remember it, it is no use pressing it.—(A.) Can you tell me anything about it, so that I can recall it to mind. You say simply the "Virgilia." The "Virgilia" is a ship. What are the facts?

Q. There is a rule in your book, that if a gang is running more than seven feet over the water, extra men are allowed. That had been decided by your Board?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In the case of the "Virgilia," the distance was measured, and she was found to be over 7 feet, and your officials refused to grant the extra men, and the men had to stop work to get their rule?—(A.) I do not remember the case, and I certainly did not deal with it myself.

Q. So you have not kept a record of stoppages where the Board officials have been in the blame—only where the men have been?—(A.) I have not kept a record in that sense of stoppages, other than the ordinary record of such stoppage. I do not keep a definite record of stoppages against the men; it is only the ordinary record of stoppages in every ship, from whatever cause they arise.

Q. If this stoppage took place on the "Virgilia," why is not it embodied here with the note that it was caused by the refusal of the Dock Committee to observe the rule?—(A.) Can you tell me when that took place?

Q. In the "Virgilia," on July 17 last year.—(A.) No, I do not remember it.

Q. Then we can, I think, assume, on your replies, that there have been many cases in which the officials have helped your authority, and that there have been hundreds of disputes settled without any stoppage at all?—(A.) Spread over a term of years—spread over years they would amount to hundreds.

Q. And this is a very limited number which you have been able to find, all of which are associated with special cargoes?—(A.) These are, as I said, illustrations; they are by no means all of them, either.

Q. The ones you have left out, I presume, would be something like the "Virgilia"?—(A.) I do not remember the "Virgilia"; I cannot tell you what it was.

Q. Let us get to the time of starting at Avonmouth. You heard Mr. Ross-Johnson admit the other day that the man has to leave Templemead at 6.55?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What time do your men come on the stand at the port?—(A.) They should be there at 7.45 a.m.

Q. Your foremen?—(A.) To call off?

Q. What time do your departmental heads get on to the stand in the morning to call the men off?—(A.) 7.45

Q. Are you sure?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you kept a record?—(A.) I have seen them there.

Q. Are you there every morning at that time?—(A.) Not every morning, no.

Q. Were you there the mornings that these cases have been taken out?—(A.) What cases?

Q. That you have submitted?—(A.) In November and December?

Q. Yes?—(A.) But let us get to the point: the calling off affects men being taken on. It does not affect those men who are following their jobs on ships. They are called off on the first day, and they follow on without any calling off; they go right to work.

Q. The agreement is that the call shall begin at 7.45?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What was the distance from the dock gates to these ships?—(A.) To some 5 minutes, to others 10, possibly to one berth 12 or 13 minutes.

Q. Have you ever known a big crowd of men crossing your docks with the junction bridge opened and be held up?—(A.) Yes, but that would only affect one side of the dock, not the other.

Q. But you have found it?—(A.) But not at that time.

Q. You have never opened the junction bridge?—(A.) I do not say never, but very seldom; because there is a rule that the bridge shall not be opened during the time that the men are going to work, but it has happened, to meet an emergency, that the bridge has been opened.

Q. Now, if you get delays, you have correspondence with Messrs. King, the stevedores, as a rule, do not you?—(A.) No; I do not know that. It may result in correspondence, but not necessarily so.

Q. I put it to you that where there is delay correspondence passes between the dock officials and Messrs. King?—(A.) No, not always.

Q. But very frequently.—(A.) No, I would not say very frequently. If there is any reason why the stevedores are to blame for the delay it would probably be taken up in correspondence; but it would happen very seldom.

Q. Or if you were to blame?—(A.) Or if we were to blame, Messrs. King may take it up with us, but it is very seldom.

The CHAIRMAN: Let me point out to you, this: Mr. Bevin is not defending those cases if they

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are so gross as you have represented; but what Mr. Bevin wants to elicit from you are all the other circumstances which might account for these and mitigate them. There is no defence of those cases if they were as serious as you have represented. On the other hand, we must have before the Court all the other mitigating circumstances that might account for that. That is your point. I understand.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not suggest for a moment you do not mean to do that; on the contrary, you are giving us very fair evidence. Mention anything in any of the cases that Mr. Bevin refers to which might have mitigated or accounted for those circumstances?—(A.) Very good, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: Would it not have been wise with regard to these delays if, in conjunction with this form you have submitted, you submitted copies of that correspondence, and thus have helped the Court?—(A.) That statement which we have put in is a statement of the times of starting and finishing all hatches.

Q. I am asking you really not to evade me.—(A.) I am not trying to evade you at all.

Q. I asked a straight question.—(A.) I have put everything in there.

Q. I am asking you a straight question, whether or not it would have helped the Court to see whether the men were to blame or not, if you had put in as evidence the correspondence that has passed between you as employers?—(A.) I could have done that.

Q. Would it have helped the Court?—(A.) But at the same time, I frankly admit that there are instances of those occasions when the blame is not on the men's part.

Q. That is what I want to get.—(A.) Certainly, I admit it; but I must always qualify that by saying that in by far the majority of cases the work could have started at 8 o'clock.

Q. Now when you take this time of 8.10, what you take as the time when the first sling comes up?—(A.) The first sling ashore, yes.

Q. What has got to be done before the sling comes ashore?—(A.) There is a provision for the lifting of the hatches before 8 o'clock.

Q. But is it done?—(A.) The men won't do it.

Q. They do not arrive at Avonmouth by the train until a quarter to 8—(A.) Oh, yes; pardon me.

Q. 20 to 8?—(A.) 7.30 to 7.35 the train is in.

Q. I submit to you it does not matter what is in the time-table; it is when she gets there that is the trouble. I know the time-table, and you know that they do not get there?—(A.) No, I admit they are late sometimes.

Q. We have to go by the time the train arrives, not by the time she is in the time-table. You see, if instead of the men arriving only 20 minutes before they have to be called off, and if to get to their work they take 5 or 10 or 15 minutes to walk to the ship, and then they have to take the hatches off.—(A.) Not take the hatches off; there is a special provision for that. The men are paid extra pay, and they get there early to do that work; they can get there earlier.

Q. Will you quote the rule of the union where there is provision in the morning for taking off hatches. I know there is provision for putting them on at night,

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The clause is in the settlement of 1919, and it reads as follows:—"For

taking off hatches before 8 a.m. and putting on the same after 5 p.m. it has been agreed that two men from each hatch, with a minimum of four men for two hatches or less, shall be employed and shall be paid for time work at the current rate of overtime with the minimum payment of one hour."

The CHAIRMAN: Is that in the agreement?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is in the agreement of April, 1919. I am calling a witness to deal with this particular point.

The CHAIRMAN: Can the Court have copies of that agreement?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Your Lordship shall have a copy.

Mr. BEVIN: So that the men do not arrive till 20 to 8 by the train. They have left home in the morning, some of them 5.30, 5.40, 6 o'clock, up to 6.30, and get to the train, and most of them would have to do a tram ride to get to the station, would not they?—(A.) That is not my opinion. The men live round the station. At Montpelier and Stapleton Road, the men live to a very great extent within a quarter of an hour or 20 minutes of the station.

Q. What are the rents of the houses in Montpelier; I happen to live there?—(A.) The rents!

Q. Yes?—(A.) From Montpelier Station they go down to St. Paul's and Newfoundland Road.

Q. How far is it to Newfoundland Road to walk from Montpelier Station?—(A.) 20 minutes.

Q. They have to get up in the morning, and have their breakfast first?—(A.) And catch a train, I think, at 7.10 from Montpelier.

Q. So that they have got 20 minutes' walk, breakfast has to be eaten before they leave home. That means, does not it, that it is a 5.30 rise in the morning?—(A.) I do not know; it may do, but if so they are not so quick as I am.

Q. What time do you get to work in the morning?—(A.) A quarter to 9 generally.

Q. What time does your train leave?—(A.) 8.14.

Q. What time do you get up?—(A.) A quarter past 7.

Q. How far do you live from the station?—(A.) 10 minutes.

Q. Just let me examine it. We are getting 10 minutes' walk, as against the 20 minutes for the other walk. We have a quarter to 9 instead of a quarter to 8, that is an hour; that would give the men a quarter to 7, taking your own time from leaving the house, and taking your own time of getting up, it would be a quarter to 6, would not it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Assuming they have to do a tram-ride, it means 5 o'clock, does not it?—(A.) Yes, but very few, I think, have to ride.

Q. How many trams run from the centre to take men to Hotwells in the morning?—(A.) I do not know, I am sure. A number, I admit, but I really do not know how many.

Q. But if you make a statement in the box that the men live round the stations, ought not you to have ascertained first of all how many of the men the tramways have to cater for to take to the station?—(A.) I do not think so.

Q. Then you cannot say whether many of the men ride, or whether they do not?—(A.) I cannot tell you that, so far as Hotwells Station is concerned, but I do know that the men do live round

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Montpelier and round Stapleton Road and around Lawrence Hill. But I cannot tell you what number ride.

Q. There would be an average of twenty minutes. The train arrives at twenty to eight, sometimes ten minutes to eight?—(A.) Very seldom so late as that.

Q. Let me come to that train business. Would you mind telling the Court who got the few alterations connected with trains, in the collecting of tickets, and so on, and gates put up at Avonmouth? (A.) I think it was both the employers' representatives and your representatives. So far as I remember, I went to the meeting with Mr. Garmston.

Q. I put it to you (this is very important, to show the attitude of the Union towards these problems) that you officials of the Dock Authorities and the employers had been trying to get those few improvements for nearly five years, and failed?—(A.) Yes, there has been difficulty in getting the trains to suit. Even now the trains take a very long time on the journey.

Q. I ask you whether it is not a fact that the actual negotiations were conducted and brought about with the Railway Executive and the Government by our Union in the final stages?—(A.) Together with the employers.

Q. I submit to you that the conference was arranged, the delegation was arranged, the proposals were arranged, the visitation to the place where the alterations had to be made, was done by the officials of the Dockers' Union without a representative of the employers with us. Is not that a fact?—(A.) If you say so. I do not know; I cannot answer. I know I attended a meeting with Mr. Garmston, of which the train service was the outcome, but who arranged that meeting I do not know.

Q. I think in the majority of these cases it is 8.15, and that is the first sling ashore. Let us assume that the hatches are taken off. Let us assume that all the arrangements are made, the craneman has to get into his box in his starting time?—(A.) The craneman's starting time is 7.45.

Q. At the place of first order, according to the rules?—(A.) At the clocking-on station.

Q. Which is just inside the gate?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then has he to get to his crane?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then has he to get his crane ready?—(A.) Well, the crane is ready.

Q. He has to get up into his crane?—(A.) He has.

Q. He does not go up like *this*. He has to walk up?—(A.) Exactly, he has, and he has a quarter of an hour to do it.

Q. Out of that he has a quarter of an hour's walk to some parts of the dock?—(A.) One part.

Q. Why did not you set out exactly where each of these ships were lying in the dock, so that we could decide whether it was 8 o'clock or 8.15 to begin?—(A.) There was no reason for keeping it out; I simply did not do it, that is all.

Q. Would not it have helped us to a decision if we had known that?—(A.) It could be got.

Q. I would like it got?—(A.) It can be got, but, after all, I must point out this: the majority of berths are within an easy ten minutes' walk of the gates. There is only one berth which is beyond that range, and that one is an export berth.

Q. Now let us take your ten minutes. The man has to go through the dock gates at 7.45 to clock on?—(A.) Right.

Q. He then goes, and, of course, I presume your officials are there full of bustle, ready with the orders, to send him right away to the crane directly he gets in, is that so? (A.) That is what we try to be, yes.

Q. There may be one or two minutes delay to say "Good morning" when he gets in?—(A.) Yes, but you must remember this, that by far the greater majority is following on work. It is not new work. It only comes as new on one day out of a ship's discharge.

Q. But the crane man goes to his place every morning.—(A.) To clock on, and then to his work. He knows what he has to do from the day before, in the majority of cases.

Q. He goes to the berth and clocks on, and he enters on his day's work after the previous day in the morning, that would take him to ten minutes to eight would not it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then he has, on your own showing, to walk ten minutes to get to the berth?—(A.) To get to the crane. In ten minutes he can get into the crane at the O. and P. sheds.

Q. Do you suggest that the men can walk to the majority of berths and climb up into their crane in ten minutes?—(A.) Yes, I do.

Q. He would have to be as agile as a monkey to do it?—(A.) Honestly, I could do it.

Q. You have never been a crane man?—(A.) I never have, but I know what they are.

Q. Then the other men have to go aboard, get down in the hold, and make up their set.—(A.) Not necessarily.

Q. Surely.—(A.) Not necessarily.

Q. Does the first set make up itself?—(A.) How do you know that the set it not left overnight. The slings are often made up and left; in some holds they have three or four slings ready.

Q. There is no detail in your statement.—(A.) The majority of these cases are starts which should have been made at eight o'clock.

Q. With the sling ashore at eight o'clock.—(A.) Yes.

Q. There is nothing in the National Agreement I ask you to say that the slings shall be ashore at eight o'clock.—(A.) It says work shall commence promptly at eight o'clock.

Q. If you get the first sling ashore at 8.10, is not that an indication that the men must be going up the gangway at eight o'clock?—(A.) No, I do not regard it in that way. The agreement is that work shall start at eight o'clock, not that the men shall be going up the gangway.

Q. Is not the agreement that the men shall be alongside the ship at eight o'clock?—(A.) No.

Q. Can you show me anything in the dock rules that the men shall be in the hold of the ship at eight o'clock?—(A.) It does not say in the hold; it says the work shall start.

Q. How can it say that if he is not in the hold?—(A.) It simply says that work shall commence at eight o'clock.

Q. If the man has to go down the hold of a ship when does the work begin? When he gets aboard the ship or when he is actually hooking on the hook, in your opinion?—(A.) He cannot commence until he gets down in the hold actually, but he should be there by 8 o'clock to hook up the first sling.

Q. In the hold of the ship?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Show me anything in the agreement?—(A.) It does not say so. It says the work shall start at 8 o'clock.

Q. I leave it to those members of the Court who negotiated the 44 hours to decide that point. We never asked for it and never promised it.—(A.) The agreement says it.

Q. It does not. I ask you to produce it. It does not say the men shall be in the hold of the ship.

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The CHAIRMAN: Will you refer me to the clause?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I am sorry I have not a copy at the moment to hand to your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: I mean this point that Mr. Bevin has mentioned. Would you mind reading the clause in the agreement?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: "That the 8 hour working day with a half day on Saturday shall be adopted for all classes of labour," etc. It gives the hours 8 to 12 and 1 to 5. "And to enable work to be promptly started at 8 a.m. and carried on to the stroke of 5 p.m. the hours of engagement shall be 7.45 a.m. to 5.15 p.m."

Mr. BEVIN: That is not the final agreement.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: "It being understood that the only interval for meals is from 12 to 1." The only part of that agreement that has been departed from is the 5.15. In the original agreement it was that the hours of engagement shall be 7.45 to 5.15. It is now 7.45 to 5 o'clock. Your Lordship will remember the evidence that Sir Alfred Booth gave, who negotiated this with the central authority, and those agreements, having subsequently been carried out at the local centres, was that it was understood that the work was to proceed in full swing for eight hours, and it was in consequence of that agreement that was made with the central Union that these agreements provided that in order to enable work to continue full swing for eight hours the men should book on at 7.45.

The CHAIRMAN: The exact point I think you have rather missed. The exact point is that this witness relies upon the phrasing of the agreement. He cites a phrase like "the work shall commence." I want to know, in point of fact, what is the exact text of the agreement with regard to the commencement of work.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: "To enable work to be promptly started at 8 a.m. and carried on to the stroke of 5 p.m. the hours of engagement shall be 7.45 a.m. to 5 p.m."

The CHAIRMAN: "To be promptly started" are the words?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: These are the Glasgow terms; I have not the Bristol agreement here. I submit, my Lord, that this was a recommendation drawn by Sir Alfred Booth and his colleagues, and not an agreement at all, and never was agreed. It became the basis for local negotiations. There never was a National Agreement.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I am reading the National Settlement 44 hours working week, which was arranged locally at Bristol.

Mr. BEVIN: Is my signature on it?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: This is signed by Mr. R. P. Bailey, who is the Secretary of the Employers' Labour Association, and this is the agreement that is being worked to.

Mr. BEVIN: Is my signature on it?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Your signature is not on this agreement.

Mr. BEVIN: Then it is not the agreement.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Then is there any agreement at Bristol?

Mr. BEVIN: Certainly there is. I am not going to have saddled upon me something which I have not signed, a circular issued by an employer's secretary.

The CHAIRMAN: The Court is rather puzzled. It is perfectly manifest that the spirit of that agreement is that the work shall go on at a fixed hour and finish at a fixed hour in full swing.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: And it is perfectly manifest that in order to enable that to be done there was a quarter of an hour in front and a quarter of an hour behind; but the point of it which Mr. Bevin is eliciting is, when is work to be considered to have commenced and to be in full swing. That is Mr. Bevin's difficulty, and I confess that it would be an advantage if we had the actual text of the Bristol agreement of August, 1919.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is the second agreement. Your Lordship shall have them both. If I may just answer this last point my friend made about there being no signature, I now have a copy of the agreement here, and though it does not bear Mr. Bevin's signature it bears Mr. Applegate's signature, who, I understand, is one of the representatives of the men at Bristol.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin does not repudiate that. Having that agreement before you, can you now give us the exact expression applicable to the starting of work as work? That is what Mr. Bevin wants to get at.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Those are the words I have just read to your Lordship: "And to enable work to be promptly started at 8 a.m. The hours of engagement shall be," etc.

Mr. BEVIN: That is right. If the work is to be promptly started we are at the dock gate at a quarter to 8; we have got 10 minutes' walk; we have got to get aboard the ship, down in the hold, put up the first set, and it is ashore at 8.10 ready for the shore-men to take it; and you suggest that the men are not carrying out the agreement?—(A.) As I have already explained—

Q. You suggest that with the men ashore, with the grain actually landed, with the men ashore ready to take it by 8.10 the men are not carrying out the agreement.—(A.) My opinion is that the first sling ashore should come ashore before 8.10.

Q. I will leave it to the Court to decide. Supposing the men were working grain, they would have to bushel the first sack. would not they?—(A.) That is true.

Q. They could not bushel the sack the night before, could they?—(A.) It would not take 10 minutes to bushel it.

Q. But it would take 10 minutes to get down the hold and bushel it and get it ashore?—(A.) No, I do not think so.

Q. I suggest you become a workman instead of an official for a week or two. I want to deal with this overtime business. You have complained about the stoppages, and I think most of your complaints are on piece-work, about men asking for extras.—(A.) Are you referring to the demand now?

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Q. Yes.—(A.) For extra payment?
 Q. Yes. The bulk of these extras are on piece-work cargoes, in this, manganese ore, grain, etc.?
 —(A.) Not manganese ore.
 Q. I am looking at the wrong form. I beg your pardon. You heard Mr. Ross-Johnson say that the output had increased 600 bushels per day since the minimum wage had been put into operation—the average output?—(A.) Not the minimum wage, but the minimum of 1,600 bushels.
 Q. It is the same thing.—(A.) No, there was a minimum in existence before that.
 Q. There was a minimum wage guaranteed per day of 14s. for 1,600 bushels.—(A.) That is so.
 Q. What is the difference?—(A.) Because that was not the institution of the minimum day.
 Q. I am not asking you when the institution was. I am asking you this: since you fixed that last agreement for a minimum wage on 1,600 bushels for 14s. Mr. Ross-Johnson said there had been an average increase of 600 bushels a day.—(A.) Yes.
 Q. Is that correct?—(A.) Yes.
 Q. There would be three bushellers in some cases, and four bushellers in others?—(A.) Yes.
 Q. Take the three bushellers. The men would have to bushel the usual tub bushel and dip it into a sack?—(A.) Yes.
 Q. How many tons would those three men do in that way with that hand work in a day—2,600 bushels?—(A.) It depends on the class of grain, of course.
 Q. Take the average of 2 tons 10 per 100 bushels; take light with heavy?—(A.) I have not got it worked out at 2 tons 10, but I can tell you what the 2,600 bushels of wheat will equal. It will equal 71 tons 10 for wheat. Barley is only 58 tons 10.
 Q. These three men would have in this position (bending) stooping all the time, picking up 60 lbs. a time, to dip into a sack 71 tons.—(A.) Not the three men at one time; they would have spells.
 Q. Between them?—(A.) Between them 71 tons 10; that is correct.
 Q. They are in a stooping position; they are not sitting at an office desk. They are lifting 60 lbs. a time up this height to dip in a sack. (Illustrated.)—(A.) Yes.
 Q. Have you ever done it?—(A.) No.
 Q. If you did it for eight hours, do you think if you were asked to work overtime you would feel over-energetic?—(A.) That is not the point.
 Q. I want you to answer my question; you are only a man like them. I want to know how you would like it if you got into their shoes—if you were bushelling wheat at 60 lbs. per bushel for eight hours, if at the end of it somebody said, "Come along and work for three or four more." Do you think you would feel over-energetic?—(A.) It would be hard, but if I was fit I should do it.
 Q. Supposing you were running that grain from the combings to the rails, scale to rail, that is one man's run, is not it?—(A.) Yes.
 Q. So he would have 71 tons over his shoulder?—(A.) Yes.
 Q. Do you know the average haulage for a horse in a week?—(A.) No, I do not.
 Q. Fifty tons. You expect a man to go on overtime when he does 71 tons over his back in a day without question?—(A.) These cases do not concern piece workers; they concern general cargo workers as well.
 Q. He is discharging a cargo of barley. I am

on your actual case; you picked it out yourself?—(A.) Which case are you referring to?
 Q. The "Sagadahoc."—(A.) Discharging barley?
 Q. Yes.—(A.) Ought not we to take the weight of barley?
 Q. Then take the weight of barley; I will give you the benefit of barley.—(A.) It is 58 tons 10.
 Q. Take 58 tons 10 over a man's back in a day.—(A.) The gang does.
 Q. The pivot man is the man who governs the thing largely, is not he?—(A.) Quite.
 Q. And the pivot man is the man from the scale to the rail, is not he?—(A.) Yes.
 Q. That one man takes 58 tons, if you take light grain, over his back in a day?—(A.) Yes.
 Q. Then you come out and say, "Work overtime."—(A.) Yes.
 Q. What time in the day do you officials meet to decide whether you will work overtime?—(A.) Half-past three.
 Q. The finishing-time is five o'clock?—(A.) Yes.
 Q. You have an hour's meeting in the office as a rule, do not you?—(A.) Half an hour.
 Q. So it is at four o'clock you have the audacity to go to a man and say, "Work on at five."—(A.) Are you referring to this "Sagadahoc."
 Q. I am referring to the refusal to work overtime generally; I am not going on isolated cases. You have your meeting to decide whether you will work overtime at four o'clock?—(A.) At 3.30.
 Q. You finish at four?—(A.) Yes.
 Q. I submit to you that very often it is 4.15 by the time you have finished your little conversation?—(A.) Four o'clock generally.
 Q. I submit that very frequently it is 4.15.—(A.) No, I cannot admit that, and very often the orders are given before that meeting; the thing is very often fixed up in the morning on the other hand. We must take both sides of the picture.
 Q. You come out of the office then, the foreman takes a stroll to his little box, and then he walks to the ship which would be another quarter of an hour: he would not be to the ship until half-past four, and then he says, "Work on."—(A.) The orders, as a matter of fact, generally reach the men before half-past four; that is the latest time.
 Q. Then you expect a man at half-past four, who probably has arranged an evening for himself, or has some arrangements, to obey your will, to give up his leisure-time to work when you do not decide the orders to work until half-past four?—(A.) No, before half-past four.
 Q. Is that reasonable?—(A.) Within reason the man, I think, should be prepared to work.
 Q. He has no right to decide the day before to take his wife to the Hippodrome then?—(A.) Yes, certainly.
 Q. He should be always prepared to suffer any inconvenience which about four officials decide in the docks office sitting down very comfortably at four o'clock in the day? Is that reasonable, really?—(A.) It is not a comfortable thing at all. I do not think it is a fair way to put it. Somebody must decide that the overtime must be worked, and the orders must be passed out to the men.
 Q. I submit to you that if the Dock Authority were free from the brokers and merchants they could decide the day before whether they would work a ship. Will you answer me that?—(A.) They could certainly do it earlier in the day. I do not say they can do it the day before.
 Q. Here is a big ship discharging. You know whether she has got space in a shed; and were it

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not for the interference of merchants who want the stuff to go a particular way who influence you, you could decide the day before as to how you would work that ship?—(A.) No, merchants do not interfere with it now: we have the discharging in our own hands, and we do not have orders from the merchants in the matter of working the ship: that day has gone by.

Q. You could decide it the day before, then, if it is in your hands?—(A.) No, because circumstances arise in the discharge of a ship; rain may take place and delay that ship for a couple of hours during the day, and you may want to work on to clear her. There are many things in the course of discharge that you cannot decide, that you must work overtime on a certain night.

Q. We have got the point from you, have not we, that you decide this overtime business in the afternoon in the main?—(A.) In the afternoon, yes.

Q. And the man is presumed to fall into line, and should be quite prepared to expect to see your august presence coming up the gangway and saying, "Work on, and be ready to obey." With regard to this finishing out a day, how much railway fare does a man pay a week from Bristol to Avonmouth?—(A.) 6d. a day.

Q. That is 3s. a week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that if he came down in the morning, and he only had done half a day's work, he would have to pay 1s. out of that in railway fare?—(A.) For one half a day?

Q. Yes?—(A.) 6d.

Q. I am assuming it is the finishing day of a ship, and there is half a day's work. You are complaining of men using their business acumen to make a day of it. I have certainly always advised them to do it?—(A.) He would pay 6d. for his fare?

Q. He would have to pay at Avonmouth 1s. Supposing he got that ship out before 12 o'clock, he would earn 7s., would not he?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And would have to pay 1s. out of that railway fare?—(A.) Why 1s.?

Q. 6d. each way, is not it?—(A.) No.

Q. 6d. out of that railway fare?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If he lives any way away on a tram route you can add another 3d. a day or 2d. at the least.—(A.) 2d., yes.

Q. There is no workmen's train when he gets back.—(A.) No.

Q. There are no workmen's cars when he gets back in the midday.—(A.) That is so.

Q. So it would be probably a 2d. fare then, getting back in the afternoon.—(A.) It may be.

Q. That would be 9d., and would reduce his wages to 6s. 3d. He would have to have a meal away from home, would not he?—(A.) No, I do not think so, finishing at 12 o'clock. He would go home; he would be home by 1 o'clock.

Q. Do you seriously suggest a man who is up at 5.45 in the morning, giving you half a day, a long train journey, waiting, hanging about; he would not get a train back from Avonmouth if he finished at 12 o'clock until 10 minutes to 1.—(A.) 12.33.

Q. He has got about thirty minutes' run; he has then got a tram-ride; it would be gone two by the time he got into his house. Do you suggest he would do all that without any food?—(A.) He would have his usual allowance in the morning.

Q. He would have to buy it, would not he?—(A.) No, they generally take their morning allowance with them. It is the same thing whether he buys it or not.

Q. I put it to you that if you were a workman, and you had to pay a railway fare, and you had

that long journey in front of you, you would try to make a day's pay before you got home, would not you?—(A.) You ask if I would.

Q. Yes.—(A.) No, I would not.

Q. I am glad to have met a superman. I should. He would have to maintain himself that day, would not he?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. His children would not eat less food because he had only earned half a day, would they?—(A.) No.

Q. Do you seriously suggest that the remedy for that business is not that when it is the finishing day a man ought to get a full day, and done with it.—(A.) Now, Mr. Bevin, the rules are made for us to work by; I do not make the rules, and we do not make the rules at Avonmouth. There are the rules laid down, and we work to them. If there is half a day provided, I think it is only fair that the men should do it. If you say there should not be any half-day, then have it a full day, and get the rules amended.

Q. You will leave it to us to decide, will you?—(A.) No, certainly not; but we only work to the rules. It is for you and the employers to decide it.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure, Mr. Bevin, you do not mean to interrupt the course of the witness's answer. The witness says that he works to the rules. If the rules that you allude to are wrong, the rules should be altered, but the witness is not responsible for the rules. (To the witness.) That is your view?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: There is one other question I want to put to you. There is a Labour Inspector appointed at Avonmouth, is not there?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you any records with you of the number of times that he caused officials to put on men that would otherwise be idle by calling your officials' attention to ships not being fully manned, lighters not being used, and so on?—(A.) I have no records.

Q. It has occurred, has not it?—(A.) It has occurred on one or two occasions, from recollection, but I have no records of it.

Q. Would you say it occurred to the extent of about six gangs a fortnight ago?—(A.) In what particular instance, can you tell me?

Q. Grain.—(A.) I do not remember the incident.

Q. The point of it is this, that it has been necessary for a person to be there all the time, watching the interests of the men, to see that even you man ships to their full capacity?—(A.) No, I do not think it is necessary to keep a man to do that. He has helped perhaps on one or two occasions, but I cannot admit the necessity of keeping a man solely for that purpose. You had your other representatives there before the appointment of the Labour Inspector.

Q. They had no authority, had they?—(A.) Yes. Whether they had authority or not, they used to come to us and make suggestions for putting up extra hands.

Q. You are complaining about ships being retarded. I am submitting to you that it has been necessary to call even your managerial attention to the delay on your side through not manning ships.—(A.) Yes, but there are often circumstances which prevent gangs going there. You are aware that we have been short of trucks and sacks to a very great extent during the last few months, which has interfered to a certain extent with the working of ships. We are not responsible for that; we cannot help it.

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Q. That is what I wanted to get. Then a lot of the delay has been the trucks and sheets?—(A.) Yes, some of it.

Q. Would not you say the bulk of it?—(A.) Yes. Would I admit that delay is due to that, do you mean?

Q. Yes.—(A.) No. I admit that the ships have not always been worked to their fullest extent, but that does not deal with the output of the men.

Q. Do you mean to tell me that you have not had to pay claims, because you have not been able to give piece workers facilities to carry on the work for trucks?—(A.) It has occurred, yes.

Q. Is not that an indication that the men are keen on improving the output, and they make you pay when you cannot provide the facilities.—(A.) I do not know whether it represents that. It means they are certainly keen after the money.

Q. Is not it a fact that the allowance that is made is never equal to what they would do?—(A.) No, not at all. We generally base the allowance on 400 bushels per hour, which is equivalent to what they would do, and I think works out pretty near to that average of 2,600.

Q. If the men have claimed 400 bushels an hour that is a claim that they are competent to do that.—(A.) Yes.

Q. That has been admitted by you?—(A.) We have paid 400 bushels per hour.

Q. And you have had to pay that 400 bushels because there have not been trucks and sheets?—(A.) On occasions, yes.

Q. Has that been attributed to the men?—(A.) The fact that there are no trucks and sacks available?

Q. Has the reduced output and other factors been attributed to the men in arriving at the average?—(A.) There is no reduced output; there is increased output in the case of the men as you pointed out just now.

The CHAIRMAN: You are at cross purposes about that. What Mr. Bevin is referring to is the output of the Port of Bristol with reference to that ship. That is what you mean, that the output of the Port of Bristol with reference to that ship has been impeded, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to the men, the men are not blameworthy?—(A.) No, not with regard to the trucks and sacks.

Mr. BEVIN: Is this correct? On January 19, at a Conference at the Docks Office at Bristol, the General Manager stated there were thousands of tons of grain in store waiting for sacks, several flour mills within forty miles radius which could not obtain grain; the sheds were full up, and two cargoes of sugar had to be sent away because of lack of warehouse accommodation. Was that the state of affairs at Avonmouth as recently as January?—(A.) Yes. Is that the General Manager's statement?

Q. It is taken from the General Manager's statement.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: What date is that?

Mr. BEVIN: January, 1920.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: On that point, my Lord, these statements by the General Manager of course ought to be put to Mr. Ross-Johnson. The witness cannot deal with them.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ross-Johnson, you said that, did not you?

Mr. ROSS-JOHNSON: Probably. It is approximate. I will not speak to the dates, and so on, but I can accept it as correct.

Mr. BEVIN: In dockers' negotiations we have been used to negotiations and not the strict method of the Court.

The CHAIRMAN: We have justified the Court; we have the authority of Mr. Ross-Johnson; he says it is so.

Mr. BEVIN: I think you admitted, in reply to your own Counsel, that very often there was delay on the last day, and discharging was slower?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There are such things as dunnage to clear up, which cannot be measured in cargo, are there not?—(A.) I allowed for that, that there are circumstances which would make the discharge on the last day slower, but not to the extent that it is apparent in those records.

Q. It is just a question of opinion whether the men did or did not do as much as they ought to have done?—(A.) No, it is more than opinion.

Q. Have you got records of the men that have finished before the 12 o'clock and done the thing properly?—(A.) All those times are put in the statement; the times of finishing are in the statement of the times of starting and finishing.

Q. Every ship?—(A.) For each ship, yes.

Q. For every ship in and out the dock?—(A.) During November and December.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You do not suggest, do you, that when the men stop work on the ground that there is some smell in the tanks they are never correct in alleging that there is a smell in the tank?—(A.) Oh, no.

Q. As I understand, your complaint is this, that solemn agreements have been entered into whereby it is undertaken that there shall be no stoppages, and all disputes submitted to some arbitrator or Committee for decision.—(A.) That is my case.

Q. And, whether the men are right in their complaint or not, what you bring to the notice of the Court is the fact that there are frequent stoppages in breach of that agreement.—(A.) That is the point. They may be right, or they may be wrong, but stoppages take place, which is what we want to avoid.

Q. And there should be no stoppages?—(A.) There should be no stoppages if they loyally carried out these agreements.

Q. With regard to this long list of the times of starting and finishing during November and December, if one runs through that list one sees scores and scores of cases where there is no start until 8.20, and even later. That is so, is not it?—(A.) Yes, 8.15, 8.20, and later.

Q. Whatever may be the proper construction of the words in the agreement, that work is to be promptly started at 8 a.m. Is it your view that the first sling should be ashore before the times that are mentioned as the starting times in this return?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Mr. Bevin has suggested to you that the circumstances are very special at Bristol and Avonmouth. This agreement that has been made with

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the local officials has been made, has it not, with full knowledge of all the circumstances that exist at Avonmouth and Bristol?—(A.) Yes, I should say so. They are able to ascertain the times of trains and everything which has any bearing upon the times to work to.

Q. It is with those conditions in mind that this agreement has been made locally?—(A.) I take it so, yes.

Q. The loss of time which this table deals with only relates to the commencing time. There is, is there not, a considerable amount of time lost at other periods of the day? For instance, there is the allowance time that comes in the middle of the morning?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it the common practice for the men to knock off before 1 o'clock?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it the common practice for them not to return promptly at 2 o'clock?—(A.) Not to start work promptly at 2 o'clock, yes.

Q. Does this table show that there are very few cases indeed where the men have worked up to 5 o'clock in the evening?—(A.) Very few indeed where they worked right up to 5 o'clock.

Q. I think, if one looks at the table, you will see scores of cases where they knock off as early as 4.30 and 4.35 in the afternoon?—(A.) Yes. There are many at 4.30, but, of course, the majority is 4.45 and 4.40.

Q. With regard to calling on in the morning, it is the fact, is it not, that when a man has commenced a job, we will say on Monday, the next morning he can go straight to his job?—(A.) On shipwork, yes. If he is called off for a ship he follows that ship right through to the finish of the discharge or the hatch.

Q. With regard to the question of the men going slow, have you taken in your returns any case where any question of dunnage arose, clearing up dunnage?—(A.) There would be dunnage in the holds in certain cases anyway.

Q. I will just take one case: it is the case of the "Elmsport" that you referred to. It is on the second sheet of "H 12": "Discharging spelter at Hold No. 2." That is a very striking illustration of what Mr. Bevin referred to as the business acumen of the labourers at Bristol. There, there were ten tons left over in the hold where on the previous day the average output had been ten tons?—(A.) Per hour.

Q. They took from commencing time to 12.10 p.m. to discharge that ten tons. What have you got to say about that particular case?—(A.) I say even with clearing up the dunnage the work should have been finished before 12 o'clock.

Mr. BEVIN: My lord, there is just one question I would like to put, a point as to these returns being taken in the period of the winter, and as to the condition of the light or running planks at this period in the evening time.

The CHAIRMAN: You forgot it, did you?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my lord.

The CHAIRMAN: You may put it now.

Further cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I would like to ask whether or not, in taking these returns for the winter months, where you are not going to work on, the trouble is taken to put lighting facilities on when it gets dark early, and whether it does not endanger the life of the men very often to work in the dark?—(A.) Are you referring to men finishing before five o'clock or working-on men?

Q. Finishing at five o'clock. Take the grain porter running a plank, when it gets dark and slippery, and it gets on after half-past four?—(A.) There are lights provided, but unless the ship is working overtime she is not lit up with additional lights; there are only the ordinary dock lights.

Q. Then after 4.30, if you are not going to work on, there are no lights provided to get that full time up to five o'clock when it begins to get dark and dangerous?—(A.) Yes, lights are provided, but not to the extent that would be the case if the work was continued afterwards.

Q.—Not to make it safe?—(A.) I cannot say that. The ordinary dock lights are there, and they are sufficient to work by.

Q. With regard to going into this gas in the tanks, do you suggest that if the men have an idea of gas or fumes arising in tanks or in cargo they should risk their lives by going down there before inquiry, and just trust to luck to somebody investigating it after?—(A.) No, I do not.

The CHAIRMAN: In case I forget, would you direct your attention again to the case of the "Elmsport." It is on page 2 of "H 12." See if I understand that thoroughly. That is a case in which there were 2½ tons left on the morning of November 20?—(A.) No, my lord, ten tons were left on the last morning. On November 20 the average worked was ten tons per hour: the finishing day of the ship was November 21, and on the morning of the 21st, the last day, there were ten tons left in that hold to finish.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: One hour's work?—(A.) On the basis of the previous day's work that would contribute an hour's work. I must in fairness say that it would take longer than the hour to clear up.

The CHAIRMAN: What I want to get at is this. Was there anything, so far as you recollect, on the morning of the 21st to prevent the men starting work at 8 o'clock in the morning?—(A.) No, my Lord; there were no conditions.

Q. Was there anything in the state of the weather to prevent them working continuously?—(A.) There was not, my Lord; the conditions were quite good.

Q. Allowing for the extra work, considering it was, so to speak, the tail-end of the cargo, allowing the extra time required, in what time, with decent honest work, could they have finished the remaining ten tons?—(A.) They should have done it in two hours at the very outside.

Q. That would have enabled them to finish at 10 o'clock?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They were skilful enough to go on until 12.10?—(A.) Yes, they did.

Q. And thus put themselves in the position of earning half a day?—(A.) A full day.

Q. A full day instead of half a day?—(A.) That is, one half-day for the morning and one half-day for the afternoon.

Q. Nobody defends that. Please understand that from neither side is that defended. Let me ask you plainly this question: Was that the type of case which you found the action and the interposition of the officials of the Union extremely helpful in suppressing it?—(A.) Yes, they have helped us in suppressing those cases.

Q. You are free to acknowledge that?—(A.) Yes, they do help us, and have helped us, but notwithstanding their help the men do still do it.

Q. What I want to get at from you is this: You do meet together with the officials of the Union on the basis of common honesty?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is to say, the officials help you to get

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these black sheep eliminated from this trade?—
(A.) Well, they cannot do that.

Q. No, but I mean that type of work is eliminated by the assistance of the officials?—(A.) They do everything in their power to keep it from happening.

Q. Still, I want you to face the point, which is this: That you meet upon the basis of honest work for honest pay, and you find the officials assist you in that policy?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Now there comes in a point upon which we all in Court are anxious to get information* from you. I have cited that case because it is a discreditable case, and so far as we know at this moment an unaccountable case, and also a case of a type which the Union would assist in suppressing. There may be explanations about many of these. I want to ask you plainly: Can you give us, with reference to Bristol, any idea of the proportion of these inexcusable and discreditable cases to the large mass of honest labour performed in the port?—(A.) I think I must explain this, that the majority of dockers are honest, hard-working dockers, but there are a number of men—

Q. I have called them "black sheep."—(A.) If you use that word, I will use it; there are a number of black sheep, and unfortunately if one or two get into a gang they very often succeed in influencing the honest docker.

Q. That may be so. Now, tell me what, in your opinion, that has to do with fixing the reward which is to be given to the large body of men whom you describe as perfectly honest and straightforward?—(A.) Only this, that I think, before any question of extra wage is entertained, the men ought to give the employers a fair day's work for the wage which they already get.

Q. I am in a sense surprised at that answer, because I thought we had got beyond that point. I thought the point was that you said that the great body of men were honest fellows, willing to fulfil their agreements honestly?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If that be the case, can you not give us any light on the proportion of the bad cases to the great solid body of honest cases?—(A.) The cases themselves, or the men?

Q. The men; because, of course, a man's influence, as you say, will continue in his own case, and it may ramify to others.—(A.) Your question is rather a difficult one—to give a proportion; but it must be a low proportion. The number of black sheep, as you call them, to the bulk of dockers must be in the neighbourhood of perhaps 5 or 6 per cent. I cannot go any higher than that; but unfortunately they succeed in influencing the other men.

Q. Why do you employ such men?—(A.) We cannot help it. They have their tallies, and they are entitled to employment. They are members of the Dockers' Union, and they hold the workers' tallies, and they come for the call off, and we cannot refuse them employment when they want it.

Q. Under the Registration Scheme?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I am not saying these things against you, but in order to get to the bottom of it. Have you known of any cases in which the question of the admission of particular men for the Register was brought up?—(A.) No, that is a matter for the Port Labour Committee, with which we do not deal at Avonmouth at all. The tallies are issued through the Dockers' Union by the Port Labour Committee. As a local official, we have no voice in that matter at all; we have to accept them as they come with their tallies.

Q. In fact, if they are within the Register they have a title to be taken on?—(A.) Yes.

Q. About these figures, there are one or two that I want to ask you about. Can you tell me

when there is a convenient train back from Avonmouth at about 5 o'clock?—(A.) 5.14 is the first workmen's train away from Avonmouth; in fact, there are two at 5.14, one each way to Bristol; and I believe there are another two at 5.18. Those are the two times.

Q. 5.14 and 5.18?—(A.) Yes. They serve different districts in Bristol. One goes one way and one another. Then there is another at 5.25 for the Hotwells District.

Q. There is quite a crop of trains between a quarter and twenty-five minutes past five?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Taking human nature as it is, do you not think that a good many of these cases of people going away at about 4.30 when they should not, when it is against their bargain and against fair dealing, are just because they are tempted away to catch the early 5.14 train?—(A.) Yes, they are tempted away, and we have made efforts to get those trains run a little later, so that the men should have the opportunity of working right up till five o'clock.

Q. I want to say to you, and I think I have the agreement of my colleagues, that a good deal of this disturbance which is reflected in your timetable may be due to the most imperfect railway service in the neighbourhood of these docks. Do you not agree to that?—(A.) There is one thing I would like to say—

Q. May I have your answer to that question?—(A.) Some of it is certainly due to the fact that the service is not a good one, both morning and evening, but may I point out that a number of dockers live at Avonmouth itself, and do not need to use the trains.

Q. Have you identified those 4.30 men as the residents.—(A.) No, I could not.

Q. That is a point. We want to get at the real thing. The point that we want to get at is: Do you represent that that 5 or 6 per cent. of what I might call the improper fringe (not to put too strong a term upon it) might not be considerably reduced if there were decent and proper railway facilities for the workmen at that port?—(A.) I think that the matter does not seem quite clear. In speaking of timekeeping, the majority of the men employed both start late and leave early. The 5 or 6 per cent. which I mentioned in connection with the "black sheep" were the men who influenced the gangs to put in claims for these extras, and to delay the work in the discharge of ships to bring about another half-day's pay. I do not use the 5 per cent. of black sheep in connection with timekeeping at all.

Q. We have been at cross purposes, and I must get at it. I want to start at one end, and I will start at the evening end first; and my reason for starting at the evening end, is because it is not complicated with the question of whether the work is ready to begin or not?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. The agreement is quite plain, that the work must be up till five o'clock. There is no doubt about that; that is the agreement?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Your tables show that a great many go off at 4.30, which is against, not only the spirit, but the letter of the agreement.—(A.) Yes.

Q. It is those cases to which I want to refer. What is the proportion of those cases to the total number of men employed?—(A.) By far the greater proportion; I should say probably 60, 70, or 80 per cent. By far the greater proportion of the men at work leave before the proper time.

Q. That, of course, is a deplorable state of matters. Has the Union helped you about that?—(A.) Yes, they have made effort in their meet-

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ings with the men to get them to keep better time, and as we have already shown, a poster was put about asking the men to keep better time.

Q. I saw that poster.—(A.) And they have done everything they can to get the men to keep better time.

Q. I see that Mr. Bevin, whom we are pleased to have with us, is at the top of the list of workmen's representatives asking the men to make a very special effort to keep good time.—(A.) That is so.

Q. May the court humbly suggest to you that there should be other appeals than to the men. Why not appeal to the railway company especially?—(A.) We have done so in regard to the evening trains.

Q. Do you not see the result of it? By the framing of the time-table there is a sort of temptation to a man to skip away home so as to catch an earlier train.—(A.) I must say this also, that when we approached the railway company with regard to the evening trains the trade union representatives were not with us.

Mr. BEVIN: Not ours?—(A.) Not yours, no.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you ask them to go?—(A.) We asked them to join us in our representation, but they could not agree to having the trains put later than their present times.

Q. So that that temptation to which allusion has been made still exists?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it the case that you find crowds of men running to catch the train?—(A.) Yes, they all go for the station, and in very good time for the train too. In fact the railway companies go so far as to say that because there is such a body of men at the station directly after five o'clock they must run their trains within a very short time of five o'clock to take the men away.

Q. Have you yourself seen crowds of men leaving their work at 4.30 instead of staying on until five?—(A.) Would you rather say 4.45? 4.30 is the earliest limit. At 4.45 you can see crowds of men going out through the dock gates every evening. In fact, our time-table for the paying of the men proves it. We have to pay the majority of these men every night. To do that in the case of grain workers we have to calculate their time, and even so the men are at the pay office and get their pay, and the pay clerks have finished paying by 5.5, 5.10, 5.15, 5.5, 5.10. There are four pay clerks, and three of them on the majority of days here have finished their work by five minutes past five, and paid every man off.

Q: Does not that suggest to you that seeing that the unions, the employers, and the port authorities are at one in desiring to have a definite time honestly stuck to, some rearrangement of the hours may be advisable?—(A.) Of the hours?

Q. Yes.—(A.) For the trains, do you mean?

Q. Yes.—(A.) Yes. If the Dockers' Union would join us in making representations to the railway company it might be that we could get those trains put a little later, to enable the men to work right up till five o'clock, but I must explain that at the time when this matter was taken up the railway company had to provide trains for H.M. factory at Avonmouth for the manufacture of munitions of war, and the workers had to be catered for, and their point was that they could not alter the dock trains because of the trains for the factory workers.

Q. You see the position in which we are as a Court. We cannot make an award of honest money except as a return for keeping agreements and

acting honestly under them. Can you not give us any light in regard to the removal of any temptations that may be in the way of the workmen to break their agreements?—(A.) But first of all, it must come from the men themselves. They must put their hearts into it and give a fair day's work. It must come from them; you cannot do it all on our side. They must be with us and give us a fair day's work, because, even with all the trains, that does not apply to leaving their work before one o'clock. The trains do not affect their leaving their work before one o'clock. They must have their hearts with us in the work, and put forward their efforts, and then, if there is anything wrong with the trains, we can get that remedied, probably.

Q. I have asked you about the one end of the work. Now come to the other end. Look at H. 8, on page 2. There is the case of the "Cape Ortegale." Do you see that?—(A.) On November 4?

Q. Yes.—(A.) Yes.

Q. I cannot ask you about all this table, but I want some light about this. Take the "Cape Ortegale." On November 4 gang No. 1 started at 9.40?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Should that gang have started at eight o'clock?—(A.) No. That was the starting day of that ship, and you cannot expect a hatch to start off promptly at eight o'clock when it is starting day.

Q. That element, which was a very disturbing one, because I thought the datum was 8 o'clock, disappears; but just go on through the same date. No. 3 gang starts at 9 o'clock?—(A.) Yes.

Q. No. 5 gang starts at 9.30?—(A.) Yes. That is the starting day of that ship entirely.

Q. Take the "Challenger," which starts at 10 o'clock?—(A.) That also is starting day of that hatch.

Q. Do you not see how confusing that is? I can understand 8.5 and 8.15?—(A.) Those cases of 8.5, 8.10, and 8.15 are the hatches on which work should have been started at 8 o'clock.

Q. The apparently gross cases in there are not gross cases at all?—(A.) No.

Q. They are accounted for by quite legitimate considerations?—(A.) By different conditions.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I think I ought to say that I got the Witness with particular care to state that the majority of cases in this list were cases where the start ought to have been 8 o'clock, and not all of them, because we were quite conscious that there are many of the cases to which your Lordship has now referred.

The CHAIRMAN: The Court is a little disturbed by this, because this table does not represent a settled state of matters or support a settled argument at all; it has to be interpreted in the light of the evidence that it is a majority of the cases.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord, but there is this about the table, that without counting them I think one may say fairly that there are hundreds of cases where the start ought to have been at 8 o'clock, but in the month of November you will only find eight cases in which, in fact, the start was made at 8 o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN: That may be very true, but observe how this table H.8 is headed. It is headed "Bad Timekeeping." I thought myself that that meant bad timekeeping owing to the men. It now turns out that it may or may not be so according to the individual cases examined.

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Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It is bad timekeeping at the other end, not necessarily at both ends.

The CHAIRMAN: We are on the 9.40 case which I have given. The 9.40 case does not stand alone; there are other cases of starts at that time.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The 9.40 case has a 4.30 finish.

Mr. BEVIN: As to the 4.30 finish, it may be found if the whole data be gone into that there were no sacks or trucks, or something of that kind.

The CHAIRMAN: I am at the other end; I am at the morning end. I think you agree, do you not, Mr. Bruce Thomas, that it would have been far better, when the issue before this Court is the wages to be paid to these men, that any tables put in should have been tables relevant to that issue in the sense of being a fringe of inexcusable absences?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I appreciate the weight of your Lordship's observation, and in order that the weight of this table may not be lost through it not being perfectly definite what it shows, the Witness will undertake to put an asterisk or a sign against any case where the men would be justified in starting late owing to it being the commencing time for starting the ship. That can be done, and that shall be done; because I do not want the weight of this table to be lost through any ambiguity that can only apply to a small proportion of the total cases.

The CHAIRMAN: The error has arisen from the desire to give all the cases of bad timekeeping. It is not for me to suggest to a man of your experience, Sir Lynden, but you would do far better to make a clean sheet of this. Put in the cases which rain does not account for; do not put in the cases with which rain or weather have anything to do; do not put in the cases where the ship had not been started at all. Put in your cases where it was the man's fault in not keeping the agreement, and you see you reduce the body of this list to smaller proportions.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will see the proportion; but my only answer to your Lordship's criticism is this: that supposing we had done that in the first instance, we should at once have been assailed by Mr. Bevin for making a selection of cases which suited our purpose and omitting to show other cases where the men did start late and were justified in starting late.

The CHAIRMAN: In this case weapons of argument are pretty freely used; but now we see exactly the point. Do you see what I am after?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Absolutely.

Mr. BEVIN: May I make a request over this: that this sheet be sent back to Bristol, and that a Committee of both sides, or representative of both sides, go through each one of these cases of the 8.15 start and the evening, with this reference: That it was not raining, that there were facilities to work, and the condition of the weather and the light; and then submit to your Lordship the result of both sides' investigation on the spot? Then I think we can have an agreed term. I have seen nothing of this, and have had no chance of investigating it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am not going to agree to that.

The CHAIRMAN: There is only one thing to be said against that, and that is the argument derived from the brevity of human life.

Mr. BEVIN: It could be done in a day.

The CHAIRMAN: Could that be done in a day?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, and I am not going to agree to it. I am going to go into cases and get the evidence accurate from our point of view and put a witness into the box on oath to prove it.

The CHAIRMAN: You will agree, anyhow, that some service has been done to the parties by showing that the contents of this have erred upon the side of fulness?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Certainly. I do not make that admission; but I know what your Lordship wants, and your Lordship shall have it.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well. (*To the Witness*): Then I come to another point: Is there an interference with convenient output on account of the confusion and congestion arising from conflict of interests between the Dock Management Department, the Shippers' Representatives, the Stevedore Contractors, and the Railway Companies?—(A.) No, my Lord.

Q. They all work in harmony?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then what was it that you had in your mind when you referred to the terrible delays referred to by Mr. Ross-Johnson, when he referred to thousands of tons of goods waiting for sacks?—(A.) Yet that would not interfere with the output, because the men would not be employed upon them. If we had thousands of tons of grain in the warehouse, that would not interfere with the actual output of labour, because labour would not be employed upon that particular grain.

Q. I think that is right enough, but what I want to get at is this: If it be the case (as I am sure it is) that, as Mr. Ross-Johnson said, there was a shortage in sacking, in trucks, in sheets and tarpaulins, would not the effect of that be to hold up the port?—(A.) It would hold up the deliveries of goods from the port, yes.

Q. Is not the effect of that deleterious to the interests of the men as well as of the port authority?—(A.) It prevents the men from getting employment.

Q. That is the point that I want to get at.—(A.) Yes, it does.

Q. Is not that a thing upon which you, as an assistant manager, have—and, naturally, are entitled to have—a very strong opinion that this railway congestion should, if possible, and as soon as possible, be removed?—(A.) Certainly, my Lord. It has caused us endless work to scheme to receive and keep ships going, in the state the dock has been in owing to a very great extent to the want of railway wagons to take the goods away.

Q. Do you think that that would produce a return to normal conditions?—(A.) It will go a long way to it, because it will make the work of receiving cargo out of the ships better, if it is possible to be better, by having empty sheds instead of congested sheds.

Q. Then the next thing I want to ask you is: Have you in your mind any suggestion to make for a more immediate action by these arbitrations

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Mr. CHARLES EDWIN COX, *Sworn*.

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

than what there appears to be, so as to save the delays first in ascertaining what the facts are, and, secondly, in the men getting paid?—(A.) There is no reason now for any delay at all. The machinery is there for instant action, and the cases can be dealt with without any delay whatsoever.

Q. So that you think since the agreement of August, 1919, that cannot be put forward as a solid excuse for not appealing to get the thing settled by that Committee?—(A.) No, it cannot. The machinery is there.

Q. Do you find with regard to that topic that the local officials are also anxious to have the agreements literally obeyed?—(A.) Yes, the two men at Avonmouth could not do more than they do to keep things going smoothly.

Q. Then, in regard to the dock authority themselves, is that the Town Council in your case?—(A.) Yes, the dock belongs to the City, and the Docks Committee is elected by, and is part of, the City Council.

Q. With that good experience of the Bristol Port Labour Committee, which acts so well together, I understand—you agree to that, do you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you not think it might also be an advantage to have a further leavening of the Town Council Committee with labour elements?—(A.) The General Manager has already given an expression of opinion upon that point. Do you want my opinion as well?

Q. Yes, I want your opinion.—(A.) Of course, there are already two labour members on the Committee.

Q. I know; and my question assumes that. My question, as I put it, was: Do you not think that it might be an advantage to have a further leavening of that Authority with labour elements?—(A.) It is rather difficult for me to give you an answer to that. Personally, I should say that another labour member might be helpful, provided he is put there through the ordinary way.

Q. Through the Town Council?—(A.) Through the Town Council, yes. That is what I mean.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: There are twelve labour members on the Town Council, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: You are entitled to put it in that way. After all, you entertain no doubt, do you, that great damage is caused to all parties by the fact that you cannot get full compliance with the actual agreements?—(A.) That is the main point. If the men would work to the agreements and give us a full day's work, then things would be much better than they are now. That is all we ask for.

Q. I gather that, in your view, a shilling or two here or there in wages is not to be compared with a half-hour or two here or there in time?—(A.) Ought we not to have a full day's work for the present pay?

Q. I am putting it to you that the shortage in time is of the most serious detriment to all concerned?—(A.) Yes, far more than a shilling or two on the question of pay. That is my own personal opinion.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what I was putting to you. Thank you.

(The Witness withdrew.)

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Q. You are a partner in the firm of Messrs. C. J. King and Sons, master stevedores at Bristol?—(A.) I am a director.

Q. You have heard the evidence which has been given by Mr. Ross Johnson and Mr. Bubbear with regard to the bad time-keeping at the Bristol and Avonmouth Docks?—(A.) Yes.

Q. From your knowledge, is it correct to say that there is on an average quite one hour per day lost?—(A.) I should think that quite a moderate estimate.

Q. You have also had experience of these stoppages of work while the matter is being submitted to your Committee to deal with the matter, contrary to the agreements which have been made?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With regard to stoppages for rain, for which you pay—

The CHAIRMAN: Please conduct your case in your own way, Mr. Bruce Thomas; but may I suggest to you that this Witness may be held as concurring in a good deal of the evidence which he has heard. If you will ask him a question with regard to the one hour per day lost; in his opinion has it been lost, first wilfully and second needlessly, then he can be cross-examined by Mr. Bevin on the grounds of his opinion. We have been very patient about going into all this, and have been very pleased to have all these details, but after all, we really must go forward. Please do not think that I am saying this in any hostile sense.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, I am sure your Lordship is not.

Q. You have heard what his Lordship says. In your view, could this time which is lost be avoided?—(A.) A good deal of it.

Q. Do you consider that any of this bad time-keeping is wilful?—(A.) I do not know that I can say that it is wilful. It is a fact that timekeeping is bad.

Q. I would like you, if you will, to give an illustration of an incident which happened yesterday in connection with the discharging of a banana boat. Was that at Bristol or at Avonmouth?—(A.) At Avonmouth.

Q. Were a number of men in connection with the discharge of that vessel found to be breaking away at twenty minutes to one?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Will you tell his Lordship just shortly what happened?—(A.) A number of men were breaking away, and the timekeeper was put to ask them to go back to their places and continue their work until one o'clock. All of them did with one exception. That man said that he would not go back, and he said that he would have his money and his check and finish. A note was given to him to draw his money, which he did. He then went to the Union authorities, and they told him that he was out of court.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the meaning of that?—(A.) That he had not their sympathy—he was out of court in breaking away and demanding his money and check. He went back at two o'clock to the ship and was successful in stopping the whole of the 550 or 560 men who were engaged in the discharge of the banana boat. At about three o'clock the Union representative came round and induced the men to re-start the discharge of the bananas.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The result was that you lost the work of how many men?—(A.) About 550.

Q. For one hour?—(A.) Yes.

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Q. What about the payment of the men for the hour when they stood by and refused to work?—
(A.) They were paid. They are employed by the day, and that hour was paid for.

Q. They had to be paid for that one hour?—
(A.) Yes.

Q. How much per hour does it cost you for 500 men?—(A.) Roughly speaking, about £100

Q. So that over that transaction you lost, for that one hour, £100?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That, of course, does not take into account the loss of time of the vessel?—(A.) No; that is the loss in actual wages.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not quite follow. That would work out at 4s. per hour, would it not?—
(A.) No, 2s. per hour.

Q. At 2s per hour it would be £50, would it not?—(A.) For 500 men?

Q. You have made an error; it should be £50.

Mr. BEVIN: It is 1s. 9d. per hour.

The CHAIRMAN: £45 is the right figure.—(A.) Yes, I am sorry.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Is that correct? Should it be £50?—(A.) Yes, I am sorry.

Q. It should have been £50, not £100. I wanted to ask you a question about the arduousness of the work. Take the grain men; is their work very arduous work?—(A.) It is much the most arduous work at Avonmouth.

Q. What are the grain men paid? What do they make in the day as a rule for this arduous work?—(A.) Varying amounts, between £1 and £2.

Mr. BEVIN: You had the figures handed in the other day, my Lord. Are those figures disputed?

The CHAIRMAN: Between £1 and £2 is a very wide margin.—(A.) Yes, the margin is wide.

The CHAIRMAN: Just clear that up, please, Mr. Bruce Thomas. Is it piecework that they are on?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: They are on piecework, are they not?—(A.) Yes; the figures, I think, were discussed last week.

Q. They are shown, I think, in the second table that Mr. Ross Johnson handed in. The work of the grain pieceworkers is the most arduous work at Bristol, is it not?—(A.) Much the most arduous.

Q. And they make at those rates over £1 per day?—(A.) Over £1 per day.

Q. With regard to the ordinary cargo man, the man who gets 14s. per day, is his work arduous work?—(A.) Not anything like so arduous as grain work.

Q. Do they have much carrying to do?—(A.) No, there is no carrying done at Avonmouth now.

Q. Is everything trucked?—(A.) Everything is placed on trucks and wheeled now, except timber.

Q. Are the duties of some men working in a gang much lighter than those of others?—(A.) The duties of the man who is passing the word from the hold to the crane or winch are not arduous. They are lighter, of course, than the duties of the man who is wheeling the trucks or making up the slings in the ship's hold.

Q. What is the heaviest man-handled traffic at Bristol?—(A.) Cases of galvanised iron weighing half a ton.

Q. How is that dealt with and how many men handle it?—(A.) When two cases of galvanised iron are lowered into the hold in one sling there are twelve men, six a side, and those men take one of the cases on a pair of trucks and truck it into position.

Q. That is the heaviest work, in your view, is it?—(A.) That is the heaviest package we man-handle.

Q. I want you to say a word about the removal of hatches. I think you have prepared a statement relating to the steamship "Weimara," and at the top you have set out the paragraph from the agreement of April, 1919, which deals with this question of the removal of hatches?—(A.) Yes.

(*The same was handed in and marked H. 13.)

Q. Before you go into this, I should like you to say whether you put this forward as an average which frequently happens or whether this particular case of these particular times is a bad one.—
(A.) This could not be described as average. This is an insulated steamer carrying frozen meat, and there are double sets of hatches to be removed. This, I should say, was a bad case, and not an average case by any means.

Q. Do you find that the men are willing to carry out the provision which is set out on this table and which is contained in the agreement?—(A.) No.

Q. The agreement provides in these terms: "For taking off hatches before 8 a.m. and putting on same after 5 p.m. it has been agreed that two men from each hatch with a minimum of four men for two hatches or less shall be employed and shall be paid for time worked at the current rate of overtime with a minimum payment of one hour. The selection of men for this work is at the discretion of the stevedore or his foreman." In your experience is that clause worked to? Are you able to get men to come on as provided by the agreement in order to get the hatches off so that work can commence full-swing at 8 o'clock?—(A.) In very few instances.

Q. Will you tell the Court what happened in this particular case, which you have instanced here as a bad case? I see it is stated that the men refused to touch the hatches before 8 a.m., and the result of that was that no work was commenced in hold No. 2 until 9.20 a.m., in hold No. 3 until 9.45 a.m., and in hold No. 4 until 9.45 a.m.—(A.) Those are the times.

Q. The result of that was, was it not, that for one hour and twenty minutes, one hour and three-quarters, and one hour and three-quarters, the men who had come on to discharge the vessel were standing by and doing nothing?—(A.) The men who were coming to discharge the vessel were taking off the hatches. The men who were waiting to receive the cargo were stood by.

Q. But the men on the quay who were waiting to receive the cargo?—(A.) They, of course, had to stand by.

Q. Of course, all this adds very much to the merchants' cost, does it not?—(A.) Undoubtedly.

Q. And is that charge handed on to the public?—(A.) I do not know what becomes of it, I suppose someone eventually has to pay it.

Q. You pay the wages, and it all goes on to the cost of discharging the vessel, does it not?—(A.) Yes, it goes on to the discharging bill.

* See Appendix No. 69.

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Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I only want to discuss the question of hatches with you, I think. What is the weight of the hatches?—(A.) I do not think there is any particular weight. In this particular ship the top hatches would be ordinary hatches, but the insulated hatches are heavy, and usually handled by the winch.

Q. They were not handled by the winch on this occasion, were they?—(A.) Winch or crane.

Q. Is not the real difficulty about this rule that there are not sufficient men. It was a rule, was it not, that was rather forced on by the employers as a condition of the settlement?—(A.) I really do not know. I was not on that particular Board. I know this agreement was arrived at, but I was not there, so I do not know the conditions.

Q. You know, do you not, there is an element in Bristol among the shipowning interests that always wants to enforce a hard bargain against the advice of the Unions?—(A.) I do not think it is quite fair to ask me that.

Q. If it is not correct to ask you, that is rather an admission that it is true, I think?—(A.) I may also add that although I am a director of King's, I am the outside practical man; I do not do the clerical work, nor the negotiating part of the work.

Q. I suppose there was a dispute between you and the men over this, really?—(A.) There was a dispute.

Q. And it could not be taken as an example of what ordinarily happens at all?—(A.) I think I said this was an extreme case just now.

Q. I want to put to you what I put to Mr. Bubbear just now; do you not think it would be wise to pick out a few bright spots to put with the black spots, if we want to arrive at a legitimate conclusion?—(A.) That is so, but this is an example of a bad example, as I admitted. The only example that I have got here.

Q. Is it not a fact that the Bristol Ship Owners' Association gave instructions that you were to pick out these cases?—(A.) As I said just now, I do not take any part in the clerical department.

Q. Is it not the fact that the members of the Steamship Owners' Association, when this case was being prepared, gave instructions to pick out the bad cases?—(A.) I can only repeat that I had nothing to do with the getting out or making up of these.

Q. The Court must draw their own conclusion from your answer. With regard to the lost time, I think you know as much about the train service, and the difficulty of getting to the work, as anybody, do you not?—(A.) Admitted.

Q. Have you and your firm discussed with me the trouble with the Dock Management on many occasions?—(A.) With what?

Q. The difficulty with the Dock Management on many occasions?—(A.) In what particular?

Q. Let me take this question of starting. Was there not for a long time a considerable conflict between you and the Dock Authority regarding cranemen?—(A.) There has been some.

Q. Considerable conflict?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. And it went so far that the Union got involved in it, and the matter was even discussed with some of us, was it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Is not that, to some extent, accounted for by what I may call the alleged red-tape of the Dock Authority interfering with starting, or did for a long time?—(A.) Probably it did.

The CHAIRMAN: Ask him what the nature of the interference was.

Mr. BEVIN: I will put it in my own way, if I may, my Lord. I think the great complaint was the number of orders that had to be got from the separate officials before you could really get a start?—(A.) There was no doubt a lot of difficulty placed in the way.

Q. And that seriously interfered with the April agreement getting a good start off, did it not?—(A.) I will not say "seriously." It did interfere, but I will not say "seriously."

Q. Another point I want to put to you is this: is not it a fact that there have been a good many ships delayed while there has been a dispute between your firm and the Dock Authority as to who should employ, or pay, for certain men?—(A.) I do not think there has been delay; the thing has been discussed, but I do not think there has been any delay over it.

Q. Is not there often times delay—to take cotton seed, and cargoes of that character—as to how many gangs shall be put on, by the interference of the merchant, by not manning the shipping ashore?—(A.) I do not quite catch you.

Q. Has there not been a good many disputes and delays owing to disputes between your firm and merchants, and others, as to how many gangs shall be put on a ship, and how she shall be manned up? Take cotton seed cargoes. Has not oftentimes a merchant said: "I will only take delivery from five gangs to-day," when you, as stevedore, acting for the shipowner, wanted to deliver, we will say, with eight?—(A.) Of course, we act on the part of the shipowner, and we, naturally, want to put as many gangs as we possibly can to get the ship discharged.

Q. And you have been hindered in that way by the merchants' interference on shore?—(A.) I do not think we can call it interference. If he says he is only in a position to receive from five gangs, we have to take it that that is the case.

Q. And that the Union had to force the eight?—(A.) It has been done.

Q. Or the men would have to be idle?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And the ship delayed?—(A.) Not necessarily, because we have had cases where extra gangs have been put on one day, and have not been able to be employed the next.

Q. If you put five gangs on a ship, and there is room for eight, then you reduce the output of the ship?—(A.) For that day, yes.

Q. That keeps the ship in port longer than she ought to be?—(A.) Not if you put five gangs on one day and none the next.

Q. There have been cases, have there not—we just want to get the fact, that is all?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Where five or six gangs have been put on to a ship, where eight could have been, and, in fact, have, worked right through?—(A.) Yes, there have been cases.

Q. If the merchant had had his way, that ship would have been delayed in that dock more days than was really necessary?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That would be taking up the berth, would it not, and keeping other ships out?—(A.) Undoubtedly.

Q. And causing congestion?—(A.) The one thing follows the other, does it not?

Q. So that while complaints may be made against the men for loss of time, you do admit that there is grave room for improvement on questions of management?—(A.) I do not think there is anyone but admits that.

Q. You will admit that?—(A.) Undoubtedly, I think everyone would admit that.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. The point that you wish to bring before the Court in connection with the removal of hatches has no relation to the amount of time that may be lost, has it, but to the fact that this agreement was made that the men would come on before 8 o'clock and remove the hatches, and that they refused to do it?—(A.) That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: What you complain of, I understand, is breach of contract?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Can you give the Court illustrations of what proportions the breaches of contract bear to those in which the contract has been carried out?—(A.) In this particular case it has been broken in 95 per cent. of the cases, that is the question of taking off and putting on the hatches. The men practically systematically refuse to accept it.

Q. I call your attention to the bargain on the subject. You have the bargain in this way: "For taking off hatches before 8 o'clock and putting on after 5 o'clock it has been agreed that two men from each hatch, with a minimum of four men for two hatches or less, shall be employed, and shall be paid for this work at the current rate of overtime, with the minimum payment of one hour."—(A.) That is so.

Q. That is the bargain?—(A.) That is the bargain.

Q. If the men were willing, could that bargain be carried out?—(A.) Yes, my lord.

Q. What is the expense in the case of the ship that you refer to, the "Weimara." Have you totted it up?—(A.) I have not totted it up.

Q. Well, how many men?—(A.) This ship had three hatches. Do you mean for taking off the hatches or for the operation of discharging?

Q. It says two men for each hatch, with a minimum of four men for two hatches; if you have three hatches in this case it means six men?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There was a minimum payment of an hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But it was an hour's overtime?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Tell me what it cost you?—(A.) 2s. 5d. per hour.

Q. 2s. 5d. per hour multiplied by six?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is 14s. 6d. that was paid in wages, or it should be paid in wages as per this agreement?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I will call these men the hatch men; what I want to ask you is, did you make that payment of 14s. 6d.?—(A.) No, the men refused to take it.

Q. And did you not make that payment?—(A.) No.

Q. The other men, the quay men, were there at eight o'clock to go on with their work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And they were accordingly delayed for a quarter of an hour?—(A.) They were delayed to the extent of those times there.

Q. I am going to ask you about that, that is what I am not following. You say the men were delayed till 9.45 on hatches 3 and 4?—(A.) Yes.

Q. On the 12th January?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is an hour and three-quarters on a couple of hatches and an hour and twenty minutes on another hatch?—(A.) I might point out that in the case of these steamers, when they arrive from sea the top hatches have very often a quantity of sawdust under them, then the insulated hatch, and then the grids that are used for reducing the temperature. Of course that accounts for the big delay on the first day.

Q. I am still not satisfied, it is no doubt my fault; but the rights that you have under the con-

tract were the right to get the hatch men working at a quarter to eight instead of eight o'clock?—(A.) The hatch men are ordered out at seven instead of eight. Those are the men to take off the hatches. They would be ordered out at seven o'clock to get the hatches uncovered by eight o'clock.

Q. And they would not come at all?—(A.) They would not come.

Q. So it was not a question merely of the hatch men coming at 7.45; they did not come at seven?—(A.) No, my Lord.

Q. Is it the case that notwithstanding this agreement at Bristol 95 per cent. of the men decline to honour that bargain?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Mr. BRYAN: I would like this question put, my Lord, as to whether, in Mr. Cox's experience, there has not been on several occasions men killed taking off hatches when they have been defective, particularly on the Ben Cargary, and other ships—men were killed taking off hatches through defective beams?—(A.) There have been cases.

Q. Is there not a general tendency on the part of the men not to touch hatches without a full gang is there, in consequence?—(A.) I admit there have been cases; whether that is the reason they will not do so, or not, I cannot say.

Q. I think you, as a practical man, would agree that two men would not be sufficient to take off hatches of this character?—(A.) It is not two, it is four.

The CHAIRMAN: Tell me how many men are held up in consequence of the hatch men not being at their duty in time?—(A.) On the ship and the quay there would be 25 to 30 men, I should think.

Q. Per hatch or per ship?—(A.) Per hatch.

Q. That would be 75 men in this case?—(A.) In this case it would be 75.

Q. Held up for periods from one hour and twenty minutes to one hour and three-quarters?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The date of this was January 12th. Do you remember what sort of weather it was that morning?—(A.) I do not.

Q. Would that have any influence? Was there any fog?—(A.) I do not remember. It would have been stated if there had been any interference by weather. Further down you will see, on January 27th, "Late start owing to rain."

Q. What is the reason that the men will not come? Is it a weather reason, fog and frost, or the like of that, or is it just that they will not do it?—(A.) They have not cared about this agreement at all my Lord.

Q. I know. There it is; give me some help. Have the Union identified themselves with this refusal?—(A.) They have not identified themselves with the men not doing it; they have undoubtedly tried to get the men to stick to this bargain.

Q. And they have used all their influence in the direction of square dealing in that respect?—(A.) They have, my Lord.

Q. Is there any difficulty with the question of light in the morning. Take this Weimara case; was there any keeping of the men back on account of the conditions, or was it just that they would not come?—(A.) As far as I know that is the case, my Lord.

Q. What is to be done now if the Union wants to have the thing fair and square, and honestly kept, and the men see, or think they see, some

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impossibility in them doing it. Is it a fresh arrangement of hours that is wanted?—(A.) I think the Unions have machinery for dealing with men who do not carry out their bargains, if they use it—fining them, I think. They can go as far as fining the man a sum of money.

Q. Yes, I know; but it is not a case of a man here and there. This is the case of the great body of the men who will not do it. What is to be done in this case? Can you give us any reason why they do not do it?—(A.) I do not know of any reason; they simply say they won't do it, that is all, my Lord. I, personally, do not see any reason why it should not be done.

Mr. BEVIN: Will you put this question, my Lord, as to whether, when this principle was first adopted in 1911 in another firm Mr. Cox himself, with his brother, and other officials of his firm, did not for a matter of four years, discourage the payment of this overtime, and were they not in fact brought before the shipowners' board to make them pay up for putting on the hatches when the rate was first agreed to, and whether the position did not originate from there.

The CHAIRMAN: How does that stand?—(A.) I do not think that is the case, my Lord.

Q. Whether or not, here we are, and there is the agreement; you may have been the responsible gentleman. We would forgive you if you could show us any light on our difficulty?—(A.) I should be very pleased to help you if I could, my Lord.

Q. Does not it point to some fresh arrangement under which the Union would resume real control of these men, and get the contract performed. Do not you think it presents Bristol in a bad light, all this?—(A.) I am sorry to admit it my Lord.

Q. But cannot you help us?—(A.) I am afraid I am not in a position to do so, unless it boils down to this; it is lack of discipline.

Q. Yes, I see that; but I was wondering whether there was anything below that, namely, that for some reason in the men's mind they think this is driving them too hard, or something like that.—(A.) The men have said when they have come out to do it, that the other men have twitted them with it, making out that they will have to start their work earlier in consequence; but I do not attach much importance to that.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well, Mr. Cox; you have been quite fair with us.

(The witness withdrew.)

CAPTAIN WILLIAM FITT, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are the Marine Superintendent of Messrs. Charles Hill and Sons, Steamship Owners and Stevedores, at Bristol?—(A.) I am.

Q. Have you heard the evidence that has been given as to timekeeping, stoppages during negotiations, stoppages for rain, demands for higher pay-

ments than those provided for by the agreements, and the slowing up of output at certain periods?—(A.) I have.

Q. You have heard the evidence and the illustrations that have been given as to that?—(A.) I have.

Q. Do you agree with that evidence?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And do the illustrations that have been given, in your opinion, fairly represent what commonly occurs at Bristol and Avonmouth?—(A.) That occurs at Bristol. I have nothing to do with Avonmouth.

Q. You speak for Bristol?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do they fairly represent what occurs at Bristol?—(A.) They do.

Q. From your experience, are you able to give any opinion as to whether there has been a reduction of output at Bristol which is due to lack of energy on the part of the men?—(A.) I can.

Q. Have you prepared a statement comparing 1919 and 1920 with 1917?—(A.) Yes.

(*Statement H.14 handed in.)

Q. I think that you make the comparison with 1917, because you did not begin to do the work of stevedores until that year?—(A.) That is so.

Q. So that you have not any earlier records?—(A.) No.

Q. You have taken three vessels: the "Boston City," in August, 1917; the "Chicago City," in November, 1917; and the "Bristol City," in 1917, and you have given the output per ton per man per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you then taken three vessels, one is the same vessel, and are the other two similar vessels in every respect?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What was the nature of the cargo that was being handled in those two comparative periods?—(A.) All general cargo.

Q. And in your opinion is this a fair comparison; that is to say, are the conditions that are taken here in 1919 fairly comparable with the conditions in August and November, 1917?—(A.) They are.

Q. Does that table show a loss in output in 1919, compared with 1917, of 22 per cent.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Were these vessels in 1919 being discharged into clear transit sheds?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And was there any factor which would account for this drop in output other than less work on the part of those engaged in the unloading operations?—(A.) No.

Q. Does that record accord with the view that you hold as to the reduction of output from your general experience at Bristol?—(A.) That is so.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. Are you dealing with the whole of the Bristol Docks, or the City Docks, or are you dealing with your own ships?—(A.) This record is of our own ships.

Q. Are you aware that in the old City Docks at Bristol, taking the whole of the docks, the cost per ton for coastal work is less than in any other port in this country?—(A.) I am not.

Q. As a matter of fact, were you at the Shipowners' Association when the question was discussed?—(A.) No.

Q. Are you not aware that one member of your Association asked not to be allowed to give evidence because that was the fact?—(A.) No, I am not.

* See Appendix No. 70.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Q. Do you say that the City sheds have been in exactly the same condition each time the City boat has arrived, and you have taken the comparison?—(A.) I did not say those words.

Q. But you said to your Counsel that the conditions were comparative?—(A.) Yes, there was plenty of room in the sheds where we were working.

Q. During the last three years, when has there been plenty of room in the City sheds?—(A.) Plenty of room to put the cargo which we had to put there.

Q. Yes, when?—(A.) In these individual cases, for instance.

Q. Then are we to assume that only on the six comparative occasions were the conditions exactly the same, and in the other portions of the time the sheds were congested?—(A.) No.

Q. The City shed has been one of the most congested sheds in the City Docks, has not it?—(A.) No.

Q. Is it not the fact that you have made appeals to get the stuff shifted on more than one occasion?—(A.) Yes, certainly, to get it shifted, but ours are not the worst sheds; there are much more congested sheds than the City sheds.

Q. But they have been congested?—(A.) There has always been an amount of congestion, but there has always been room to put the cargo we had to put in.

Q. When was your last ship discharged?—(A.) Last week.

Q. When is your next ship in?—(A.) There is one ship arrived since then, this week.

(Q.) Is she discharging now?—(A.) Yes

Mr. BEVIN: I would like, my Lord, if someone from the Court could just see this shed now, without any interference, and find out as to whether a ship discharging in the City shed with a full cargo has room to work right in at the present moment. I would like to make that request to the Court to test this evidence.

The CHAIRMAN: What is your request?

Mr. BEVIN: These figures are no indication at all, I suggest, of the congestion. I want to point out, as the result of that, that I would ask that someone should be sent from this Court who understood the business, to see whether cargo can be taken from the City boat at this moment and stacked back to mark in exactly the same way that it was before the war.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The point really is that at the date in question, in 1919 and 1920, these two boats were unloaded when the sheds in fact were not congested. That is the point; it does not matter what they are now.

Mr. BEVIN: I will put that question to the witness?—(A.) These particular dates have been selected as the sheds were not congested

Q. I am dealing with that point now. In 1917, how many boats did you have on the service?—(A.) Six.

Q. How many?—(A.) Six.

Q. How many have you got now?—(A.) Four.

Q. How often did they run then?—(A.) They used to run weekly; they now run fortnightly.

Q. In 1917, in the height of the submarine menace?—(A.) Yes, very much so, right up to the time that the line was in existence. While the ships were running to Bristol they ran weekly in 1917. We lost our ships.

Q. At what period?—(A.) The latter part of the year.

Q. How many ships were out of the service before August?—(A.) None.

Q. Think, Captain. When did you lose your first ship in the war?—(A.) In 1916.

Q. That is one gone; that brings your six to five.—(A.) We had seven ships.

Q. How many ships did you have requisitioned?—(A.) We had the "Bristol City" requisitioned.

Q. When?—(A.) In 1917.

Q. What date, do you remember?—(A.) March.

Q. This is August. That reduces down your ships.—(A.) She ran to Bristol then, although she was requisitioned. She only ran between New York and Bristol.

Q. Was the cargo the same in and out at that period?—(A.) She brought home more munitions than the other vessels; but they all brought munitions at that time, and they loaded out to the line.

Q. Was not it that period when she was carrying munitions, that is the point I was coming to, in 1917, that there was a special concentration on the part of the Transit Committee, and other bodies, to get the munitions right away to the munition works?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is that a fair comparison with general cargo now, where you are delivering to merchants in bits. Was that a fact?—(A.) In November, 1917, the "Bristol City" is quoted here. She would have munitions then.

Q. Was not she carrying munitions before she was requisitioned?—(A.) All ships carried munitions in 1917.

Q. And was not there special concentration owing to the necessities of the war to clear the stuff away from the ships because of the urgent requirements of munition workers at that time?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then it is not a fair comparison with 1919 or 1920, is it, when you have to deliver in small parcels to merchants? Can you say it is comparable?—(A.) This is not delivering small parcels. This is discharging the ship into sheds, sheds where there was ample room for the cargo.

Q. If the sheds in 1917 were clear because munitions were cleared away, do you now say that there is more room, or as much room, in your sheds as there was in 1917, when there was a concentration on clearances?—(A.) I say there was plenty of room in the sheds to discharge these other vessels.

Q. I was asking whether there was as much. I want to ask you whether there is as much room in those City sheds at this juncture as there was in 1917, when there was a special concentration on it to clear them for delivery to munition works?—(A.) No there would not be as much room in the sheds.

Q. If there is not as much room in the sheds, do you, as a practical man, say that you can put on as many men, and clear the ship as quickly as if the sheds were clear?—(A.) I am not talking about how many men I can put on to work it, but I am talking of how much the men employed did, taking a percentage.

Q. If there is a shed and it is empty, and the ship is alongside the berth, and stuff can be got back in order and stowed, as a practical man, cannot you take from the ship's side faster than if that shed was partially blocked?—(A.) It all depends.

Q. The Court must draw their own conclusion on that. Now the "Boston City." What class of boat was the "Boston City"?—(A.) A first-class boat.

Q. A new boat?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it a fair comparison with the "Wells

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City"; is she a new boat?—(A.) She is a good boat.

Q. Is she a new boat?—(A.) No.

Q. The "Boston City" was just off the stocks then, was not she?—(A.) Yes, she was built to replace the "New York City" that was lost; she makes the sixth now.

Q. A new boat?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With the very latest up-to-date gear?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you have got her in comparison with the "Wells City." Is that a fair comparison?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Cargo holds the same to work from?—(A.) Not the same size.

Q. The same facilities?—(A.) Yes, the same facilities with regard to winches. There are two winches for every gang, you see.

Q. Was it not the boast of your firm that the "Boston City" was one of the latest words in cargo steamer?—(A.) I do not know. I did not say so.

Q. Then it is a pity your principal is not in the box instead of you. There has been a two-hours a day reduction in Bristol as against Avonmouth, has not there?—(A.) I do not quite understand.

Q. Two hours per day knocked off the day. You worked a 10-hour day in 1917 and you work an 8-hour day now?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it not a fact that recently the Port and Transit Committee provided motor lorries to go to Bristol to help relieve the traffic?—(A.) They provided motor lorries to go to Bristol to take some steel off the roofs of the sheds, yes.

Q. And was not there a fleet of motor lorries stationed at the White City at Bristol to help relieve congestion?—(A.) I had nothing to do with that; I could not say where they were stationed.

Q. But were they there?—(A.) There were motor lorries at the sheds taking away steel; I do not know where they came from.

Q. I want to take your mind back for a moment to hatches and the previous witness, if I may; but before I get to that, you have recently launched out, or your firm, as a stevedoring firm?—(A.) In the last two years.

Q. But recently, within the last few months, you issued a circular to hundreds of shipowners announcing the fact that you were now competing as a stevedoring firm?—(A.) I do not know; I have nothing to do with it; I have not seen the circular.

Q. But you are the representative of the firm here to give evidence?—(A.) I am a representative of the Bristol City Line, to give evidence about the work that is done on the ship. Outside of that I know nothing about any circulars. I have not seen it, and I have not heard of it.

Q. You do not know that Charles Hill and Sons have become stevedores?—(A.) Oh, yes, I know that.

Q. You do know that?—(A.) But I do not know anything about any circulars.

Q. Do you know that they are advertising the fact that they can give better output than any other firm in Bristol?—(A.) I do not.

Q. And one of the commendations of their firm is that the men give the best output?—(A.) I have not heard of it.

Q. Shipowners who received it will remember the circular. With regard to hatches, you have been in the employ of the Bristol City Line for a good many years?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you remember a man being killed in Swansea in 1901?—(A.) He died afterwards; he was not killed at the time. He was ill for many, many months.

Q. It was due to an accident with the hatches?—(A.) Yes. He was not killed at the time.

Q. In Swansea your firm have employed shore riggers to do the hatches since?—(A.) No, the crews of the ships do it in Swansea.

Q. But they are not taken off by the docker?—(A.) No, they never have been in Swansea. It is not the custom of the Port of Swansea to do it.

Q. It was in consequence of this that the old practice of a couple of men taking off hatches was done away with, and either the crew or the shore riggers have done it since?—(A.) No, I cannot say it was.

Q. But the fact is that your hatches have not been taken off by the dockers in Swansea since?—(A.) They never have. We have always done it.

Q. Here was a docker who was killed in consequence of it. He must have done it or he would not have been killed.—(A.) He was putting on a beam.

Q. That is a part of the hatches, is not it?—(A.) No, it is not the hatches.

Q. It is a very fine distinction. You cannot get a hatch on without the beam?—(A.) That is so, but it was not the hatch.

Q. As a matter of fact, it was your own foreman there who was killed, was not it?—(A.) No.

Q. A man named Cratchley?—(A.) Yes. He became a foreman after that. After he fell down the hold he got a good sum of money paid him, and then he was taken into partnership as a foreman; he became an under-foreman. It was after that that he died.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are not here to say whether or not you give the best output in Bristol. All you are here to say is what the output is. Is not that so?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You have worked out this comparison in tons per man per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Your comparison is not affected by the consideration of whether you have more men on at one period than another?—(A.) No.

Q. The point of this test is, is it not, that you take particular care to select cases in 1919 and 1920, where, in fact, the transit sheds were so clear that the output could not be affected by reason of any congestion?—(A.) That is so.

Q. In your view is this a fair comparative table?—(A.) It is.

Q. And were the same facilities for unloading available in 1919 and 1920 that were available in 1917?—(A.) They were.

The CHAIRMAN: Of these vessels named in your list the "Chicago City" is the one that appears in both cases?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Presumably its arrangements in those years, its fitting, its cranes, and all the rest of it, were the same?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that the "Chicago City" is not subject to the observations made comparing the "Boston" with the "Wells City."—(A.) No.

Q. Then coming to comparing like with like, that is the "Chicago City," do you see that in 1917 that is the only item which really does compare like with like?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In 1917 the tons per man per hour were .38?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And in 1919 were .37?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So far as that comparison is concerned, the output seems to have been the same.—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

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Q. So that this table of yours, in so far as the ships are concerned, which are like to like, just shows that the output is the same.—(A.) No doubt, my Lord.

Q. Now, it is not a small thing, because in 1917 the "Chicago City" was loaded with 2,878 tons.—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. In 1919 the same ship was loaded with 2,387 tons.—(A.) Yes.

Q. The difference of the loading could have no bearing on the rate of output, could it?—(A.) No, my Lord, general cargo, of course; sometimes cargoes come light.

Q. I, myself, am trying to get light, but the only light you can get is comparing like with like, and when you do that in the case of the "Chicago City," which is a case of like with like, there is no difference at all; there is no lessening of the output. Is not that right?—(A.) That is so.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, we now propose to call the evidence with regard to Hull

MR. WILLIAM FENTON, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are the Chairman of the Humber Employers' Sub-Committee, are you not?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. You are a Director of Messrs. William Brown, Atkinson and Co., Ltd., shipowners and shipbrokers of Hull.—(A.) That is so.

Q. The Humber Ports are Hull, Grimsby, Immingham, and Goole?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think that the ports of Grimsby, Immingham, and Goole, generally follow the conditions that are arranged for Hull?—(A.) Practically so.

Q. In pre-war days Hull was the third Port in the United Kingdom, was it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Its principal imports are foodstuffs, especially grain, seed and fruit; and you also have a considerable quantity of timber and general cargo coming in there?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Hull carries on trade with the whole of the world, does not it?—(A.) Yes, a world-wide trade.

Q. And it has regular trades with the East and the West, and with the Continent of Europe?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Is one of the principal features of the trade at Hull the regular sailing with the Continental Ports?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And it is also a very important trans-shipment port, is it not?—(A.) Yes, and the above remarks apply to Goole, Grimsby, and Immingham.

Q. Hull is an over-side port?—(A.) Yes. A large quantity goes over-side.

Q. I think, in Hull, as in London, they have the right of what is called "free water."—(A.) That is so.

Q. That is the lightermen can come in and take the cargo from over-side from the vessels and pay no dues?—(A.) That is the position.

Q. Who are the docks at Hull owned by?—(A.) They are owned by the North-Eastern Railway Company and the Hull and Barnsley Railway Co. Grimsby and Immingham by the Great Central Railway Company, and at Goole by the Aire and Calder Navigation Company, and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company, which are the largest tenants, I understand.

Q. The employers of labour at Hull are ship-owners, master-stevedores, the dock authorities, and the receivers of cargo. Those are the main employers, are not they?—(A.) Yes, forwarding warehouse-keepers, and so on.

Q. What is the approximate number of dock labourers at Hull?—(A.) About 9,000 at Hull, I should think, roughly, about a-third of them employed by the shipowners, and the other two-thirds by the warehouse-keepers, etc. 9,000 at Hull; there are about 1,000 each in Goole and Grimsby.

Q. You have the rates and working conditions operating on and from April 22, 1919, set out in an agreement dated April 14, 1919?—(A.) Yes, we have those which we have handed in.

(*Tables handed in and marked "H. 15.")

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Those are all the documents relating to Hull. I am not quite certain whether this witness proves them all, but they may as well be handed in to the Court at once. (*To the witness.*) That agreement is signed by a Mr. Farrah, for the Humber District Transport Workers. That is the gentleman who gave evidence, I think, here last week.—(A.) That is so.

Q. And Mr. Whitehead on behalf of the Employers' Conference?—(A.) Yes. He is the Secretary for our Committee.

Q. This agreement refers only to the lumpers, does not it?—(A.) It refers to the lumpers, and B to the liners' men.

Q. Will you just explain to the Court what the lumpers at Hull are?—(A.) The lumpers are the men employed by the master stevedores for the irregular work, that is for the tramp steamers practically. The liners' men are employed on the regular lines.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If your Lordship will look at the first document, on the first page, you will see set out the half-day standard rates; that is the pre-war rates. Then in the next column there is the advance that has been given during the war, bringing out the total half-daily rate to-day of 6s. 5d., and in the next column 1s. 7d. is the present rate per hour. Then, if your Lordship would turn to the next agreement, which relates to the liners' men, that does not appear on the Table, I think, if your Lordship will put liners' men on your Table.

The WITNESS: I had better substitute "liners' men" for "regular traders."

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Your Lordship will see that the pre-war rate was 2s. 10d., that is 7d. per half-day less than the lumpers' men. The war advance is the same, 3s. The present total is 5s. 10d. for the half-day, compared with 6s. 5d., the present half-day rate for the lumpers' men, and the rate per hour is 1s. 5½d. (*To the witness:*) What is the reason for the difference in the pay of these two classes of workers, the regular trader's man getting less than the lumper man?—(A.) The more regular employment.

Q. Has that always been recognised at Hull?—(A.) As long as I can remember, yes.

Q. Has this difference been maintained?—(A.) That is so.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It can be seen from that table, I think, my Lord. I have not got any calculations showing the weekly rates, but your Lordship will see that the maximum the lumper can make in the week, working ordinary time, is 11

* See Appendices Nos. 71-74.

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times the 6s. 5d., that is £3 10s. 7d. The average is £3 3s. 3d., that is 11 times 5s. 10d.

The WITNESS: £3 4s. 2d., that is.

Q. Provision is made in these agreements for working a limited amount of overtime, is it not?—(A.) That is so. It is clearly set out in the Agreement.

Q. Is it necessary that a certain amount of overtime should be worked at a port like Hull, where you have regular sailings?—(A.) Very.

Q. It is necessary to meet the exigencies of that particular kind of trade?—(A.) It is necessary in order to get on with the work generally, not particularly for the regular traders or not altogether for them, but in all cases.

Q. That Agreement for working overtime was made with the men's representatives at Hull, and I think it is right to say that they have supported the Agreement.—(A.) Yes, they have tried to get the men to work to it, but they would not do so.

Q. Do the men systematically refuse to work any overtime at Hull and Grimsby?—(A.) With very few exceptions.

Q. Can you tell the Court whether you have any difficulties at Hull in connection with late starting or early finishing?—(A.) To cut it shortly, our experience is absolutely the same as Bristol. We have exactly the same difficulty; the men turn up late and go away early, etc.

Q. What is your estimate as to the time lost on an average per day?—(A.) Quite an hour.

Q. Where do the men live at Hull, and how do they get to their work?—(A.) In most cases quite close to the docks. There is no train journey or anything of that sort; they have the trams running every two or three minutes if they require to use them.

Q. Is the work regular at Hull?—(A.) Yes, I should say it is pretty regular.

Q. Can the men, in your view, who wish to work a full week as a rule get a full week's work?—(A.) I think so; yes, there is no doubt about it.

Q. Have you been experiencing difficulties in getting a sufficient amount of labour?—(A.) Very often.

Q. What has your experience been lately?—(A.) The last three or four months of last year we were wanting men practically every day, and could not get them to work. I think on the average the men in Hull only do about four days' work a week. I understand the Ministry of Labour have figures on that point, and they can produce those figures if they are asked.

Q. Although they only do about four days a week, you state that there is more work than that to be done if the men are ready to do it, for those who require to do it?—(A.) Yes, if they want to do it. According to my idea on the subject, a lot of the men are quite satisfied when they get about two or three or four days' wages, and will not work any more.

Q. When you get a number of men on discharging a vessel is it the right of those men to finish that work?—(A.) It is the unwritten law, you might call it. They simply go straight to it automatically.

Q. So that if you get 50 men taken on to discharge a particular vessel one day, if those 50 men turn up the next day they will go as a matter of course to continue the work that they had left off the previous day?—Yes, those men would be sufficient to finish that particular job; but as a matter of fact, in actual practice, owing to men falling out and not turning up the next day, etc., having had enough work, I suppose it takes about anyhow twice as many, say, 100 men to do 50 men's work.

Q. If you find that three or four days are occupied in discharging a vessel, and there are 50 men engaged on that vessel, you will find that spreading over the three days 100 men are engaged, whereas if the 50 men who were engaged on the first day were ready to work the ship out there would have been the same 50 men each day?—(A.) Yes, three days is rather short, perhaps, as the period for discharging a ship. Take a week or 10 days. It means this, that the men do not appear to want continuous work. In case of need we could prove that from the actual figures and the actual names of the men.

Q. There was one factor I wanted you to bring out. I think it really arises on the first Table that was put in. You there show ordinary labourers, pre-war 3s. 5d. the half-day, the present rate 6s. 5d.—(A.) That is so.

Q. In fact, you have a lower rated man than that at Hull, have you not?—(A.) Yes, of course, the liners man is lower.

Q. Apart from the liners man, have you not got quay men and dock warehousemen?—(A.) Yes, we have; they get a fraction less because, I suppose, of the more regular work.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, it is not in the Table, and I think it ought to be in because a question may arise about it. The rate for quay men and dock warehousemen is 2s. 9d. the half-day pre-war, war wage 3s., total 5s. 9d., rate per hour daytime 1s. 5½d., overtime rate per hour 1s. 8d.

The WITNESS: That applies to a small number of men only.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: As your Lordship will see, when a minimum is being discussed, if these are treated as a minimum it will have a considerable bearing on the effect at Hull.

The WITNESS: We have always treated the ordinary liners man as our basis, as our lowest paid man.

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning at half-past ten.)

ELEVENTH DAY.

Thursday, February 26th, 1920.

Present :

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. A. PUGH

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON)

Mr. G. H. INCE)

Secretaries.

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord, on behalf of the Transport Workers' Federation I have an application to make, and it is that we ask the Court if they could see their way clear to give an interim report on wages at this week-end. The period from the time when these negotiations were started last October up to the Court of Inquiry and now is the longest period, I think, that negotiations have ever been carried on for a thing of this character. The Federation deliberately limited its evidence to the main points of the claim, and we ask that efforts shall be made to give us an interim report on wages, especially in view of the situation in the country.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you say, Sir Lynden?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I only say in reply to that, that I should have thought the function of this Court was to ascertain what the facts are. The claim is a claim which Sir Alfred Booth said would result in a direct cost of not more than £20,000,000 sterling, and not less than £15,000,000 sterling per annum. Up to the present time I have looked through the proceedings, and I find that the time which the employers have occupied is certainly something under one-third and a little over one-fourth of the total time which has been occupied before the Court. I cannot assent to the Court making an interim award before they have the facts as we understand them presented before the Court, nor do I think that the public would desire a report to be made without all the knowledge being put before this Tribunal. We have done our best to cut down the evidence. Our witnesses have not taken long; the greater time yesterday, for example, I think I may say, has been expended by Mr. Bevin in his cross-examination, of which I do not complain. I must take, my Lord, what I regard to be the most important points which typify certain conditions, and I do not think it is practicable for us to conclude the evidence which we desire to put before the Court, and for me to put my concluding observations before the Court in less than a week. I do not see that it is possible to do that under a week. If the Court could sit down—although I know the very great demands upon their time—and give one continuous week to it, I think we might conclude at the end of the week.

The CHAIRMAN: You mean next week?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord. I know, of course, that we are asking a very great deal, and I would not ask it unless Mr. Bevin was pressing for it. I know that I am asking a lot in suggesting this to your Lordship, with your many public claims; but if the Court, to such an extent each day as two or three members of the Court found it possible to assist your Lordship, could sit continuously for a week, I think we could conclude in a week the evidence and the observations which I should desire to lay before the Court. But your Lordship will understand this, that there is no desire on the part of the employers to protract the evidence. From the evidence which your Lordship has heard I think you will do them the credit of saying that they are endeavouring, under very complicated circumstances, to present the salient facts before the Court, but they do feel that the salient facts ought to be presented.

Mr. ABADY: I was about to make an application, my Lord, which perhaps is relevant to the question now raised by Mr. Bevin, namely, as to the presentation of evidence by the London Chamber of Commerce and the London Waterside Manufac-

turers' Association, which has not been presented to the Court up to now, and of which there is no indication in the opening address of my friend Sir Lynden Macassey. In making this application I am bearing in mind what you said to me when I applied to the Court at the opening of these proceedings, and may I remind your Lordship that what was stated was this: "Therefore those who have been good enough to address us in those separate interests will understand that our decision is that they are not parties to this case, that they watch; but we ask them (and I put no leverage whatever on them on this subject) to take this line so far as they can, to make common cause with that large body on either side which is ably represented. If, however, at the end of the day they see that there is some special and exceptional matter not brought before us, the Court will hear an application upon that ground, and upon that ground only." Naturally, in making my application, I believe myself to be in accordance with the latter sentences which I have read to the Court. As it appears to me, the present matter before the Court is an application for a national minimum wage, and the Court is considering what recommendation it should make upon that, having regard to the cost of living, which has been presented in the form of budgets, and the casual elements in the employment of transport workers. I submit that the evidence given through Mr. Bevin assumes that an increase can be granted without affecting either the cost of living or the volume of employment. Mr. Bevin, you will recollect, referred to his ability to present a way to the Court of breaking what he termed the vicious circle, that is to say, the corresponding increases in the cost of living which respond to increases in the cost of wages. I am sure Mr. Bevin will not object if I suggest that that part of his case (which only applied to shipowners, by the bye, who employ a minority of the workers in question) was not very strongly developed. On the other hand, the employers, as I submit, are not in a position to give the Court any evidence which goes beyond this: the effect of a national minimum wage or an increase in wages, or an increase in conditions upon their cost in carrying out their duties, which are for the most part statutory duties, and which are passed on to the public in the shape of transport charges. That being so, those who instruct me believe that they are in a position to enlighten the Court on matters upon which the employers, by the very nature of their position, are not able to do so.

The CHAIRMAN: We should require you to specify now what those matters are which are imperfectly represented.

Mr. ABADY: Yes, my Lord; and, of course, it will be understood that in making the application I am not seeking to throw any weight in the scale one way or the other, but purely to bring matters before the Court for the purpose of enlightening the Court. The first matter is the effect of increased transport charges upon the trade of the country, which includes cost of living and the wages likely to be demanded by other trades. That is one specific matter; and the other is the effect of increased transport charges upon the volume of merchandise passing through the ports, which again has a repercussive effect upon the amount of constant employment that can be offered to transport workers; because I submit that if an alteration is made in transport charges which results in the selective use of foreign ports instead of English ports for merchandise, and the

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volume of merchandise passing through English ports is thereby diminished, it would seem to be a perfect *sequitur* that the amount of employment which can be offered will also diminish, and therefore the casual element, however your Lordship's Court may try to deal with it, would rear its head again and increase. In that connection, my Lord, the particular application of that point is to the Port of London, which, as your Lordship knows, before the war and for many years has been a very large entrepôt for imports and re-exports; and I am instructed that the evidence is that, owing probably to war causes, that trade has declined greatly, and that owing to the increased transport charges which have already had to be made by the Port of London Authority, there is an increasing disposition on the part of merchants and people who deal in what might be termed the entrepôt business to utilise Continental ports as against the Port of London; and it would follow, if an increase in transport charges already levied has had that tendency or result, that if a further increase would be necessary through an increase in wages, the result might be accentuated. The witness I would propose to proffer upon this point is Mr. Tredwen, who is the Chairman of the Merchants' Committee of the London Chamber of Commerce; himself a merchant whose volume of trade is of considerable magnitude, and who can speak as representative of merchants who between them handle an enormous volume of trade. Then, the other witness whom I would desire to call can speak to a certain extent upon the effect of increased transport charges upon commodities such as cement. That witness is Mr. Alfred Brooks, a Director of the Associated Portland Cement and Associated Companies, who is himself a waterside manufacturer, and through his firm employs upwards of 1,000 transport workers who would be affected by any decision of the Court, and who is not represented on the Employers' National Council.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you say that he is not represented on the National Council?

Mr. ABADY: Those are my instructions. The effect of his evidence, of course, would bear on two points. With regard to one, the effect of transport charges upon commodities, his personal experience may be limited, but I would endeavour to present through him statistics of as many articles as is possible; but, anyway, I suggest that cement is an important item which goes to the cost of living, because it affects the cost of houses. The second point to which Mr. Brooks could speak would be the sensitiveness of labour, as it affects waterside manufacturers who manufacture and deal with articles of food, to an alteration in the transport workers' conditions in and about the Port of London. Those are the only two witnesses that I respectfully ask that you should hear, and though I make this appeal to you in a very humble spirit and *ad misericordiam*, as it were, I am instructed to say, with very great respect, that the London Chamber of Commerce do consider that they are in a position to enlighten the Court on matters which, as they think, should be taken into consideration before a decision or recommendation is come to even on this limited part of the subject which is before the Court at the present moment.

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Lynden, is it any part of your case as you present it, that the increased

charge by concession of the workers' demand would so burden the trade, that trade might be driven to foreign ports?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am calling evidence on that point. I think the witness in the box is going to deal with that point as far as his port is concerned, and other witnesses will deal with that point as far as other ports are concerned.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well. Then it is clear that we cannot at the present moment make any final pronouncement upon Mr. Abady's position until we see what is the scope of the evidence led by the general body of port authorities and employers. He himself may come to see before that closes that the points which he has specified as separate are not separate, but have been dealt with. At present we do not exclude the application, but we postpone consideration of it until we see the length and breadth of the case presented by the employers.

Mr. ABADY: If your Lordship pleases.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to the application made by Mr. Bevin to the Court, the Court expresses no surprise at the anxiety which Mr. Bevin's appearance to make this application signifies. I need not assure the parties that the Court is deeply sensitive of the importance, if not the necessity, of an early decision in this case. There might be elements of regret in splitting up the Inquiry, and not giving an early decision on the whole case. The Court is not without hopes that it may be able to do that, and, of course, that would be a result, so far as procedure was concerned, which would be eminently satisfactory. On the other hand, so much has the Court been influenced by the wages question that, as the parties know, it has allowed the Inquiry to be split up so as particularly to deal with that specific issue. Now it must be recognised that no limit was put upon the case presented by the workers; they began their case, continued it, and ended it without interruption or closure of any kind. It was discreetly handled, and therefore the proceedings were not protracted, considering the magnitude of the issue. The same procedure must be applied even-handedly to both sides, and accordingly the Court cannot interrupt the proceedings of the employers, which, no doubt, will be managed with the same discretion as those of the other side. It would be of the worst example that any decision should proceed from this Court, which was of so non-judicial a kind as to say that a decision was given, in which one side was wholly heard, and the other only partly heard. That cannot be countenanced for a moment. Upon the other hand, there are two considerations which I wish, on behalf of the Court, to state. In the first place, it is pretty clearly manifest, to use a colloquial expression, that the cards of both parties are now pretty well on the table, and therefore, Sir Lynden Macassey may see his way, notwithstanding the magnitude of the material with which he is embarrassed, to exercise somewhat rigorously his power of compression. The other point to which reference has been made, is as to the sittings of this Court. I speak for every member of the Court, in saying that our own personal convenience will not be a matter of consideration by us in this case. We are desirous of facilitating the interests of the parties and the public, and before the close of the day we hope to make an intimation which will show that, although our

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numbers may occasionally be depleted by the necessary absences of one or two, we shall sit on as nearly as possible continuously, so as to enable this case to be finished on an early day. We can go no further at this stage, but we express the hope that both parties will act in the spirit of the deliverance now made.

Mr. WILLIAM FENTON, *recalled*.

Examination by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS (continued).

Q. You dealt yesterday with the different rates of pay at Hull?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And on the tables which were put in you showed that the half-day rate for lumpers was 6s. 5d., and for men engaged on the regular trades 5s. 10d.?—(A.) That is so, yes.

Q. Do you think that if there were any proposal to put those two classes of labour on the same footing as regards wages, it would be accepted by the lumpers' men, or do you consider that they would always insist on maintaining the difference which has almost from time immemorial existed?—(A.) From my experience I think there would be no doubt about their insisting upon the difference being maintained.

Q. I want you to go to the district rates on the Humber, as I think they are shown on the third and fourth sheets lettered in the right-hand corner C. and D.—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have there shown in a comparative table the pre-war and present rates of pay of the dock labourers of both classes, lumpers' and liners' men, and then the pre-war and present rates of various other classes of labour employed in and about the port?—(A.) That is so, yes.

Q. Then on the next sheet you have shown what the Humber District engineering rates are?—(A.) Yes, that is so, and at the bottom the building trades.

Q. I think all the rates on this sheet are the rates for skilled workers practically?—(A.) Yes, I think so—practically so.

Q. I think those two tables speak for themselves, and bring out the point which we wish to make, that the existing rates of the dock labourers at Hull are on a fair basis compared with other trades, and even compared with the skilled trades, and that if the present application were granted it would put the dock labourers—(A.) Above most of the skilled trades.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I was just pointing out, my Lord, through the Witness, that if the present application were granted it would put the dock labourers in Hull I think substantially above all the skilled trades which are shown on this sheet.

Q. I want you to tell the Court what your view is from your experience as to the present output at Hull compared with the output in 1914.—(A.) It is down a good lot. We have done our best to try to pick out cases where the circumstances were exactly the same, and I think we have succeeded. Anyhow, we have satisfied ourselves, which perhaps may not satisfy Mr. Bevin; but still we think it satisfactory. The output is down very considerably; that is to say, the output per man per hour.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Two tables have been prepared here, my Lord, which will be spoken to by another witness, but Mr. Fenton has handed them in in this bundle, which is H. 15.

Q. Have you that table before you?—(A.) Yes, I have both of them before me.

Q. The first one is headed: "Hull E. Working

of general cargo steamers, 1914-1919."—(A.) Yes.

Q. That shows that in 1914, 122½ tons per hour were landed, and in 1919, 93½ tons; that is to say that in 1914 the output was one-third greater than in 1919?—(A.) Yes, that is so. We have picked the period in 1919 before the congestion was on, so that there could not be any question of that sort creeping in.

Q. We will call a witness to prove this table in detail, but just to take it generally, on the left-hand side there are 23 vessels shown, all of the Ellerman-Wilson Line, are they not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Engaged in the same trade?—(A.) Similar trade, yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Are these all of the Ellerman Line?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Both sides, my Lord. On the right for 1919 all the vessels that were left are included out of the 16, but the losses during the war were very severe, and so, of course, they have not been able to include them in the right-hand column.

Q. They are engaged in the same trade in 1919 as they were in 1914, are they not?—(A.) I understand so, yes.

Q. And the circumstances are exactly similar, and they have been chosen with that object?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Does that table accord with the view you hold as to the reduction in output from your general experience at Hull?—(A.) Well, I think, if anything, it is a good sample from the workers' point of view. We could pick out worse. There are a good deal worse cases, but it is rather difficult to get comparative cases, and this seems to be the best sample of what we could get so that we could compare similar boats, and circumstances, and everything.

Q. In your experience, is this a fair and typical Table?—(A.) I should call it a very fair case.

Q. The next table is prepared on similar lines, and will be spoken to by another witness. It deals with working general cargo by tramp steamers, and that again shows that the output in 1914 was greater than that in 1919 by one-third. This application would mean an increase in the expense for labour in the port of Hull of about what per cent?—(A.) Roughly about 40 per cent., if the full application were granted.

Q. Would that increase of cost be passed on by the merchants?—(A.) Naturally, about two-thirds of it would be, because two-thirds of the labour approximately is employed by the merchants themselves, and only about one-third by the ship-owners.

Q. So that two-thirds would be passed on directly?—(A.) Yes, and probably a large proportion of the further one-third.

Q. Would this increased cost, in your view, have the effect of driving tonnage away to other ports, particularly Continental ports?—(A.) That has been my experience.

Q. Can you give any example of that?—(A.) I have just brought out one glaring instance of our own, which is simply typical, I think, where we had a boat coming to Hull with a cargo of oats, and she was diverted to Antwerp because of the more economical method of working in Antwerp, and the better despatch obtainable. In that case, the boat in question that was coming to Hull had 4,500 tons of oats on board, and she was diverted to Antwerp. It would be interesting just to make a note of these figures, which, unfortunately, I have not got in duplicate for the Court.

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The CHAIRMAN: What was the name of the ship?
—(A.) The "Portsea."

Q. And the date of the voyage?—(A.) She arrived at Antwerp on the 11th January.

Q. From?—(A.) The Plate. And she sailed from Antwerp on the 22nd January, and she discharged actually 4,574 tons of oats, and she cost in Antwerp about £487; that is the ship-owners' costs in Antwerp.

Q. On what exchange is that?—(A.) On the exchange of the date in question, that is in January. I have not got that, unfortunately; still, that is what it cost them in sovereigns or John Bradburys.

Q. That is in English money?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: What was the name of that vessel?—(A.) The "Portsea."

Q. What vessel is she?—(A.) She is an English ship; one of our own, as a matter of fact.

Q. And she was sent there, as I think you said?—(A.) Because of the better despatch and the cheaper expenses. For comparison, for the benefit of the Court, I took out a similar boat that discharged in Hull, and the time and expenses. The name of that steamer was the "Kirnwood." She arrived in Hull on the 23rd December, and finished discharging on the 17th January. She discharged 4,500 tons of oats; she cost £750, and was in the port 25 days. It is only fair to say that some of those days were holidays; probably you might call it five or six, I could not say for certain.

The CHAIRMAN: Call it six days?—(A.) If you knock six days off, that would be a fair estimate, perhaps. That includes Christmas Day and the Bank Holiday following. There was no stoppage in Hull for New Year's Day.

Q. You have taken off six days?—(A.) I am giving them a very generous figure, I think probably three days more than Antwerp would be enough.

The CHAIRMAN: What would be a fair figure, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: I have not the slightest idea as to dockers taking holidays at Christmas.

The WITNESS: Really the only extra stoppage was two days for Christmas; that is Christmas Day and the Bank Holiday.

The CHAIRMAN: Call that five days?—(A.) Five days would be very generous.

Q. That is 20 days?—(A.) Yes; then you could say she was discharged in about half the time at Antwerp.

Q. How many days in Antwerp?—(A.) 11 days.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is the actual time at the berth. There is nothing included there for waiting for a berth?—(A.) That is the actual time in port, at both places, from when they arrive till when they are discharged.

Q. Of course, if there is any increase in your labouring charges the difference between £750 and £487, as shown in this comparison will be increased by some 40 per cent?—(A.) Oh, yes; that difference comes out from the shipowner, and that is one of the reasons why he sends the boat to a cheaper place.

The CHAIRMAN: Just to bring this to a point, will you add the amount of the present claim?—(A.) Roughly, 40 per cent.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: You have to increase your £750 by 40 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: That is £300?—(A.) Probably the whole of that £750 would not be subject to it.

Q. What we want to get at is the comparison?—(A.) You want the amount of labour on that?

Q. Yes?—(A.) I should estimate one-third of it will be labour; that is a very generous estimate. If you say one-third of it will be increased by 40 per cent., that would be about £80 or £100 more. If you add £100 more you will be well within it.

Q. £100?—(A.) £100 I should estimate.

Q. That increases your Hull charges on the assumption that the rate would be given to £850?—(A.) That would be it.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That would be getting on to double the Antwerp charges?—(A.) Yes, that is about it.

Q. Just a little less than double. You put forward that by way of illustration?—(A.) A typical example of what is going on and what will go on more than ever when things become keener.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: We do not propose to develop this, my Lord; we put that forward as the witness has said, as a typical case of what is going on now, and what in his opinion will be likely to go on more often in the future.

Q. At present there are some 8,000 dockers regularly employed at the Humber ports?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: One moment; are not you going to bring out more about this case in this sense: Assume the output of 1919 was equal to the output of 1914, do not you see how it would affect it?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Quite, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Bring that out, please. All this witness has said is subject to cross-examination by Mr. Bevin. Excuse me suggesting it, but you should put your point that way.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: You have stated that the output in 1914 was roughly one-third greater than to-day?—(A.) That is my idea; in fact, that is so.

Q. If you had the 1914 output, what effect would that have upon the figures you have given here in regard to the Portsea and the Kirnwood?

The CHAIRMAN: Let me interpose and say it is a 20 days' case upon your calculations?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If you had had the 1914 output it would have been a thirteen days' case, would not it?—(A.) I think in 1914 we could have discharged the boat as quickly at Hull as at Antwerp.

Q. You have said that you got one-third less output than to-day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Had you had one-third more output, am I not right in saying that would be six or seven days less?—(A.) It would have reduced it by six or seven days.

Q. Then that will reduce it to fourteen days?—(A.) That is so; that will reduce it by about six or seven days.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That would have reduced the time, we will say, to fourteen days, and it would have had an effect also on your cost, would not it?—(A.) It would have reduced it a bit, yes. Would you repeat your question, because I am afraid I did not quite catch it.

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Q. The greater output would have brought down the number of days occupied at Hull, would it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Now, your cost at Hull was £750?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Would it not also have brought down your cost?—(A.) It might have reduced it slightly, but not materially. You see, in Hull, we pay so much a ton for discharging the stuff, from the ship-owners' point of view, and we should have paid that price whether we discharged it in two days or fourteen.

Q. How is your cargo discharged—at piecework?—(A.) No, it is not discharged at piecework. I must explain the position in Hull. The ship-owners employ a stevedore, and they pay the stevedore so much a ton for discharging the cargo; but, on the other hand, as far as the stevedores and the men are concerned, the men get so much an hour, whether they work quickly or slowly.

Q. You are not able to put a figure of saving in cost upon this?—(A.) No.

Q. You think there would have been some saving?—(A.) Except the saving of the time to the steamer would have been very valuable, of course.

Q. There would have been a substantial saving because of the fewer days the vessel was in port?—(A.) Quite.

Q. What would that saving be? Can you put that in pounds for the six days?—(A.) It is rather difficult to tell; it depends on the earnings of the steamer per day.

Q. Taking the whole of the Humber ports, I think there are about 8,000 dockers regularly employed, are there not?—(A.) I estimate so at Hull, Goole, and Grimsby.

Q. And the effect of those demands upon the basis that you have mentioned of 40 per cent. would be increased weekly payments of £28,000, would it not?—(A.) Just roughly. Approximately, that would be it.

Q. That is, upon the payments now made to the minimum grade?—(A.) Yes, that is based on the payments made to the minimum grade.

Q. And there would, of course, be corresponding advances to the higher grades?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Would that substantially increase the weekly additional charge?—(A.) Considerably.

Q. I think you heard Mr. Bevin state on the first day the refusal of Hull to put upon the quay traffic when there were no barges to put it into overside?—(A.) I did not actually hear him, but I read his evidence on that point.

Q. You saw that he stated that what prevented this being done were the vested interests of the merchants at Hull?—(A.) Yes, I saw that.

Q. Is that correct?—(A.) Well, I think he must have been misinformed; it is a mistake.

Q. Will you tell the Court whether in Hull during the war, whatever the previous practice may have been, cargo has been landed on the quay whenever there was room on the quay, although in the ordinary course it would have gone overside into lighters?—(A.) I think Mr. Bevin was referring particularly to the congestion at Hull: During the congested period at Hull we, as brokers, have had dozens of cases where we had absolutely a free hand to land the goods, warehouse them, put them into lighters, or get rid of the cargo out of the steamers anyhow, and it has been done as far as possible, but even then we have not got on very well, but I have no knowledge of any vested interest stopping the work in the way suggested by Mr. Bevin, which I think is probably a mistake.

Q. If there had been any cause such as that suggested by Mr. Bevin, or any such vested interests,

would you have known of them?—(A.) I should say so. In fact, I have attended meetings pretty regularly on the point with a view of trying to minimise the congestion, and I am sure it would have been brought up. I have no knowledge of it.

Q. It has never been brought up at your meetings?—(A.) As far as I know, no; I think I should know if it had.

Q. What has your experience been in the past, when increases of wages have been made? Have they resulted in any greater or less effort, or has there been any improvement or effect upon the time-keeping?—(A.) Well, just to take the first part, the effort; my experience has been that the output has gradually reduced corresponding with the amount of money the men get, and that the actual work done is also reduced correspondingly; so that when a man got a small wage he had to work, say, five days, to-day he only works four, anyhow, and those figures are proved to a large extent by the Port Labour figures, which I think one of the Hull witnesses referred to, and which could be produced in evidence. I think they are more or less confidential figures, and I cannot produce them myself, but I should think the Court could get them, if necessary.

Q. From the Ministry of Labour?—(A.) From the Ministry of Labour.

Mr. BEVIN: I have got them.

The WITNESS: I think if Mr. Bevin could produce them for the congested period, when we were really wanting men the whole of the time, you will find on the average they only worked about four days a week.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: During that time, was there a full day's work for them all the week?—(A.) Practically the whole of the time. If a man really wanted work, he could get it.

Q. You have a registration system in force at Hull, have you not?—(A.) Yes. That is worked by the Port Labour Committee, consisting of employers and labour representatives. Each man has a registered number, and badge, the Union badge I think, but I would not be quite sure, but anyhow a badge, and the understanding is that only the men with the badges are employed on the docks; one advantage of this registration scheme is that the demobilised docker is able to walk straight back into his job.

Q. And that, I think you have stated, is administered by the Port Labour Committee, upon which there are equal numbers of employers and men?—(A.) I am not quite sure about the equal numbers, but the men are represented—I think equally.

Q. The representation, though it may not be equal in number, is equal, I take it, in voting power?—(A.) I think so. I think Mr. Bevin would admit that, probably.

Q. At Hull are the men paid daily?—(A.) Yes, every night, in most cases.

Q. Have you a Port Committee of Employers which meets the men's representatives and deals with any differences that arise?—(A.) Yes, we have a small joint Committee, consisting of a similar number of men's representatives and employers. We were appointed some time ago, and we are called together by our secretary on an application by either side to settle any differences or disputes, and it has worked pretty satisfactorily.

Q. Just to go back to the payment of the men. Do the men insist upon being paid daily?—(A.) Yes, they will insist upon that—or do, rather.

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Q. What is your experience with regard to the time-keeping; I do not think you have dealt with that?—(A.) I think we just finished up there last night, when I stated just roughly that we lost about an hour a day—in fact, quite an hour a day.

Q. And I think you stated yesterday that the men do not have to travel by train to their work?—(A.) They live fairly close, you might say quite close to the docks in most cases, and in any case there is a very good service of trams by which they can get to and from their work for about 1d.

Q. And the average time lost you consider to be one hour per day?—(A.) About one hour a day, yes. You see, we did not go so carefully into the question of time lost as Bristol did apparently; but, as your Lordship seemed to attach greater importance to the finishing time, we wired through to Hull yesterday to get information as to what time the boats (we just took one dock, that is the most important dock in Hull, the Alexandra Docks) finished in that dock, and for your Lordship's information we have got that, which just proves my contention absolutely. Shall I give those figures?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes?—(A.) These are particulars of ships working on the 25th February, 1920, with times of actual stoppage of work.

Q. That was yesterday?—(A.) Yes, at the Alexandra Docks, Hull. The "Othello," with general cargo, stopped at 4.43. The "Grampian Range," with general cargo, 4.40. The "Dorrington Court," grain and seed, 4.45. The "Elzasar," with grain, at 4.40. Perhaps I had better give the figures; I can hand this list in if it is of any use: 4.40; 4.40; 4.42; then there is one here, with props., at 5; another one with deals at 4.50; another one with deals at 5. There are ten which have stopped well before the time, and two have stopped at 5. Here is a copy of the telegram we sent to our Secretary, his letter, and the list. (*Handed in.) I might say that our Counsel has no copy of that, but I should like you to have it available.

Q. What will happen will be that Mr. Macpherson will take it in charge, get copies made for both parties, and for the Court, and hand you back the original.—(A.) Thank you very much.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Does the Report that you received this morning, that you have just handed in, coincide with your experience as to the times when the men finish at Hull?—(A.) That is what is happening regularly at the beginning at dinner time, and at night. That is where we get our one hour from; and one hour is a fairly generous figure, I should think, from the men's point of view.

Q. And that is one-eighth of the total working day?—(A.) That is so. I may say those figures were taken by our Secretary just on the telegram which he got there; and we have not had any other communication with him on the point at all.

Q. In the first document you have put in, which is the rates and working conditions which are to operate from last April, signed by Mr. Farrah on behalf of the Humber District Transport Workers, I see on the first page, "Calling-on time to commence at 7.45 a.m.; men to proceed to their work, men to remain at actual work to noon and to 5 p.m."?—(A.) Yes, that was the agreement that was in accordance with the recommendation at the last National Negotiation.

Q. Were you on that Committee?—(A.) Yes, I was a member of the Negotiation Committee that settled the matter with Mr. Bevin and his friends.

Q. What was the arrangement, or the understanding, come to at those meetings with regard to

working the full eight hours?—(A.) Well, we got really to a deadlock in those negotiations, and it was a question as to whether we had a stoppage, or otherwise, I think, and Mr. Bevin held out to us as a bait that we should get eight hours actual work; and he promised that his people would try to get the men—in fact, he promised they would—at least, that was the impression I finished up with—that he would get the men to start at a quarter to eight and finish off at five actually.

The CHAIRMAN: You worked upon the well-known rule which was quoted to us here?—(A.) It is definitely set out in this agreement that the hours of starting are 7.45.

Mr. BEVIN: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there any other rule in Hull than that? You remember the rule which says it shall be complete work between beginning and end, and there shall be a quarter left at both ends.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: But your Lordship will remember that that was subsequently amended; the quarter of an hour at the other end was cut off, and if it was worked it was to be paid for?—(A.) The rule we work on is this.

Q. We were dealing with the particular wording of the Bristol agreement, which gave effect to this national arrangement. Now the Hull wording you will find on the first page of this document that was handed in, under "Calling-on time." "To commence at 7.45 a.m.; men to proceed to their work, men to remain at actual work to noon and to 5 p.m." The understanding was that there was to be a full eight hours' work given?—(A.) That is so, that was the promise.

Q. And all you ask for is that there should be a prompt start made at 8 o'clock, and that work should continue until 5?—(A.) That is all we want.

Q. That is to say, you only desire that this agreement should be carried out?—(A.) Yes, that is all we want.

Q. And you do not suggest, or do you suggest, that you have not got the assistance of Mr. Farrah in trying to enforce this agreement?—(A.) I am sure the union officials have tried to, but the difficulty is the men won't have it.

Q. The union set their face against this, but nevertheless—(A.) The bulk of them help us to try to carry it out.

Q. But it is not, in fact, carried out in Hull?—(A.) I was going to say never, but generally not.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I want to deal with output first. You have a Joint Committee in Hull of workmen and employers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you ever called the Committee together to ask them to discuss this problem?—(A.) The Committee, as a matter of fact, were appointed especially to deal with disputes.

Q. Would you answer my question. If you have a Trade Union Committee and an Employers' Committee, and there is a problem affecting the men and the employers, is not it the common-sense thing to do to ask that body to meet and discuss that problem?—(A.) I think so, yes.

Q. Have you done it?—(A.) We have not.

Q. Then you have not adopted the common-sense way of dealing with it?—(A.) In that case, not, if you put it in that way.

Q. You have let this thing run on until this application?—(A.) I should like to mention that

* See Appendix No. 74.

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we have not sat absolutely still on this point, that it has been discussed unofficially lots of times; I have talked it over myself.

Q. Who have you discussed it with?—(A.) With our stevedore and with Mr. Sanderson and Mr. Farrah.

Q. My friends say they cannot remember it. Let me deal with the statement you made yesterday and contradicted this morning, as to the willingness of the men to work. You said yesterday, I believe, that the men were satisfied with two or three days, and this morning you said four days.—(A.) It was a mistake if I said two or three days. I said that on the average they work about four days a week, and seemed to be satisfied with that.

Q. Do you seriously suggest in that box that that four days' work in Hull on the average is due to the men's unwillingness to work? (A.) I think so.

Q. Do you swear it?—(A.) I am simply here to give what I think is the best of my opinion.

Q. No, you are on your oath, and statements have been made which amount to an accusation against the men. I want you either to withdraw it or state on your oath it is a fact that the men are idle the other two days because they refuse to work?—(A.) I repeat that in my opinion —

Q. I do not want opinions; I want facts. I want you to swear or withdraw. You have gone into that box and libelled the men.

The CHAIRMAN: I would only put it to you, Mr. Bevin, that you cannot get facts in a case like this; you must get opinions. The facts are what is in the men's minds. Each man would have to come to swear as a fact what is in his mind. This witness can only give his opinion as to what animated the men, that is the utmost he can do.

Mr. BEVIN: I will leave the value of his opinion to your Lordship's Court.

The WITNESS: Would it meet the point if I say the facts are indicated on the Ministry of Labour's figures, which prove that all the men registered

Mr. BEVIN: Very well. We will come to that in a moment. I am going to hand them in, and then we will see the facts.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Will you let him finish, please?

The WITNESS: I should like to call the Court's attention to the fact that the facts are set out on those Ministry of Labour figures, and they prove that although there was a lot of work—they do not prove the work—but they prove that although there were a lot of men about, that only a certain proportion of them work—it averaged only four days a week, anyhow. Those are the facts I formed my opinion on.

Mr. BEVIN: Before you formed your opinion what personal investigations have you made as to the men's deliberately staying away from work after working four days?—(A.) Of course I am dealing with this matter every day; you get reports every day which you have to base your opinion on, and the report I had practically every day during this congestion was that we could not get as many men as we wanted.

Q. How many men do you employ direct?—(A.) We are brokers, and it is a floating quantity; We sometimes have twenty ships in, and they

have anything up to 150 men on each, something like that.

Q. I want to remind you, you let your work to a stevedoring contractor?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then the stevedoring contractor would be the direct employer of the men for you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How many men do you directly employ, to come in personal contact with?—(A.) I do not employ any except in that way.

Q. That is what I wanted to get. You have no personal contact as the employer with the men? (A.) I do not employ the men myself, no.

Q. These Ministry of Labour figures range over a long period. Will you take the 31st January?—(A.) That is when we were getting slack again comparatively.

Q. Take any date you like to suggest; put your hand in a box and take out one?—(A.) Take any date from July to December, when we were busy.

Q. We are dealing with the present, I think. We have outlived the past and it has gone?—(A.) Are we not dealing with the question of whether these men will work when it is there?

Q. Do you admit that at the moment there is not work available for the whole of the men in Hull every day?—(A.) Of course, I must admit there is not work available every day for all the men; but I am talking of when they will not work when there is work.

Q. Let us get to the congestion period?—(A.) July to December.

Q. Can you man a dock fully when you have not trucks to load and when it is congested?—(A.) No.

Q. Then the fact that the port is congested and full of traffic is no indication that there is work available for the men?—(A.) I am talking about the times when there is work available.

Q. I am asking you a question which I do not want evaded. I want the Court helped.—(A.) I agree, but I just want to get my point in that I am talking about the time when the work was available.

Q. When the work is available it is purely intermittent?—(A.) It is intermittent; I should not say purely intermittent. It is irregular to a small extent.

Q. To what extent?—(A.) I have taken out the figures showing the exact tonnage coming into the port each month last year, if that is any guide to you. That shows a fairly regular run of tonnage.

Q. Is the regular run of tonnage an indication of the regular employment of the men?—(A.) I should say so.

Q. In London at the moment there are 30 odd ships in the river. They would be entered in the tonnage. Would that be an indication that they would be in the berths for the men to work them?—(A.) Evidently the berths are full.

Q. Or the sheds are full?—(A.) Both perhaps.

Q. Or the lighters are full. Let me deal with the congested period again. In reply to your Counsel, you said that the vested interests in Hull had given way.—(A.) I do not think so. I said I had no knowledge of the vested interests stopping the goods going on to the quay where it was possible.

Q. Have you any knowledge of a deputation coming from Hull to the Port and Transit Executive Committee?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With a request to the Port and Transit Executive Committee to assist them in clearing Hull?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you know if the question was put to them as to whether their Port could not be cleared if they released their own lighters by placing the goods that were stored in the lighters ashore, an'

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so relieving the lighters for other traffic?—(A) The shore was, of course, pretty full at that time, and they could not find places to discharge the lighters.

Q. Do you know an objection to it was that it would interfere with the right of shipowners and others, and create a precedent in the Port of Hull?—(A.) No. Mind you, I was not at that meeting, so I have no knowledge of it.

Q. Perhaps another witness will go in the box presently who was present. I see him here behind me.

Sir LYNDEN MACASNEY: You have got to prove it yourself, Mr. Bevin.

Mr. BEVIN: If the witness will go into the box perhaps we can do it?—(A.) I do know as a fact that wherever it was possible to put stuff on the quay it was done.

Q. Is it a fact that at the present moment Hull is congested by timber?—(A.) In a way, yes. That does not mean the quays are congested, but the yards are full of stuff which wants clearing away. The quays themselves are fairly clear.

Q. If the yards are full of stock does not that interfere with the clearing out when other stuff comes in?—(A.) As a matter of fact the quays are clearish—well, I should say clear at present—and any ships coming in can get discharged as fast as they can get landings for them.

Q. Do you suggest seriously that any reduced output in Hull is due to the men?—(A.) I do not say all of it. We have got to be fair. We have only given you a small proportion of it.

Q. What proportion?—(A.) I think I said only about 20 to 30 per cent., or something like that.

Q. Due to the men?—(A.) Yes, I should say the bulk of it is due to the men.

Q. The bulk of it is due to the men?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have the employers no responsibility?—(A.) What do you mean by that?

Q. The organisation of the employers' business is absolutely perfect?—(A.) No. we do not presume to go so far as that.

Q. Then some of it may be due to bad organisation?—(A.) Yes, the small proportion that is applicable to the imperfectness of the employers.

Q. The employers would be the small sinners, compared with these wicked men?—(A.) Yes, I think so.

Q. How much would be due to congestion?—(A.) We have taken that into account in our figures.

Q. How was the test made?—(A.) Our next witness, who has taken the test will probably explain it to you very fully.

Q. You have given the evidence, and your counsel says I have got to get it from you. You have sworn that this test is accurate. How was the test made?—(A.) I handed the evidence in, and said the next witness would prove it in case of need. On the other hand, I am honestly of opinion that the evidence is correct.

Q. The weather was exactly the same in both cases?—(A.) Of course we have taken a large number of ships over a long period, and you get varying weather. It might be better.

Q. I suppose you arranged that the weather should be exactly the same when you were going to take the test?—(A.) No, I say it might even be better.

Q. You are not sure?—(A.) I am not sure.

Q. Did you arrange that the cargoes should be exactly the same?—(A.) Similar types of cargo. They might be better.

Q. They might be better and they might be worse?—(A.) Yes, a great deal worse.

Q. The same facilities for trucks and quay space, and everything was all arranged to take this test?—(A.) In this case a large quantity of the stuff goes overside, and we have taken the time before our congestion difficulties came on.

Q. When was the period in Hull that Hull was not congested during the latter part of 1919?—(A.) We have not taken those dates.

Q. June, 1919, and onward, was it not?—(A.) January to June last year, was it not?

Q. These conditions may not obtain at all to-day?—(A.) The port has not altered in any way, I think.

Q. Surely we ought to have some up-to-date figures. Were all the men back from the Army at that period?—(A.) We deliberately took this period, because it was a clear period from the port's point of view—there is no contest about it—whereas, we thought if we had taken a later period you might bring the congestion point up.

Q. You have taken the most suitable period for yourselves?—(A.) No, I think I said we had taken what I considered a very fair test to both parties; in fact, in favour of the men slightly, if anything.

Q. How many men went into the Army from the docks at Hull?—(A.) Quite a large proportion; I do not know how many. Possibly if you call Mr. Farrah, your witness, he will tell you the figures.

Q. Would you be surprised to hear that over 3,500 men went into the Army from the port of Hull?—(A.) As a matter of fact, I think they supplied the largest number of any town in the United Kingdom in comparison with the population.

Q. Did that lead to a breaking up of the general labour conditions of the gangs in Hull?—(A.) We seemed to get on pretty well. Of course, it must have upset things a bit; we do not need to discuss that.

Q. It broke the continuity of gangs, and so on, owing to taking 3,500 men, which was nearly 50 per cent. of the employees at that port?—(A.) Yes. Of course, we were all working under difficulties then.

Q. The Armistice came about in November, 1918?—(A.) Yes.

Q. When did demobilisation begin seriously?—(A.) I do not know. You know better than I do, perhaps.

Q. You say you have taken what you describe as a fair period without making these investigations as to other causes?—(A.) If we had taken them to-day they would be worse probably from your point of view.

Q. But you did not investigate the actual facts associated with these returns of 1914, when you had the regular gangs, who, by tradition, and method and comradeship, had worked together for years; and you took a period after the war when the men had been broken up, and 50 per cent. had been to the war, and a lot of them had come back, but not all, and you say that is a fair comparison, do you?—(A.) I say that we have taken the fairest comparison we possibly could under all the circumstances, and that if we were to take it to-day, in my opinion it would be worse on these figures for you.

Q. Do you suggest that it is fair of an employer to expect exactly the same output, and to return to normal conditions within six months of the most bloody war the world ever went through, and to expect those men who had been through the hell of Flanders, while some of us were at home (including you and me) to return to their work and to give you the same work within six months?—(A.) I

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have told you my opinion about that, that if we were to take them to-day you would do worse.

Q. Now we know the feeling of the employers, at any rate. You said, also, that the men would not agree in Hull to a composite rate, or a rate for all the grades—shall I put it in this way: the scheduling of several grades into one, and paying a flat rate of 16s. to lumpers, regular traders, and so on.—(A.) They jealously guarded these differences right the way through, and insisted upon them, and I think they would stick out for that.

Q. Do you know that there was an agreement recently arrived at with the fish trade in Hull?—(A.) No.

Q. Would you be surprised to learn that in that case men who have paid two different rates have made one common rate in the Port of Hull quite recently.—(A.) I do not know anything about the fishing trade.

Q. With regard to this loss of an hour a day, how have you had the time kept to enable you to swear in the box that the men lose an hour a day?—(A.) These times are taken when the men come off the ship.

Q. Who takes them?—(A.) In this case they have been taken by quite an unprejudiced man.

Q. Which case are you referring to?—(A.) The figures I have handed in.

Q. I will question you on that. You mean the figures you have just handed in in reply to the telegram.—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Who kept the times?—(A.) These have been taken by the superintendent at the Alexandra Dock by the special request of our secretary in Hull last night.

Mr. BEVIN: The agreement in Hull provides for a cessation of work at five o'clock?—(A.) Yes, that they work up to five o'clock.

Q. Putting on hatches is work, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I want to call your special attention to two classes of cargo. General cargo, and grain and seed, would have to be covered up, would it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You note the times that the ships that have to be covered up ceased work at 4.43. Would that be after the hatches were on, or does that mean they ceased delivering from the ship.—(A.) Probably it would be the last man off the ship.

The CHAIRMAN: That is rather important.—(A.) We will get that confirmed.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like the Court to make an inquiry as to that, and to wire to both the Union officials and the employers, because there is this important fact: there are two ships discharging props and deals which are not covered up, which worked up to five o'clock.—(A.) A third one discharging wood, which does not cover up, knocks off at what time?—

Q. 4.50. Take the three: 5 o'clock, 4.50, and 5 o'clock; as against 4.40, 4.45, and 4.43 on ships that cover up. Is it not rather reasonable to assume from those figures that the ships that do not cover up work up to time, or nearly up to time, and that with regard to those that cover up, the time must have been taken when they stopped delivery.—(A.) I should just like, with you, to get the actual time the last man left, or something of that sort, to tally it off. I think you will find that that is when they cleared out from the ship.

The CHAIRMAN: The situation in Hull is that there is no clause providing for a quarter of an

hour later than 5 o'clock for covering up and doing odd jobs.

Mr. BEVIN: That exists nowhere in the country. It was struck out.

The CHAIRMAN: The position must be cleared up if possible by the production of the sender of that telegram, the superintendent, Sir Lynden. What the Court desires to know is, when the close of the day is reached, what proportion of the men left before time and what proportion of the men did not.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not think there will be any difficulty in getting that information. That can be obtained, can it not?—(A.) Yes, I think so.

Q. I think possibly we could get some photographs of the men trooping off at those times?—(A.) Would it be a good plan to get the same thing at dinner-time, when there is no covering up?

The CHAIRMAN: If you could do that it would eliminate this trouble.—(A.) We have taken these figures because your Lordship referred to the covering-up time. I can show you the same thing at dinner-time, when there is no covering up.

Q. We must get to the bottom of it.—(A.) We can get the information.

Q. That will be done to-morrow?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I mean with reference to the figures given?—(A.) We will get to know exactly on what they are based, and whether it means when the whole of the men cleared out. We will try to get that information.

Q. We do not want figures for to-day or to-morrow, when it is known what we are after, but the same day that this applies to, with the hour at dinner as well.—(A.) We will try to get that.

The CHAIRMAN: May I suggest that both parties should concur in helping the Court as to that, and get some sort of arrangement. In Hull you all work together well. Here is a plain matter of fact with regard to the history of yesterday's work. Why cannot you agree to present us with a statement of what happened?

The WITNESS: I think we can.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The conduct of the case is in my hands, and I must answer your Lordship on that point. It is a question of fact on which I gather that Mr. Bevin and I are at issue. I submit your Lordship will have to hear and form your judgment on the evidence we shall call on the point after this witness. If after that your Lordship thinks anything can be done we will consider it.

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly. I do not withdraw my suggestion; on the contrary, I repeat it. Both parties here are on the spot, and are witnesses to what actually happens, and they might concur in giving us a short statement. Perhaps you may clear it up before the day is over.

Mr. BEVIN: As far as I am concerned, I will send at once to get the test made of yesterday, to find out what time the men did leave, and what happened—not what may happen to-day.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Or to-morrow.

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Mr. BEVIN: It was a fact that in Hull several of the railway companies were so congested that they had to store goods in railway stations, was it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The docks belong to the railway companies, do they not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You had an allocation of trucks called the 1917 allocation, had you not?—(A.) I think so, but I cannot speak really very definitely about that point.

Q. Did the employers of Hull come to the Port and Transit Committee and say that there were hundreds of men idle in Hull owing to the 1917 allocation?—(A.) I think it is quite possible, because a lot of the mills were stopped outside of the docks.

Q. They complained that the allocation was based on a period when Hull was nearly closed, and had not been brought up to date now it was reopened?—(A.) Now you are asking me to talk about something I do not know. There was difficulty about trucks; I know that.

Q. You can employ men fully when you have not a full supply of trucks?—(A.) The bulk of the stuff goes to lighters, so it does not affect it in most cases.

Q. Does it not go in lighters to the various mills, and then they need trucks to get it out of the mills when it is manufactured?—(A.) Yes, I suppose so, with the manufactured goods.

Q. And in the oil mills a little while ago there were so many thousand tons of oil cake that they could not relieve the lighters?—(A.) Yes, that was so.

Q. Now with regard to Antwerp. Have you the Charter-Party?—(A.) I have not it with me, but I can produce it.

Q. What were the terms of the Charter-party? Did the merchants have the right to demand that the ship should go to Antwerp?—(A.) No.

Q. Were the goods sold on the Continent?—(A.) No, not when she was chartered, not until she got close to port, and they pressed us to do it.

Q. When she was coming to Hull the cargo was sold to go on the Continent?—(A.) No.

Q. When was it sold to go on the Continent?—(A.) Within a few days of getting off the coast here.

Q. When she was coming into this country?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So it was not the price of discharging at Hull, but it was selling the goods at the port of discharge?—(A.) Yes. The point was we agreed to allow her to go to Antwerp.

Q. If the goods were needed for the Continent, would they discharge them in Hull and reship them?—(A.) As a matter of fact they were needed in England, I understand.

Q. Were the goods actually sold to be utilised on the Continent?—(A.) No, not at all.

Q. Were they landed at Antwerp and brought back to England?—(A.) No, eventually they were sold in Antwerp.

Q. I only want to get the truth?—(A.) I only want to give you the truth.

Q. Was there a financial inducement to send that ship to Antwerp because there was a market there for the goods?—(A.) Yes, I expect so, but the position was this: we as the shipowners were the people who had the option of saying yes or no, and we said yes, because we could get the ship turned round quicker and cheaper.

Q. How many ships were waiting in Hull at the time you said yes?—(A.) As a matter of fact it represented about 23 days, as I have shown you.

Q. That is not what I am asking you?—(A.) I

do not know how many were waiting at that time in Hull.

Q. If you had not decided to send that ship to Antwerp could you have brought her in and given her a berth right away in Hull?—(A.) I think we probably could, yes.

Q. Could you?—(A.) I will tell you why we decided to let her go to Antwerp: because it was going to be more expensive, and we were going to waste more time in Hull waiting for a berth, and slow discharging, and so on.

Q. Was that waste of time in Hull due solely to labour, or was the dock so congested that the inducement to you was that you could put her into Antwerp and get her cleared quicker?—(A.) You might say it was due to labour very largely, because they worked slowly, and that is what brought the congestion on.

Q. You are sitting in your office, and the merchant rings you up, and asks you if you will let your ship go to Antwerp?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You immediately sit down and calculate what it is going to produce to you, do you not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. When you have to consider that, you say: "What is the condition of the Port of Hull? Can I get a berth? Can I get her cleared?"—(A.) Quickly—yes.

Q. You decided you could not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Did you attribute that to labour?—(A.) A large portion of it, yes.

Q. How much have you made during the war?—(A.) I do not know that it has any bearing on the point.

Q. I think it is a fair question. I am coming to the ability to pay.—(A.) If it is a question of can we pay, I say yes.

Q. You can pay?—(A.) Yes, but that is not the point. We can pay our small proportion. That is not the difficulty. The difficulty of it is that two-thirds of it is going on to somebody else.

Q. I am assuming that all the goods passing through the dock have to go into a ship or out of a ship at some time or another?—(A.) Yes, I suppose they have.

Q. Then the whole charge can be placed upon the ship at one period of the passage of the goods?—(A.) I should say it is quite impossible.

Q. We will let the merchants look after themselves. We believe they have made as much as you?—(A.) Let me explain why, if I may? The shipowner discharges the stuff over the ship's rail, and then he is finished with it, and the merchant takes charge of it. You do not suggest we are going to pay for this stuff being put into the lighters and railway trucks and all sorts of things like that, do you?

Q. You admit that the shipowner, out of his freights, at the moment, has the ability to pay?—(A.) At the moment. We suggested to you during the negotiations that if you would go on a sliding scale we would give you the money.

Q. I am willing to produce the notes and show you that there was no sliding scale ever mentioned. I will hand in the notes of the earlier proceedings. I asked you when freights came down, and you never put a single proposal?—(A.) Sir Alfred Booth said: "Will you not agree to a sliding scale with the shipowners," or something of that sort.

Q. I have the shorthand notes that were taken of the proceedings, and I will ask you to show me where Sir Alfred Booth ever said it. You may have had it in your mind?—(A.) It was distinctly suggested.

Q. At any rate we have the admission that you have the ability to pay. What was the method of

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discharge in Antwerp on this ship?—(A.) I think similar to Hull—just over-side.

Q. With plenty of lighters available?—(A.) I was not there, but evidently there must have been.

Q. No delays of any kind. Do you suggest, on that, that if the rate of pay in Antwerp is less than in Great Britain there would be an inducement to the ships to go to Antwerp?—(A.) On that question of the lighters our Antwerp agents write and say "It is hardly a good ship to cite for comparison, as there were delays in receiving the cargo owing to breakdowns in warehouses, and so on." So there were difficulties in Antwerp as well.

Q. Do you suggest that if the rate of pay for the Belgian docker is less than the Hull docker and the labour charge is less the ship might go to Antwerp?—(A.) No, we should naturally prefer to come to Hull because we are at a loading port, and it is cheaper generally.

Q. Do you suggest there would be an inducement if the charges were less?—(A.) I think as a matter of fact we can afford to come to Hull and pay more money—a fraction more money anyhow—because we are at a loading place, and we save moving.

Q. I put it to you again, that if the difference in charges is so wide between the Continent and Great Britain there would be an inducement to go to the Continent?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Let us follow that out. Assuming that there is a wide margin in the charges between port and port in this country, will not that put the port with the least margin at an advantage against the greatest?—(A.) No, there are all sorts of circumstances in connection with it.

Q. Hull has the lightest port charges in the country?—(A.) That is information. I am not quite prepared to say yes or no at the moment.

Q. Have you more free overside delivery in Hull than anywhere else?—(A.) You mean it is the cheapest port in the country. From whose point of view?

Q. From the point of view of port charges leaving labour out.—(A.) On the ships or the cargoes?

Q. On the ships.—(A.) No, I do not think so. On the cargoes I think it is.

Q. Then if we admit the principle that the ports should be varied, Hull should pay the highest rate in the country, should it?—(A.) It does not necessarily follow, because the matter of a fraction will drive the stuff to Liverpool. It is a matter of serving the Midland towns.

Q. Then if the matter of a fraction will drive it to Liverpool, and that fraction is on the labour charge, to stop that diversion from one port to another it will be in the interest of those two ports to have the same labour charge?—(A.) No, that does not follow at all.

Q. How do you quite reconcile your two positions? First, you say Hull ought not to be the highest rate, because it has the cheapest port charges, because you say a fraction will divert a ship?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then when I say if that fraction is on labour, you say no?—(A.) Probably if all the port charges in Hull were the same as Liverpool, Liverpool would get all the business.

Q. Supposing Liverpool charges were all the same as Hull, putting it the other way?—(A.) Of course, it would still be the same. Liverpool might get all the business.

Q. This is the point I want to get at. If I go to Hull you would tell me that story?—(A.) I have not had the pleasure of seeing you in Hull.

Q. But you have told it to other people when negotiating for wages?—(A.) What story, exactly?

Q. The story that if the Hull charge for labour is too high, trade will go to another port.—(A.) Yes, I have said that. There are certain economic differences that must be maintained, or else you will get all the cargoes driven into one place, because it is the cheapest, outside of the labour question. But that is not the only question at all.

Q. That argument has been put to the workmen as the reason why they should not ask for too much in Hull?—(A.) In the olden days I suppose it might have been.

Q. And it is natural to assume that in all probability your colleagues have put up the same argument in Liverpool?—(A.) I cannot say what they do in Liverpool.

Q. They are very similar to Hull in dealing with wages, judging by the information given?—(A.) You should know better than I do.

Q. Your minimum rate of labour in Hull is 11s. 8d. a day on the regular traders, is it not?—(A.) Yes, I think so.

Q. What is the minimum rate in Liverpool to-day?—(A.) I do not know.

Q. It is 11s. 8d., is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If both ports work on 11s. 8d. to-day, is there any real difficulty for both ports to work on 16s.—(A.) No, I do not think so, not on that point.

Q. So that if the 16s. minimum is granted in both ports it keeps the equation just as it is now?—(A.) Between Liverpool and Hull, probably yes.

Q. You are both serving the Midlands and the North?—(A.) Yes. If you take Hull and somewhere else it would vary probably.

Q. Let me take London. The minimum rate in London happens to be 11s. 8d. to-day?—(A.) We do not compete with London very particularly.

Q. I took the two competitive ports. The minimum rate at Southampton happens to be 11s. 8d. I am suggesting all those 11s. 8d.'s should be 16s., not to upset the equation.—(A.) You have suggested a lot of things that we, as the people who have got to work them out, do not see how they could be worked.

Q. If you can run all those ports on a minimum of 11s. 8d., what is the difficulty of running them all on a minimum of 16s?—(A.) What is the difficulty of running them all at 11s. 8d.?

Q. Because the men cannot work at that rate, and you are living too well already, as you have admitted. I would like to ask you what the rate is per day at Antwerp at the moment?—(A.) I could not tell you. I think, as a matter of fact, it is 18 francs, but that is just a rough guess. It is about 10s. or 11s. I am rather vague about it, so do not take it from me.

Q. When you mentioned the figure of £700 odd, is that the amount you paid to the stevedore?—(A.) No, that is the port charges one way and another, the expenses of the ship.

Q. That is not labour?—(A.) No; I think I mentioned that about a third of it might be labour, perhaps.

Q. What proportion does labour get to the middle-man?—(A.) I am afraid I do not quite understand that.

Q. How much a ton do you pay to the stevedore out of which he has to pay labour?—(A.) I have not got the rate-book here with me.

Q. But you are dealing with it every day. Cannot you give us an approximate figure?—(A.) No.

Q. You are a broker?—(A.) I am afraid I do not carry all those lists in my head.

Q. Take oats, the figure you have quoted. To

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arrive at that you must have taken all the port charges, and you must have had some regard to the stevedore's figure when you arrived at that £700?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you not got that figure in your mind?—(A.) Yes. I think we paid the stevedore about £250.

Q. Out of £700?—(A.) Yes, about a third of it.

Q. So that one man, working a ship, for provision of gear, insurance, paying the wages, and very little supervision, takes £250 out of £700 charges?—(A.) I told you that was a generous estimate from your point of view. Of course, all the other charges would be affected by this increase.

Q. Does it not seem extraordinary to pay that to one man. Would not that be nearly equal to what you paid the whole of labour?—(A.) Would you mind repeating that?

Q. If £700 was the cost of the ship, including all port charges, and £250 out of that £700 went to one middle-man, and then you had to pay the other charges outside of labour, is not that rather an indication that the one stevedore is charging nearly as much as the total labour he employs to discharge the ship?—(A.) Of course, the stevedore has to pay the men.

Q. Do you mean to say that £250 out of that £700 was the total amount you paid him, or the profit you paid him?—(A.) It was the cost of discharging the ship.

Q. Then the cost of labour was only £250?—(A.) That is the stevedore's labour.

Q. How much of that £250 was profit?—(A.) I do not know, but I should think a very small margin.

Q. How many men would be employed?—(A.) I could not tell you off-hand, but approximately about 70 to 100; I do not know.

Q. You say to discharge a cargo of oats, costing £250 to discharge, there are 70 to 100 men employed?—(A.) I mentioned that the shipowner only paid a third of the men employed, or approximately that. As a matter of fact, on a grain cargo the shipowner only employs about one man in four. The receivers would be paying the three other men, and the wages would be increased in proportion.

Q. When we analyse these figures we have got £250, out of which the stevedore has to make his profit?—(A.) A very modest one I should think.

Q. Judging by your attitude to the workman I should say you would treat him the same. Where is the other £450 going?—(A.) It goes in all sorts of expenses. There are port charges, lighterage, and dock dues, tugs, boats—

Q. How much for brokerage?—(A.) As a matter of fact, the broker gets about 1 per cent., or something like that, on the £700. I think that is the fee. You might call it £20 at the outside—probably less.

Q. So that we have reduced the labour trouble down to £250 now?—(A.) No, I did not say that. I said that sundry of the other items would be increased because of the extra cost of labour; for instance, the dock authorities, if they have to pay a lot more money for their labour, which is directly affected by this application, would want to put up their charges, and so on right through. The whole item would probably be subject to an increase.

Q. Were the port charges to Antwerp exactly the same as they were to Hull?—(A.) All I know is that the ship paid so much at Antwerp and so much here, and it was cheaper at Antwerp.

Q. But you did not take the trouble to investigate what it actually involved?—(A.) I took the

fact, and decided that it would draw trade away from here.

Q. It does not help us much if you do not produce a table showing exactly how much labour is involved. It does not help us much if the dock dues and so on in one port are higher than another.—(A.) I did not think it would please you very much, but the fact is that as employers we are up against it on this question.

Q. Let me turn to the comparative wages in the port of Hull. If you take a flour-mill, you have £3 per week. How many men in a flour-mill would be on the £3?—(A.) Probably about the same proportion as the dock labourers who would get their 11s. 8d.

Q. Would you be surprised to know that the man earning £3 is the man sweeping up the mill?—(A.) No, I am not surprised to hear that, because the lowest men among the dockers would only be the smallest portion of them probably.

Q. You have a very large percentage on the 11s. 8d., have you not?—(A.) I do not think so.

Q. What percentage would you have of liner men on the £3 4s. 2d.?—(A.) There are only a small proportion of the liner men getting £3 4s. 2d. The bulk of them get more money.

Q. What holidays do you give and pay for to the liner men, and to all these dockers? Do you give them a fortnight's holiday a year?—(A.) No, we do not pay them for their holidays; it is not the custom so far.

Q. Is it not a fact that in the flour-mill agreement there is fourteen days' holiday, including Bank Holidays, for which they get paid?—(A.) I do not know.

Q. Would it not be wise to set out all the facts?—(A.) We have set out here a comparison of trades which we think might be affected by the increase.

Q. It is not headed that way. It is headed "A Comparison of Transport Workers' Wages with other Local Industries in Hull."—(A.) Whom we think may be affected by it.

Q. What would be the average wage of the men under the flour-mill agreement? Do you know?—(A.) No.

Q. If you were going to give a guide to the Court, would it not have been wise to ascertain? You had no intention to mislead, I am quite sure?—(A.) No, all we want is to get at the facts.

Q. The average wage of the flour-mill men, taking it from a 25-sack plant upwards, works out at the moment at about £3 11s. spread over the grades of men.—(A.) Yes.

Q. With an application for 15s. a week now before the Court of Arbitration?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If the advance is granted by the Court of Arbitration, does not that work out in fair comparison with the application we have for the dockers?—(A.) A docker on 16s. a day is going to get £4 8s.

The CHAIRMAN: If he works a full week?—(A.) If he works a full week.

Mr. BEVIN: These men would be guaranteed £3 11s. and a possible advance by the Court of Arbitration, on the general advances that are being given, to at least £4 a week, with a fortnight's holiday, with sick allowance, with a guaranteed week, and paid 52 weeks in the year?—(A.) On the average flour milling is more or less skilled work. They have to go through a sort of training.

Q. If you ask me that, I should reply that I think the skill is comparative between a man who stows a ship and a rollerman. It needs more skill

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to stow a ship than to act as a rollerman.—(A.) We shall have to take your word for that, because I do not know.

Q. I have done neither, but I have watched both. The figure which you give for the paint trade is £2 18s. Is that correct?—(A.) I think so. These figures have been taken out pretty carefully. A mistake may have crept in, but I do not think so.

Q. It is 63s. at the moment?—(A.) Paint is 63s., is it?

Q. Yes, with a fortnight's holiday and similar conditions to those of the flour millers.—(A.) Are those the Hull figures?

Q. Yes, national. They apply all over the country. For tanners you give £2 17s. 6d. Is not that figure 62s. 6d.?—(A.) These are figures which our Secretary has taken out from the various trades, and I think they are correct. As to the tanners and painters, you have just picked on an odd one or two.

Q. Will you take my word that it is wrong? I am connected with each Industrial Council, and am responsible for the agreements.—(A.) We will have them checked over.

Q. Thank you. Take the bricklayers; they are £3 17s. at the moment, are they not? They are at the bottom of your List C.—(A.) Yes, we have £3 17s. here.

Q. Are they not working out a scheme to guarantee that £3 17s. whether there is wet weather or unemployment?—(A.) I do not know.

Q. If you take your pre-war figures, you have for a lumper's man £1 17s. 6d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have for the flour miller £1 4s.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If 16s. is granted, will that make the margin between the flour miller and the lumper's man any wider than it was before the war?—(A.) I have not worked that out.

Q. You worked that out just a moment ago. It is the difference between about £3 17s. or £4, and £4 8s. if a man worked. Before the war the difference was between £1 4s. and £1 17s. 6d., a difference of 13s. 6d.; so that if 16s. is granted it will put them very near to where they were before the war, will it not?—(A.) It would put the dock labourer well above them.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: What do you say the flour-miller had before the war?

Mr. BEVIN: £1 4s. There was no grading then. The agreement which exists now did not exist then. They were very low. What they got above that I have no figures to show, but I have taken your lowest man. Take your liner man; the figures are £1 11s. 3d. and £1 4s.; a difference of 7s. If this man gets the Court of Arbitration Award now, having regard to the casual nature of his work it will make about the same difference between them.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is, if he gets what he is claiming now?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: But if you take the existing figure—

Mr. BEVIN: No, I mean if he gets what the Court of Arbitration is giving at the moment.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If he gets what he has asked the Court of Arbitration to give him?

Mr. BEVIN: No, if he gets the average which the Court has given. You know as well as I do what has been given since December, Sir Lynden.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I know what has been asked.

Mr. BEVIN: You know the awards which have been given.

Q. I want to put another personal question to you: Is it not a fact that you personally have been one of the biggest difficulties in the way of good relations in Hull? It is a serious question—(A.) Will you repeat that, please?

Q. I will put it in another way: Is it not a fact that you have been the greatest cause of conflict and difficulty of settlement on every occasion when there have been negotiations in Hull since you have been associated with it?—(A.) No, I should say not. Of course, I happen to take the leading part in it, and therefore I have got most of the blame; but I think you rather flatter me.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: He does not want to compete with some other people.

Mr. BEVIN: Possibly not. That is all I ask.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you re-examine, Mr. Bruce Thomas, would you mind my making a suggestion to Mr. Bevin? I propose, Mr. Bevin, to put some questions, but I think they would come better from you, if I may suggest it, upon this point. You know that at present the lumper's figure is 12s. 10d., and the liner's figure is 11s. 8d. in Hull?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: There is a considerable weekly difference arising out of that. Will you be responsible for the question, and ask him whether there would be any difficulty in the liners and the lumpers coming together and obliterating that difference but accepting a higher wage? Do you follow?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: You made a good deal of that in your opening. It is within your province to put that point.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The Witness has already expressed his view upon that question.

The CHAIRMAN: I want him cross-examined upon it.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If your Lordship pleases.

Mr. BEVIN: Is there any difficulty on the employers' side in the liners and lumpers meeting and agreeing to pay the same rate to the two classes of men?—(A.) You see the difference arose, if I may just explain the position, through the more regular employment available for the liner men. They know exactly when and where to go for it, and it is simply like clockwork. Therefore, there are a certain number of men who absolutely insist upon that work and stick to it and want it, and I think they would insist upon that difference. Then if the liner men get put up, I see great difficulty with the lumpers' men; they would want a difference because of the slightly more erratic nature of their work.

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Q. But the difference has always been insisted upon by the employers, has it not?—(A.) I think by both parties.

Q. My friends say no. On this point, assuming the men—the lumpers and the traders—would agree on the flat rate of 16s. Od., and having regard to the very large surplus of labour in Hull and the difficulty of mobility, would it not help to reduce the unemployed margin if the rate were the same for the two classes of work so as to make interchangeability possible?—(A.) It would not alter it at all, I think.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You stated that although there might be a full week's work available for the men at Hull, the men themselves were satisfied with four days' work?—(A.) That is the conclusion I have arrived at, and it is more or less confirmed by these port Labour figures.

Q. You base that upon the returns which were made to the Ministry of Labour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Those returns showed, I understand, that the men were working four days per week on the average?—(A.) During our busy period.

Q. And that during that time you were wanting more labour than you were actually able to get hold of?—(A.) That is so, yes.

Q. Taking it right through, is the work at Hull regular? Can it be looked upon as a regular port?—(A.) Yes, I should say that it is pretty regular. The trades differ; they are seasons' trades; but one way and another the tonnage coming into the port is pretty well the same each month. It does not vary very largely.

Q. And it is one of the features of Hull, as I think you stated before, that there are a very large number of regular sailings?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. With regard to the case of the Portsea going to Antwerp, the question of what is paid for labour in Antwerp is not very important, is it? Or rather I will put it in this way: It is not the question of what you pay the men in Antwerp, but the fact that you get a much quicker turn-round to the vessel which is important, is it not?—(A.) That is the most valuable item to the ship—the despatch.

Q. And that is what determines you as a ship-owner when you come to the conclusion to send it to Antwerp in preference to letting it come into Hull?—(A.) Yes, that is the main point.

Q. The comparison which you have made is a comparison of the time taken to discharge the vessel, and turn it round after it has got to a berth?—(A.) In both cases, yes.

Q. So that the question of vessels waiting outside Hull to get in or not being able to get into a berth does not arise in either case?—(A.) I could not swear to it absolutely, but my idea is that in both cases the ship went straight into a berth.

The CHAIRMAN: Assume a ship under charter to go to certain ports in this country or certain ports on the Continent. Those charters are quite common?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And the charterer has leave to select, has he not?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. Under those common charters, can you tell me what are the rival ports to the Port of Hull on the Continent of Europe, with a charter such as I have described?—(A.) I should say that Antwerp and Rotterdam are our chief competitors, and some of the French ports.

Q. Some of the French ports, such as—?—(A.) Dunkirk, Calais—

Q. Havre?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then would there be rivalry inside the Baltic? You know what I mean?—(A.) Yes, whether there is competition?

Q. Take the charter which I have given you.—(A.) If they had the option of the Baltic—I mean the Baltic does not directly compete in the same way as Antwerp and the others I mentioned.

Q. Assume that competition in fact to exist, and trade open to take those ports?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will you tell me what was the relative charge in Antwerp and in Hull in the year 1914? You have compared them in 1920; we now ask you to compare them in 1914, prior to the war?—(A.) It is rather a difficult question to reply to; but I think they would be slightly more than Hull. There would not be such a large difference.

Q. The figures which you have given are £487 for Hull, as compared with—?—(A.) £750 to £800.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It was £487 for Antwerp as compared with £750 for Hull.

The WITNESS: Or if this claim is granted, £850.

The CHAIRMAN: It is £487 as against £750?—(A.) Yes. That is about 40 per cent.

Q. How would it stand in 1914?—(A.) It is difficult to give an accurate reply, but approximately I should say it might be 10 or 15 per cent. more than Hull.

Q. £487 as against £550, would that be right?—(A.) For instance, Rotterdam—or are you taking Antwerp alone?

Q. Take Antwerp.—(A.) Antwerp alone, I should say, would be slightly less than Hull, if anything. I cannot give you a very accurate figure, because it is difficult to recall the facts.

Q. It would be slightly less?—(A.) I think Antwerp would be slightly less than Hull.

Q. Than Rotterdam?—(A.) Rotterdam was always a very cheap port, and would be cheaper than either of them.

Q. Cheaper than Antwerp?—(A.) Yes, and cheaper than Hull.

Q. In your opinion, is it a matter for serious consideration by both workmen and employers as to the possibility of trade being diverted from home ports to those which you have named?—(A.) Absolutely. Take Hull, for instance; it used to be a great trans-shipping port; and, in fact, is to a certain extent to-day. Stuff used to come into Hull, and be trans-shipped to Antwerp, Rotterdam, and these French ports; whereas it is going to Antwerp, and they are doing it there now; and not only are the dockers losing their part of it, but the merchants themselves are losing the trade, and the Belgians are doing it for us, whereas it used to be done in England.

Q. What I want to ask you is: Is there any other cause than labour which induces you to say that while the figure for Antwerp was £487 prior to the war and is now—on that assumption—Hull has risen from £550 to £750?—(A.) The main point that we had in sending boats to Antwerp was the despatch.

Q. I want to keep to this point. I am thoroughly alive to the question of despatch, but it is the cost that I am at now. I am coming to despatch in a moment. Time is another thing.—(A.) At the moment the cost in Antwerp works out in sovereigns a bit cheaper, because the exchange is a bit less.

Q. Then £487 in Antwerp would mean in English money a good deal more?—(A.) No, that

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was in English money. £487 is what it cost us in English money.

Q. Take it so. Take it that that was the figure, so as to compare like with like. I gather from you that you could have done it for £550 in Hull prior to the war?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No.

The WITNESS: I did not say that, but it would be something less than the £750.

The CHAIRMAN: I must get what help I can from you.—(A.) I want to give any help I can.

Q. You said it would be a small percentage higher in Hull in 1914 than in Antwerp?—(A.) I think so, yes.

Q. I am putting a small percentage higher in Hull by turning the figure of £487 into £550. Would that about suit your small percentage?—(A.) I do not think we are quite clear upon this. You want to know what Antwerp would have cost pre-war?

Q. No, I want to take it that the ship would have cost £487 pre-war.—(A.) Yes, assume that.

Q. I want to get at what is your common datum?—(A.) Supposing it cost 10 per cent. more in Hull, that is £50 more.

Q. 10 per cent. more would be £48 15s. ?—(A.) Yes, roughly.

Q. Add that, and we shall see that I was not far out when I suggested that Antwerp would be £550. It turns out to be £535?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it your evidence that a ship which would cost in 1914 £487 to discharge, would in Hull in 1914 have cost £535 or thereabouts?—(A.) I am afraid I do not quite follow. I may be dense.

Q. Try it in any way you like.—(A.) I see what you mean now. My point was that Antwerp would cost a little more than Hull pre-war, and if you assume that Antwerp pre-war was going to cost £530, as I think you said—

Q. Antwerp would cost more than Hull?—(A.) No, slightly less.

Q. You have to add a percentage to Antwerp to get what it would cost at Hull?—(A.) Yes, that would be so.

Q. A £487 disbursement at Antwerp would mean in Hull anything you like, but it appears to me to be something like £535.—(A.) Yes, but I am very vague upon these points, I must admit, because it is six years ago.

Q. I am asked, and very properly asked, to suggest to you that the exchange may have something to do with these figures?—(A.) The exchange has made the £487 less than it would have been if the exchange had been normal, of course.

Q. Assume no disturbance by exchange—because I am desperate to get at the real rights of it. In 1914 could Antwerp have undercut you by a small percentage?—(A.) Yes. Of course, the reply to that is "Yes," but Antwerp is at a bit of a disadvantage because you get a ship there, and then to come to a loading port she has got to come away from Antwerp in most cases and come back, say, to England, where she can get bunker coal.

Q. I am now on the point which you put, namely, the contrast between Antwerp and Hull.—(A.) Yes.

Q. What was that contrast in point of money?—(A.) Pre-war?

Q. Pre-war, and what is it now?—(A.) You are asking me to say something which I am very vague about, and I could not say without going into the figures, but just roughly I should say that there might be a 10 per cent. difference.

Q. Now we are back to just exactly where we were?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And I tried to put it into figures. If that be so, then it would be £535?—(A.) Yes, you can take that.

Q. I now come to the next point which I have to put to you: Why has that £535 gone up to £750 in Hull?—(A.) Because all the expenses have increased very considerably.

Q. How much is it attributable to labour in Hull?—(A.) About 100 per cent., approximately, or rather more. For instance, our stevedores' rates are now subject to, I think it is, 115 per cent. increase.

Q. The labour bill has been doubled?—(A.) The labour bill as regards stevedores has been rather more than doubled.

Q. Let me ask you this: I am now on time. In Antwerp, prior to the war, could you have got a vessel cleared in the same time as in Hull, or in less time?—(A.) I should say about the same.

Q. And now the difference is between eleven days and twenty days?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I have before me the Port and Transit Executive Committee's Report on port conditions for February 21, 1920, and with regard to Hull here are the conditions described: "Supply of labour, fair; barges and craft, poor; trucks and sheets, very bad; movement on the railways, no difficulty; cartage, no difficulty." Does that represent in a general way the condition of things for a considerable period back, namely, that the barges and craft are poor and the trucks and sheets very bad?—(A.) Yes, I suppose it would.

Q. If a cargo comes in at the option of the charterer on a contract of affreightment such as I have described, the charterer has to consider the facilities for disposing of his goods when they arrive, has he not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And if the barges and craft are poor and the trucks and sheets very bad, that may drive them away from Hull, other things being equal?—(A.) Yes, it might have that effect. It has not always been the fact, though.

Q. Which is the railway at Hull—the Midland?—(A.) The North-Eastern Railway and the Hull and Barnsley Railway.

Q. It is all railway docks in Hull, is it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have the Hull authorities represented to the railway company how traffic is delayed by these conditions?—(A.) We are regularly doing it, yes.

Q. If those conditions are improved, do you think the attractiveness of Hull would be added to?—(A.) Of course.

Q. One thing that would not improve, unless there be a change in the attitude of the men, is the rate of discharge?—(A.) The output per man per hour. We think, or at any rate, we are hoping, that it will.

Q. Upon that I gather—and one is not surprised—that you look upon that as a most serious matter?—(A.) Yes, of course.

Q. You know, do you not, that your best friends in this matter—I think I am not overstating it—are the trade unions themselves?—(A.) I should not like to go so far as that.

Q. I am venturing to put it to you: Is it not the fact that the trade unions' policy and effort have been directed to have this bargain which was made honestly kept?—(A.) Mainly so, yes.

Q. If it were honestly kept, do you think that the difference in the wages would count for very much?—(A.) You mean the present application?

Q. Supposing you had a full output, per con-

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tract?—(A.) If we were to get an honest day's work for an honest day's pay, we think we could give them a little bit more money. What we should like in Hull is some kind of piece basis, something like Bristol; and if I might presume to suggest, I was going to say that I think if the Court would suggest that some piece rate basis, as far as it is possible to work it out, be adopted, somewhat on the Bristol lines, that is, giving them a generous minimum, it might help things; and the men would get paid for the work.

(Q.) Always assuming that they give on the other side the contract output?—(A.) There would be distinctly an inducement.

Q. It would be a distinct inducement, you think?—(A.) It might.

Q. A minimum time rate with a piece rate alongside of it?—(A.) Somewhat on the Bristol lines—give them a generous minimum, say, and adopt that as far as you can.

Q. I am very anxious to get a more hopeful view of some kind. Let me suggest this to you: The 3,500 men who were taken away during the war were men of military age, of course, fit, capable men?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I may take it that compared with the men who remained and who had to be brought in they were men of a superior physical type?—(A.) Yes, I suppose they would be.

Q. That state of matters is apt, is it not, to produce a certain disorganisation resulting in loss of discipline?—(A.) Of course, I do not put down the poor work to that, to such a large extent. I mean it must affect it, but to a small extent.

Q. I am trying to awaken some elements of hopefulness in you. A good many of these gallant fellows have been killed?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. How many were killed?—(A.) I could not say, but quite a large portion of them.

Q. And some have been maimed for life, of course?—(A.) Yes, of course, that must happen.

Q. So that of the 3,500 who went away you have got a certain proportion—we shall say half of them—back?—(A.) I could not say the proportion, but anyhow they will be short; they must be.

Q. Do you not think that with the aid of the unions and with improvement in the port by the removal of congestion and with the introduction of some scheme on the Bristol lines such as you have mentioned there is a hope of greater output in the Port of Hull?—(A.) Yes, particularly the Bristol scheme.

Q. And with that hope the result would be that as time went on and the union got a better hold of its own men and the trade improved, the condition of the men would be very largely benefited, both in the money received and in the value got for the money by the prices of articles?—(A.) I think there are hopes, yes.

Q. In your influential position in Hull, you will see to it, will you not, that all causes of friction and irritation shall so far as possible be removed with the aid of the union officials?—(A.) We do that together at present, yes, and I think pretty successfully.

Q. And that policy will continue?—(A.) Certainly.

(The Witness withdrew.)

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Mr. MULLINS: My Lord, may I briefly and in a few words make an application on behalf of Liverpool, in view of the application this morning of

Mr. Bevin. My clients, the United Traders' Association, whose evidence is part of Sir Lynden's case—we are not asking to call additional evidence—are very anxious that no decision on the question of wages shall be come to before the point of view of the merchants on *terra firma*, and the effects of the wages upon their trade are considered by this Court. Your Lordship has had evidence this morning that, I think, one docker in four is employed by the shipping companies, and for the moment the evidence is almost entirely concentrated on the shippers and their point of view. Before your Lordship comes to any decision on the point of wages, my clients are very anxious indeed that the point of view of the merchants, which is quite separate from the point of view of the ship-owners, should be considered. It forms part of Sir Lynden's case, and I do not propose to ask to call any evidence, but I do ask that that part of Sir Lynden's case shall be heard.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not quite understand the position you are in. Are you making common cause with Sir Lynden Macassey's clients.

Mr. MULLINS: Entirely.

The CHAIRMAN: Then it is for you, as it were, to impart energy to the learned Counsel representing that interest.

Mr. MULLINS: And also to add my plea that that evidence shall be heard by the Court before a decision is come to.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure it will be a pleasure to all of us to hear you—

Mr. MULLINS: I do not want to be heard, my Lord; I want the evidence to be heard before your Lordship gives anything in the nature of an interim report.

The CHAIRMAN: Then we can make no decision upon it now, but you may keep yourself in reserve. I understand that you are watching the case?

Mr. MULLINS: That is so, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: And when the proper time comes, if you care to repeat your application on account of some dreadful omissions which have been made by your learned brethren, you will name to us the witnesses you propose to call and give us some idea of how long they will take.

Mr. MULLINS: It will not be my evidence, my Lord; it is Sir Lynden's evidence. My only point now is that your Lordship should not accede to Mr. Bevin's request of this morning for an interim award on wages until the evidence of the merchants, especially of Liverpool, have been heard. That is my only application.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I thought my friend was watching the case, but he appears to be watching me. However, he is quite right, and the class of evidence to which he refers is a most important class of evidence, and it is a class of evidence which I propose at an early stage to lay before the Court.

The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, with regard to the request made this morning, so far we are able to meet you. I am sure that all of you recognise the (shall I use the term) enormous mass of statistics

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and the variety of matter handed in the course of the examination to the Secretaries to the Inquiry, and the necessity for the Court adopting one of two methods: Either it must endeavour to master this as it goes along keeping *en rapport* with the stage of the case; or, when the case comes to a close on your part, it must begin and occupy probably a long time in mastering the material. The course we have hitherto taken has been to occupy the vacant days in keeping the material up to date in form, and the Court apprised of the true bearings, without going into too much detail. We do not propose to abandon that method altogether, because it would not save the parties any time; we should require the same time afterwards to master the matter; but in view of the urgent appeal made, we propose to sit on Tuesday morning instead of on Wednesday morning at half-past ten, and to go right on, and we hope earnestly that before that week comes to a close we shall have heard both sides upon the part which has now been remitted to probation.

Mr. Bruce Thomas, will you permit me to put one question to Mr. Fenton which I omitted, and of which one of my colleagues has reminded me, if Mr. Fenton happens to be in Court?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I am afraid that Mr. Fenton is not here, but there are other witnesses from Hull, and perhaps they could answer.

The CHAIRMAN: This point may be covered. I will keep it before me.

Captain STONEHOUSE, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are the Assistant Dock Superintendent controlling the labour operations for the Ellerman-Wilson Line at Hull?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. How many years' experience have you had at the docks at Hull?—(A.) In the present position, seven years.

Q. I want you to tell the Court whether, in your view, if the linerman and the lumpers' men were put upon the same rate of wage, the lumpers' men would be satisfied with that?—(A.) The liner men would appreciate the rise, but I have my doubts about the lumper men.

Q. Do you think they would be likely to remain content long?—(A.) From past experience I should not think so.

Q. From past experience you say no?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have they in the past always been zealous in maintaining the existing difference?—(A.) That is true.

Q. There were two tables put in when Mr. Fenton was giving evidence, Document H. 15, Hull E. and F., the last two sheets. Have you had that table got out—I am now referring to the first one, the working of general cargo steamers, 1914 and 1919?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Were you superintending all the vessels which appear upon that table both for 1914 and 1919?—(A.) In both instances, yes.

Q. Were those vessels carrying the same class of cargo in each of those periods?—(A.) Precisely.

Q. Do the same vessels appear in both columns?—(A.) Practically so, with the exception of the losses through enemy action.

Q. In the first column in 1914 I think there are 23 vessels, and in the second column we have 16 of those 23 vessels. Is that so?—(A.) That is so. Your Lordship will notice that the tonnages of the vessels are somewhat similar, although there are one or two alterations in name.

Q. Were the conditions under which the vessels appearing in the 1919 list were unloaded the same as the conditions of 1914?—(A.) Practically so. In 1914 the vessels were in a state of peace, absolutely; the 1919 vessels are in the first six months after the Armistice. Those vessels came to Hull carrying considerable foodstuffs—I may say principally foodstuffs—and came to the same berths in the same dock as in 1914; and these berths were practically reserved for this class of trade.

Q. Were the vessels in 1919 hindered in their discharge by any congestion?—(A.) There was practically no congestion in 1919 in the first six months. In the last six months, yes.

Q. You have only included in your table the discharges for the first six months?—(A.) For the first six months. I was keeping clear of congestion and keeping clear of war.

Q. Had you the same strength of gangs on in both periods?—(A.) The ships were manned up the same in 1919 as they were in 1914. There may have been a slight deterioration in the quality of the workmen, but as far as numbers were concerned, their numbers were the same.

Q. The gangs in 1919, you say, may have been less efficient than the gangs in 1914?—(A.) Yes, but very slight.

Q. When a large number of dockers had left Hull during the war, had you a considerable influx of labour into the docks?—(A.) We had.

Q. Did you get a good class of man in?—(A.) A good, able-bodied class—good average class.

Q. The effect of that first table is to show that the output in 1914 was one-third greater than the output in 1919, is it not?—(A.) That is correct. The exact figures are: 122½ tons per hour in 1914 against 93½ tons per hour in 1919.

Q. The second table, Hull F., deals with the working of cargo carried by tramp steamers, does it not?—(A.) It does.

Q. Were the circumstances the same from January to June, 1914 and from January to June, 1919, there?—(A.) Precisely the same. I do not press this Hull F. as an absolute basis to work on, for this reason, that there are so many varied classes and differences of cargo connected with these ships. It is only just as a proof that the output has decreased.

Q. You put this forward as proof that the output has decreased, but you do not suggest, if I understand you correctly, that it can be taken absolutely that the output upon this class of vessel was one-third greater in 1914 than to-day?—(A.) The output shows the same, but you cannot get the exact working conditions in that table that you can in the other one. This one is the various docks of the port; the other is actual ships, which have utilised the same berths in the same docks, which in my estimation is most definite proof.

Q. However that may be, the result on the table does work out at practically the same?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do those two tables confirm your own opinion from your wide experience at the docks that there has been a decrease in output due to lack of energy on the part of the men?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You heard the question which arose this morning as to bad timekeeping at Hull?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are you continually down at the docks, and do you frequently see the men breaking off in the evening?—(A.) I do not take every dock every day because it is too big a job, but I take one dock practically every day, and my experience is that the hour which has been estimated as our loss is quite correct.

Q. With regard to the breaking away in the

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evening, as has been stated, before five o'clock, will you tell the Court what your experience is from your own observation upon that? At what time do the men as a rule break away?—(A.) From 4.35 to 4.50.

Q. You have working, say, on the grain vessels at Hull the shipmen and the merchants' men, have you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What happens at about 4.35?—(A.) The grain men cease work, consequently the shipmen cannot carry on, so they must cover up.

Q. The grain men—the merchants' men—cease work, and leave the vessel?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The shipmen then proceed to put on the hatches?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. At what time is the vessel covered up as a rule?—(A.) At ten minutes to five.

Q. The hatches are completely put on and the shipmen leave?—(A.) Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I want to ask you first whether the conditions were exactly the same in the early part of 1919 as in 1914?—(A.) The same in the vessels I have quoted on Hull E.

Q. The conditions were exactly the same?—(A.) Yes, in regard to those vessels.

Q. How do you remember?—(A.) By personal observation.

Q. Can you remember the exact conditions of 1914 now?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have a good memory, have you not?—(A.) I consider I have a fair working knowledge.

Q. You can remember whether the weather was the same, and everything?—(A.) I think if you glance over the table you will find that the times of the year for the ships coincide.

Q. Do you find exactly the same weather in the same period of the year with regular seasons in this country?—(A.) Generally.

Q. Then it is different in Hull from what it is in London.—(A.) There are occasionally times when it is a little worse than others. The same applies to the summer.

Q. You said it was principally foodships in 1919?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What was the proportion of bulk cargo to other general cargo on all these ships in 1914?—(A.) From one-half to two-thirds.

Q. What was it in 1919?—(A.) About the same.

Q. Have you anything to show that?—(A.) I have not in these particulars.

Q. Remember what you said in reply to your own Counsel: that there was a specially reserved shed for certain food that had to be handled arising out of the war. That was in 1919.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I do not think he said that in answer to me.—(A.) I am afraid I must differ from you there. I did not say "arising from the war."

Mr. BEVIN: You said that following the first six months the principal stuff that had to be carried was food, for which space was reserved?—(A.) Certainly they came to their own recognised berths as previous to the war.

Q. And space was reserved in 1919?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I put it to you very strongly that the proportion of bulk cargo as between 1914 and 1919 in the same period had considerably varied. You have a good memory; now think?—(A.) Considerably varied in bulk?

Q. The proportion of bulk to package was considerably varied from 1914 to 1919?—(A.) With one or two exceptions I think it was pretty much equal.

Q. When you were getting out the exact conditions did you not think of that?—(A.) I took the ships as they came along in both instances.

Q. When you were preparing that table to show that the conditions were exactly the same, did you not compare the cargoes which they were carrying?—(A.) I say the exact conditions of discharging and the berths occupied by the ships were the same; and I say that it is immaterial whether it happens to be bulk or general.

Q. Do you suggest that the speed of discharge of bulk and general cargo is exactly the same?—(A.) We take the average on the whole lot.

Q. I am asking you the question: Do you suggest that the speed of discharge of the two classes of cargo is the same?—(A.) There should not be much difference.

Q. What was your experience in 1914?—(A.) About ten tons per gang per hour.

Q. Bulk?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Piecework?—(A.) No—yes, piecework for the grain.

Q. How much general?—(A.) About the same, nine or ten tons.

Q. Do you seriously suggest that there was no difference at all in the Port of Hull in the early part of 1919 compared with the same period in 1914?—(A.) There was a difference in this respect: the lighters were shorter on the whole.

Q. That would affect discharge?—(A.) It would, outside of my own company.

Q. And do you say that in that port sheds were never blocked in 1919?—(A.) They were only blocked by the incoming ship, when she filled them up and they had to be cleared for the next ship coming along.

Q. Was it always cleared?—(A.) We had sufficient room for us to work.

Q. Was it always cleared?—(A.) There was sufficient room for us to work, and I think that is quite enough.

Q. I want to know whether the shed was clear?—(A.) You mean a clear shed, with absolutely nothing in it?

Q. I am suggesting, would the shed be as clear as it was in 1914?—(A.) The shed was as clear in 1919, so as to allow us sufficient room to go on, but I do not say it was as clear as it was in 1914.

Q. If the shed was not as clear as it was in 1914, would not that affect the discharge?—(A.) No.

Q. You can discharge just as fast in a partly choked shed as you can in an absolutely clear shed?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: He did not say partially choked.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: He said the opposite.

Mr. BEVIN: Will you let the witness answer?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: He said he did not say it.

Mr. BEVIN: He said the shed was not as clear in 1919 as it was in 1914.—(A.) That is what I did say.

Q. If it is not as clear, then there was not the same amount of room?—(A.) That is quite correct what I did say, but I did not say the shed was congested.

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Q. If the shed was not as clear, and had not the same amount of room, could you discharge the ship with the same rapidity that you could with a clear shed?—(A.) Yes, if I have sufficient room to put in the cargo that I have in hand.

Q. You said that the men were not quite so efficient as they were in 1914?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. Are they becoming more efficient now?—(A.) Well, as time goes on they ought to do.

Q. In comparing these ships, did you on every ship that came in have exactly the same number of gangs on every occasion?—(A.) The gangs varied from day to day. They commenced with general cargo on the first opening, and we would probably start off with eight gangs. If the ship had eight hatches we would start with eight. Then, when we came to the grain, the grain merchants were notified, and they started off with the grain, and in the case of these ships they would have gangs of from 16 to 18.

Q. As the cargo varied the gangs varied?—(A.) There was no variation in the gangs in the general.

Q. Do you mean you worked the ships with exactly the same number of gangs on each ship that you did in 1914?—(A.) Each ship would be worked till she was finished under exactly the same conditions as there were in 1914.

Q. I want to put a question to you as an expert. These ships are loaded in foreign ports, of course?—(A.) They are loaded in New York.

Q. Has the stowing been as good on the other side?—(A.) We have had no fault to find with the stowing, only in this respect, that we find a lot of pilferage. The stowage otherwise has been all right.

Q. The stowing is just as good as it was in 1914?—(A.) Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The pilferage is better?

Mr. BEVIN: That is due to the rotten wages; they have to live somehow—they cannot live on Professor Bowley's budget nor on yours.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We do not say it is here; it is a question of New York.

Mr. BEVIN: I think that is the only point I want to ask.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. Does the shortage of lighters affect your tables in any way? Is any of the cargo from these ships put into lighters?—(A.) No. Fortunately, we have a fleet of lighters of our own, and when there is any likelihood of any shortage on the merchant's side we put in lighters, and if the merchant likes to adopt it he does so. If so, we put in the men just the same, and he receives it from the lighter instead of ex-ship.

Q. You were not prepared to say that the sheds in 1919 were as clear as in 1914, but are you prepared to say that the sheds were clear enough in 1919 to give the same rate of discharge as in 1914?—(A.) I am, and they would have been clear according to Mr. Bevin's idea if labour would have worked a bit of overtime to have cleared the rest of them.

Q. Is not it a fact that you are unable to get any overtime work in Hull?—(A.) I will go this far; it is only fair to say that the men will work overtime on their own terms.

Q. Will they work overtime on the terms of the agreement?—(A.) No.

The CHAIRMAN: During the war a large number, amounting, we were told, to 3,500, were taken away from Hull?—(A.) I will accept your figure.

Q. What was the quality of the men that were called on to supply that number?—(A.) A lot of men we found were coming in from the land and other industries, which, I think the Port Labour Committee would uphold my statement, was the reason for the institution of this register, so that the Union could have a check on them. I am not personally acquainted with the Port Labour Committee myself.

Q. They must have been men who were in such a position that they were not called up for the war?—(A.) That is true.

Q. So that there would be a certain proportion of them old and a certain proportion medically unfit, and so on?—(A.) I should not like to confirm that. My experience is that they seemed to be well, able-bodied men who came into our dock at that time.

Q. Training goes for something in a dock, does not it?—(A.) Training is a useful asset in this way, it makes a man able to handle a package which is swinging about, when a novice would be nervous of it.

Q. In fact, a novice cannot discharge cargo at the same rate as a man who has been accustomed to it for years? (A.) Well, in most rough cargoes I should think he could. Shovelling iron ore or things of that sort do not require much skill.

Q. This is rather important, and I want to know: is it your view that new men from the outside and old and experienced men from the inside are just the same value?—(A.) They are the same value as making up one of a gang, but they are intermixed.

Q. I mean the same value as work producers?—(A.) When a man first starts on it naturally, but there is nothing in a dock labourer's profession that he cannot learn in a week.

Q. He can learn it all in a week?—(A.) Yes. You must understand that in addition to the ordinary docker there is always the leading man who practically trains them. He does the scientific part of it, if there is any science attached to it.

Q. I want to get at it; your view is that taking one thing with another a new man is as good as an old man?—(A.) Yes, for an ordinary class of work.

Q. That is your experience?—(A.) That is my experience.

Q. Now, on the foodstuff question, that applies to the year 1919?—(A.) The ships are entirely engaged at the present time in the foodstuff trade, because so many ships have been sunk in the war; now they are engaged in carrying foodstuffs.

Q. Foodstuffs from American ports?—(A.) From New York.

Q. Can you tell me this, in foodstuffs do you include grain in bulk?—(A.) I include grain.

Q. Grain in bulk?—(A.) Yes. You understand that wheat has had a preference over other cargoes.

Q. I know. Apart from the preference of wheat to barley or oats, would you say that 1919 and 1914 were substantially the same cargoes?—(A.) Yes, I consider that in that table you are comparing like with like as near to the exact thing as you can possibly get.

Q. You knew that in 1919 the import of foodstuffs to this country was of the higher importance?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Taking value on value, the cargoes were at an infinitely higher price?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. Did you impress that on the men as a reason for a greater rather than a less output?—(A.) Not generally, but in our little disputes we tried to

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argue all ways with them to try and cope with the work.

Q. Have the Unions helped you about that?—(A.) As the port working Committee, yes, they have been of great assistance.

Q. What is your fringe of unemployment—of casual labourers?—(A.) I could hardly give you a number on that.

Q. I do not want the number. Could you give me anything like the proportion? For every 100 men that you employ how many have you unemployed?—(A.) If I take as a criterion the past six months, I think it is very, very small—about 10 per cent. I should think.

Q. Yours is a seasonal trade, is it not?—(A.) This particular trade is a regular trade all the year round.

Q. But I am referring to the port generally.—(A.) Our trade comprises the whole of the work.

Q. We were told that you were more congested in the latter part of the year, is not that so?—(A.) That is right.

Q. What does that mean?—(A.) The quays are congested, shortage of wagons, shortage of lighters.

Q. In fact, there is a pressure of trade in the latter part of the year.—(A.) Yes; ships have to wait a considerable time for berths.

Q. How long does that, what I call seasonal trade, continue in the year?—(A.) For one of our seasonal trades we have the wet fruit trade.

Q. How many months in the year?—(A.) About five months, taking the Spanish and Continental fruit trade.

Q. When you have that pressure the fringe of casuals would be less, would not it?—(A.) There have been times when we have not had sufficient.

Q. But when you have not that pressure the fringe of casuals would be more?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Tell me about that time when they are more?—(A.) About that time I should say we should have 10 per cent. unemployed.

Q. You have a system of registration, have you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You know about the deal cargoes, do not you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is all the cargo you have been referring to, foodstuffs, etc., time work?—(A.) With the exception of the grain portion, when the merchants receive their own grain.

Q. So far as you are concerned it is time work?—(A.) All time work.

Q. With regard to the deals, is that piece work?—(A.) No.

Q. It was time work also?—(A.) Yes.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. GEORGE WILLIAM HESELTINE, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are the Managing Director of Messrs. Scott Limited, Wharfingers, of Hull?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you appear in connection with the imports of grain and food for the employers of labour, who act for the receivers of cargo?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you supply the men who work these cargoes?—Yes, the receiving portion.

Q. Do you perform the services for the merchants at fixed rates?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Would any advance that is given to the men

be passed on to the merchants?—(A.) I have always done so.

Q. You work only piecework, I think?—(A.) All our dock work discharging grain and seed cargoes is all done on piece, and any shore work on day rates.

Q. When you are working cargo out for a merchant, you have instructions to unload a particular mark, have you not, as a rule?—(A.) If it is a bag cargo, we have only to remove that particular merchant's mark.

Q. Will you take this case: where you have to work a bag cargo, and you have to unload a particular mark for a merchant, and you begin, we will say, at eight in the morning, and at 10 o'clock your mark is worked out, and then another mark has to be unloaded, what takes place at that point when you have worked your mark out?—(A.) If our mark was worked completely out, we should retire, and the next wharfinger would come in; but cases such as you mention do not often arise, because we only get a certain number of bags of our mark, then another merchant's mark turns up, and it has to be dealt with. Then in an hour's time, our mark might turn up again, and we would follow on.

Q. You work out your mark at 10 o'clock, and you are expecting another mark to turn up, we will say, at 11 o'clock?—(A.) A continuation of our mark; probably we are waiting for our mark to turn up again in that hold.

Q. Are your men taken over, in some instances, by the people who are working time, who work their mark out between 10 and 11?—(A.) That does arise.

Q. And in that case are those men who are working piece for you from 8 to 10 and 11 to 12 paid half a day's pay for working between 10 and 11 on time?—(A.) That does happen at times.

Q. Does it sometimes happen that men are employed by two, three, or even four different employers on the same day?—(A.) I should say it is possible to happen for two other employers, probably, as well as ourselves.

The CHAIRMAN: We do not want to detain you, but it is occurring to several of us here: what has this to do with the men? It points to better co-operation on the part of the cargo receivers. What has this to do with the man; if he is there and willing to work, and is delayed for an hour, why should not he be paid?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I would respectfully submit when you are considering the question as to whether or not the present payment of the money is sufficient, that it is relevant to consider the circumstances which give rise to a very substantial addition over and above the rates that appear in the list that has been put before you; and, secondly, my Lord, I should like to draw the Court's attention to this: when my learned leader opened this case and mentioned this sort of thing as happening at Hull, and what its effect would be upon the guaranteed day—or, as we understood it at that time, half-day—it was rather jeered at by my friend, Mr. Bevin, and those supporting him, as a thing that never occurred. We therefore thought it right that that statement should be substantiated.

The CHAIRMAN: I am very loath to interfere with you, because you are experienced Counsel, but I would rather like to say to you that the witness with some reluctance has admitted that such a thing does occur. You put it to him at length, he pauses for a little, and with some reluctance

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says: Well, such a thing does occur. It is quite clear you are proving an exceptional state of facts, and it is also clear you are proving a state of facts which does not affect the primal occupation of the men, except that a good man, willing and happy to do his work, is kept there dangling his legs over the edge.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Well, my Lord, for what it is worth, I have given the evidence, and will pass from it.

The CHAIRMAN: Put it as briefly as possible.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I have already dealt with it as fully as I intended to.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, please understand we do not want you to cross-examine on this point.

Mr. BEVIN: Will you permit me to make this observation, because I was referred to as jeering. What I laughed at was the perpetuation of a system in any port where three or four merchants went into the hold of one ship discharging the cargo. I laughed at the ridiculous nature of that perpetuation.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what one of my very experienced colleagues calls attention to, it is a question of organisation.—(A.) The difficulty arises in this way, that we work on the piece, and another wharfinger works on the day rate, and the men say they work under the agreement for a minimum half-day; consequently they get so many hours piece-rate in the morning from us, and a half-day's rate from the other wharfingers. That is why the point was raised.

The CHAIRMAN: Please understand nobody was blaming you; you are only giving evidence of a state of matters that does not appear to us to bear on the real point of our Inquiry.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Do you find that your men prefer to work piece work?—(A.) I do.

Q. What about the timber trade? Do you have anything to do with that?—(A.) No, I know nothing about the trade, excepting that they work all their timber from the quay at piece rate, and it is very successful, and I am particularly anxious that something should be done to remove this great difficulty. A large number of firms, especially in the grain and food trade, are for piece work. The men go down to the ship every morning with the fullest intention of getting the best out of the ship they can in the eight hours. The loss of time of nearly an hour a day, which I am sure is the truth, is a great blow to a piece worker, and the anomaly is this, that the stevedore's men are paid by the day, and there is no incentive for them to get over-excited about a day's work. If we could arrive at some scheme—I have thought over this, and longed for it for seven or ten years—if we could evolve some scheme from this Court by which the stevedore's men could, say, have a minimum half-day, for, as Mr. Fenton, one of the witnesses, said, a very fair and reasonable outturn of tonnage, and a handsome bonus for every ton over that for the half-day, or the day I have not the slightest hesitation in saying the output from Hull steamers would go up 40 per cent. within three months of that being put in force.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I would like to ask the witness on that point this: whether the merchants at Hull, in order to make a system of that kind workable, are prepared to withdraw their right to go aboard the ships?—(A.) I am not a merchant—I could not say.

Q. But you act for them?—(A.) Could I say this to you—that I think the Hull representatives of your great organisation know this, that there is a very strong feeling, a friendly feeling, in Hull, for working with the Union, as far as the transport workers are concerned.

Q. I am not objecting to that?—(A.) And I think we are in that frame of mind now that we want to meet you and get things put on to a satisfactory basis whereby the men could take more money away.

Q. The point I am putting to you is this: you are suggesting to the Court that if certain changes of condition were made by the workmen, the output could be increased. That was your point, was not it?—(A.) Yes, and they would be better paid for it.

Q. Well, now then, if we can show that one of the difficulties in the way of that change is the fact that the merchant is holding on to an old custom which makes the change unworkable, will your side be prepared to make the change equally with us?—(A.) I cannot speak for the merchants, but I will undertake to use my influence, and we shall be most pleased to meet your Union officials. I should not like your Lordship to conclude that there is any ill feeling; we have tried to cultivate a friendly feeling, and the rule now with our Conciliation Joint Committee is this: if there are any disputes with my men, I say: Go to your Union leader, ask him to call a meeting, and I think your Hull delegate will say that we get on very well together.

*Q. I believe you are the most meritorious witness that has been in the box, but I am not questioning you on that point at all. The merchants may have the very best intentions, they may be very friendly until it comes to giving us something—like the workmen. That is the point I am trying to get to. Now if the workmen are asked to give up an old custom which has been in operation ever since Hull has been Hull, would the merchant equally co-operate by giving up some of his old vested customs to make the thing workable?—You have quoted Bristol. The reason I ask you is that changes have had to be made in the rights of the merchant to interfere with the discharge of cargo in order to make that system workable at Bristol. I am asking you whether, in your opinion, the merchants at Hull will be equally willing, provided we can induce the men to make the change, to meet them by giving up their old customs?—(A.) I believe (I cannot speak for the merchants, as I am not one) that every endeavour would be made to come to a friendly and a practical working arrangement on new lines if you can give us the output.

Q. And they will remove everything that would prevent the men giving the output, or hanging about?—(A.) You must not force it too far; it is a very complicated thing.

Q. If you are going to ask the men to go on piece, instead of day, and if you are going to ask the men to give the output, must not the basis of the bargain be that the opportunity is there without interference to give the output? That is what I am asking?—(A.) That is negotiation; but I am sure we are willing to meet you. I cannot say anything more than that.

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The CHAIRMAN: Is not it this way: that you think that better organisation in the particulars you have mentioned would increase the output by no less than 40 per cent.—(A.) I think it would; but I might say, my Lord—

Q. Do not take away from that; that is a real ray of light for us all.—(A.) Can I tell you how I am personally troubled in doing the work that I have to do in Hull?

Q. Yes, just describe it.—(A.) On the receivers' side we are down as piece workers, and if they can get a fair run in the day they make a better wage always than the day worker, but the stevedore's men are day workers, and the confusion arises that two-thirds of the work is being done on piece work and one-third on day work. I want to make some arrangement to bring them all on to a piece basis.

Q. Excuse my saying so, but that is just what you said before. I want to ask you this now; this, which would be such a good thing for Hull, and for the men, you think could be arranged quite reasonably, and ought to be arranged quite reasonably?—(A.) I think it might want a little pushing by a recommendation from this Court. After that, I believe it could be arranged.

Q. You will not have to wait long for that push, because we tell you now, and we tell you with much satisfaction, that you are the one witness in this case who has given us much satisfaction with regard to the future, in the sense that a better state of things may be looked for. Please go home to Hull with this in your pocket: this Court of Inquiry think, in view of your evidence, which it has no reason to disbelieve, that an arrangement for joint working of the kind which you have sketched out ought to be proceeded with without delay.—(A.) Thank you, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: That is our report, which you take away with you before us writing anything about it.

(The witness withdrew.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Now, my Lord, I propose to proceed with the Glasgow case.

Mr. JAMES S. SPENCER, *Sworn.*

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you a principal of Messrs. James S. Spencer and Company, Stevedores, Glasgow?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you are Vice-Chairman of the Glasgow Ship-Owners' and Dock Labour Employers' Organisation?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You are prepared to give full general evidence with regard to all sections of dock labour in the Port of Glasgow?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And also detailed evidence in regard to that section of it which deals with deep sea general cargo?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The question of labour connected with mineral traffic and labour connected with coasting traffic will be dealt with in detail by other witnesses?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The first point I want to get from you is the cost to the Port of Glasgow of the claim as put forward. I think the total cost you estimate to be something between £600,000 and £700,000 per annum?—(A.) £621,196.

Q. That is in respect of the first two items only of the claim?—(A.) That is in respect of the claim for day work wages and overtime.

Q. In respect of day work first, and, secondly, overtime, the figure you give is £621,196?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. Will you consider the Port of Glasgow for a moment and tell me shortly what, in your view, are the circumstances which distinguish that Port from other ports in respect of the nature of the docks, the cargo, mode of handling, distribution, etc.?—(A.) The Port of Glasgow has got no docks with gates; the tide flows in and out of the docks, and the ships are affected by the rise and fall of the tide continually. The cargo is all loaded from the quay or discharged on to the quay, with a few exceptions; there is practically no barge work; there is a little, but it is a mere trifle. The cargo is delivered and taken away from the quay after discharge, or brought previous to loading, partly by cart and partly by rail in the case of general cargo. In the case of mineral traffic it is entirely by rail. The sheds are purely transit sheds. There are no warehouses adjacent to the docks, and the docks themselves are open from the roadways; that is to say, there is no restriction of traffic through the roadways of the docks, such as you have in some ports where the docks are enclosed.

The CHAIRMAN: There are no dock gates?—(A.) There are no gates on the roadways into the docks. There are gates on some of them, but they are never closed, except in the case of Sundays and holidays—there is free traffic. So that labour comes down to the docks and does not require to remain outside the docks previous to the engagement; it can go right in. The men go right in to the ship on which they know they are going to be employed. I think these are the chief features. The docks extend over about seven miles of the river. There is one dock, by the by, which I omitted to mention, Rothesay dock, which is enclosed; there is no access to it from the roadway. It is entirely enclosed, so only people get admission to it who have business there.

Q. Is that a particular kind of traffic?—(A.) That is practically all mineral traffic—ore and coal.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Are those special local conditions reflected in the nature of the labour and the class of the labour required to work the Port?—(A.) The nature of the labour and the class of the labour? It rather affects the methods which require to be adopted in handling the work. You mean the nature of the work they perform. The methods which are used for loading cargoes obviously must be different from the methods which are used in a port which has dock gates. There there is no rise or fall in the tide, and the rise and fall of the tide is a very great factor in the loading or discharging of a vessel.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the nature of the tide there?—(A.) It is roughly from 12 to 15 feet. I believe the official figure is 12 feet, but, in my experience, I have known the rise and fall very much greater than that, and I think that 14 to 15 feet is perhaps nearer the fact. The rise and fall of the tide prevents to a large extent, not wholly, the use of stages for loading such as are used in Liverpool and, I think, in London, where vessels are practically always at the same level except so far as they fall with the process of loading. Consequently there is a greater difficulty in putting in a cargo than there is in a port where the docks have

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gates, because not having the use of stages they must use derricks, which are swung, or which are used by means of buckling falls together; consequently it is hardly possible to use more than two derricks at any one hatch at any one time. That is a very great factor, of course, in the despatch of vessels.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: So that in considering how the traffic is worked at any particular port you must have regard to the natural conditions and the other port conditions?—(A.) That is so. When I say that there are some vessels in Glasgow which are worked with stages, they are not stages similar to those which are used in Liverpool, or other ports with dock gates. They consist of long planks 36 feet long 18 inches broad, and 6 inches thick, which rest on the side of the ship at one end and on the quay at the other end, and allow for the rise and fall of the tide. But they can only be used on a small class of vessel, because if they are used on a big class of vessel the angles of the rise and fall of the vessel are too great, and make the working of them dangerous.

Q. I do not want to ask you any more about the special local conditions of the Port of Glasgow. I want to come now to the persons who are the principal employers of dock labour in Glasgow. Have you prepared a statement which shows that?—(A.) Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think it will be convenient if we put in now all Mr. Spencer's statements in regard to Glasgow.

(*The bundle of statements was handed in and marked H.16.)

Q. On Statement 2 do you show the principal direct employers of dock labour in Glasgow, and the classes of labour which they employ?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They include shipowners and master stevedores, employing the different classes of men set out in that statement?—(A.) That is true. The heading, "Master Stevedores," also includes master porters. It is not mentioned on this list, but it is meant to include them.

Q. Those employers referred to in that statement are responsible for the employment of more than 80 per cent. of the casual dock labour in Glasgow?—(A.) That is so.

Q. We may pass from that to the next statement which you have prepared for the information of the Court showing the hours of labour, rates of pay for day work, overtime work, and week-end work, of those different sections of labour already referred to?—(A.) Yes. That is Statement 3 in the bundle.

Q. On that statement are there seven different classes of men: firstly, general cargo men; secondly, grainweighers; thirdly, timber men; fourthly, coalmen; fifthly, ore-men; sixthly, wharfinger staff; and, seventhly, Clyde Trust Employees?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In regard to the latter class a witness from the Clyde Trust will speak to them. I think that statement may be taken to speak for itself, unless you would like to make any point upon it before we pass from it.—(A.) I do not think so. I think it is a perfectly clear statement of the rates of pay—unless the Court would wish me to read them out. The general cargo men receive now, as is shown there, 1s. 9d. per hour, which works out at 14s. per day, and 7s. per half-day; but that is not the minimum rate for Glasgow. You will see under "Coasting Liners" No. 1 (c), 1s. 6½d.

* See Appendices Nos. 75-83.

per hour, which works out at 12s. 4d. per day, or 6s. 2d. per half day. That is the minimum rate for the casual workers in the port of Glasgow. You will observe that that rate only applies to about 1,000 men. That figure of 1,000 men is an approximate figure; it is really impossible to say actually how many men it does apply to; and I think that possibly it is a maximum figure.

The CHAIRMAN: Could you state the total number employed in Glasgow?—(A.) We have estimated that at 8,470 for casual labour without the Clyde Trust employees.

Q. That is your total staff?—(A.) No, that is casual men. In addition to that there are 1,400 men, Clyde Trust employees, who are practically all permanent men.

Q. That brings you up to 9,870?—(A.) Yes.

Q. When you speak of 8,470 casual men you do not necessarily mean unemployed men?—(A.) No.

Q. You mean men who have a regular billet?—(A.) Yes, paid daily.

Q. This is a very interesting statement on page 3. Would you mind just going through it. You have started with the 14s. a day. Is the 12s. 4d. for the coasting liner men the minimum?—(A.) It is the minimum for the casual worker, but it is not the minimum for the permanent employee. The permanent employee gets less rates. Some of the wharfinger staff permanent men do not get that—the watchmen, for instance—and there are a number of Clyde Trust employees who do not get such high wages as that, but I would prefer that the Clyde Trust witness should give you that information.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We will just go quickly through this Statement 3. You have given the rates for the general cargo men. What about the grainweighers?—(A.) The grainweighers are practically the only piece workers at Glasgow. There is a small section of men engaged in loading wagons who are paid on piece-work rates, but the grainweighers generally speaking are the only piece workers in Glasgow. They receive about 17s. 6d. per 100 bags; that is, weighed by the hand-weighing machine. They very seldom work overtime; it is practically all day work.

Q. Now take the timber men?—(A.) The timber men are paid a higher rate than the general cargo men, and they are paid differing rates in different parts of the harbour. In the upper part of the harbour they are paid 1s. 9½d. per hour, and in the lower part of the harbour they are paid 1s. 10½d. per hour.

The CHAIRMAN: 1s. 9½d. is 14s. 4d. a day?—(A.) Yes, and 1s. 10½d. an hour is 15s. a day.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: As illustrating the grounds on which these differentials are built up, can you tell me why the timber men in the upper part of the harbour and in the lower part of the harbour are paid different rates of pay?—(A.) The reason for the timber men being paid the higher rate in the lower part of the harbour is because they have a distance to travel to the work there, which they do not have in the upper part of the harbour, because they live close to the work there, but they have to go further afield to go to the lower part of the harbour.

Q. So that the difference in rate of pay is not an unmeaning difference, but it is something that is founded on an economic difference in the working conditions.—(A.) That is right.

Q. Now take the coal men.—(A.) The coal men

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receive 1s. 11½d. per hour, which makes 15s. 8d. per day. The coal men receive the same rate of pay by day as by night; there is no overtime rate for coal.

Q. I was coming later to some rather interesting facts in regard to the relative rates of pay of coal men and ore men. It is on the same Table, Statement 3. Under the original agreement of 1912 were coal men paid the same rate for both day work and night work?—(A.) Yes, coal men were paid the same rate for day work and night work.

Q. Was the rate they were paid, in fact, a penny per hour more than the day rate for general cargo?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Were there two working periods, a day period of 10 hours and a night period of 11 hours.—A. That is so.

Q. Each period worked by different men?—A. Yes—not necessarily by different men, but usually by different men. There was no regular night shift in the sense that one set of men took day work regularly, and another set of men took night work regularly; that is not the case and never was the case; but the men elected either to go on the day shift or the night shift when there was a change made. The work at coal in Glasgow you must understand is not continuous, there are breaks, and sometimes it happens, and does happen still, that for a portion of the day at the coaling berth there is no vessel there and no work going on. It very often happens that there may be a few hours work done during the day, and a full night, or it may be the other way about. There is no continuous work in that sense, so there is no regular shift work.

Q. But in respect of both the day work and the night work the same rate of pay was in operation? (A.) That is right. That is for coal.

Q. Now let me come to the ore men's rate. Was that at one time fixed at 1d. per hour over the general cargo rate?—(A.) Yes, the same as the coal men.

Q. Was the reason for that this, that the work was regarded as being of a disagreeable character?—Yes. They also had in addition certain rates for dusty and dirty ores.

Q. But in 1912, at the instance of the Union, was a flat rate of 2d. per hour over the general cargo rate fixed to cover all the ores, dusty and dirty, and night work and overtime?—(A.) That is correct. A rate of 2d. per hour over general cargo rate was fixed, and the rates which had previously been paid for dirty and dusty ores were wiped out.

Q. Now, to show how these different local rates react one on another, we have got to the stage that the coal men received the same rate for day work and night work—namely, a penny an hour more than general cargo rate, and the ore men received 2d. an hour over the general cargo day rate?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Some time after that did the ore men ask for a revision of their rate, and were extra rates then conceded?—(A.) That is so. They asked for an overtime rate, and they asked for the rates which they had previously been paid for dusty and dirty ores to be reconsidered, and to be applied again, and that was done. Immediately after that was done, that put them back into their previous position, except that they received a penny per hour more than they had before; in other words, they were then getting the dusty ore rates before they got the penny, and that made them in the same position relative to the coal men, except that they were now getting a penny per hour more. The coal men shortly after were

minded that their own rates should be brought up to that level, so as to bring the relative position back to what it was before.

Q. No sooner were the rates of the ore men lifted in the way you have described than the coal men came forward with the demand to have the pre-existing differential once more established?—(A.) Yes. The effect of that was to put them in the same position as they were in previous to that arrangement—that is to say, they were now 2d. per hour over the general cargo men, but the dirty and dusty ore rates were re-established, and it put them in the same position relative to each other. At that time also the general cargo men received certain concessions in the way of dirty and dusty rates for objectionable cargo, but they did not get any increase in the ordinary rate.

Q. Having regard to your special experience concerning these local differentials, do you think it is practical to wipe them out and do away with them altogether?—(A.) I do not think so. I do not think you could do that.

Q. For example, where that was effected as between coal men and ore men, as you pointed out, you immediately afterwards had to re-establish the old differentials?—(A.) That is so. You might have an arrangement of that sort carried out temporarily, but it would not last for any length of time.

Q. Having become one of the traditional customs of the port?—(A.) That is so. There was another instance of the same sort of thing. The Committee on Production gave an award in June, 1917. I do not think I have a copy of that award with me, but it can be produced. They granted an increase in the day rates, but no increase in overtime rates for time workers; and an increase in overtime rates, but no increase in the day rates of the piece workers engaged in discharging ore. It was quite unworkable, because it disturbed the pre-existing differentials, and we had to make a joint application to the Court to have it put right.

Q. However attractive that was as a theoretical proposition in the tranquility of Whitehall, you could not bring it into practical operation at Clyde side?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Once again showing that you cannot, by a stroke of the pen, wipe out these traditional differentials?—(A.) No, I do not think it is reasonable to expect it, because most of these differentials have real reasons for their existence, and if those causes exist you cannot expect to be able to say: "We will wipe them all out," because they will re-act and bring about the same result later on.

Q. If you have no grievance about it, the men think they have, and it comes to the same thing?—(A.) Yes.

Q. We have gone down this Statement No. 3, just sketching the main details of the different rates as far as the wharfingers staff is concerned. What are the rates in respect of the wharfingers staff? They are of two kinds, are they not? One set of rates for casual workers, and another set of rates for weekly workers?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Perhaps you will just state what they are in the two cases?—(A.) The casual rate is 13s. 6d. per day. The weekly wharfinger has his wages based on that figure to a certain extent, but a great deal depends upon a man's length of service, his capacities, and so on. The weekly wharfinger is on a different basis, and there is no real settled rate of pay for them.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there many of these watchmen?—(A.) Yes, a good number.

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Q. Are they old men?—(A.) Mostly old men and some disabled.

Q. Disabled from doing other work?—(A.) Yes, disabled either through injury or sickness. Mostly they are old men, and mostly old dockers.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Now we will pass from Statement No. 3. I want to ask you one or two questions on the question of the average weekly earnings. Have you gone into that question?—(A.) I have.

Q. Have you endeavoured to arrive at a statement of what the average weekly earnings are?—(A.) Yes, I have done so. I have tried to arrive at a statement which would give some indication of the weekly earnings of general cargo workers particularly in the port, but it is a very difficult thing to arrive at an accurate statement of these wages, because we have no clearing house, we have no registration, we have no means whereby we can get the correct information, except simply by asking employers to let us have the details of the work and the wages. That we have got as far as we could possibly get it, and we find that the average wages, or at least what appears to us to be the average wages, of a docker who is getting fairly good employment, is £4 16s. per week.

Mr. BEN TILLET: Is that with overtime?—(A.) That is excluding the coasters.

Q. Is that with overtime?—(A.) Yes, I have taken the whole thing, overtime and all. If you are dealing with day time only, the docker could earn during day work hours, provided he were employed during all the hours, £3 17s. per week. That is the general cargo docker, the liner. The coasting line docker comes out at £3 7s. 10d. per week, and the timber man £4 2s. 6d.

The CHAIRMAN: That is £4 2s. 6d. for a day of eight hours?—(A.) £4 2s. 6d. for 44 hours' work.

Q. For 5½ days of eight hours each?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It is not the actual earnings, but they are possible earnings if they work a full week?—(A.) Yes. That is all time work.

Q. Then with regard to the coal men?—(A.) Coal men, £4 6s. 4d.; ore men, £4 6s. 4d. The grain-weighers are piece workers, and we have got to make an estimate there, when we come to deal with their wages per week. We have had the question looked into, and, estimating an average output of 640 bags per day, it works out at £6 3s. 2d. per week.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship will turn to Statement 4, column 5, you will find these figures collated. (*To the Witness*): Will you just check what I have told his Lordship, and see if that is correct?—(A.) Yes, these figures are to be found in statement 4, as I have given them to you. You will find in Statement 4 the rates which were paid in 1914 and in 1919.

Q. While we are on Statement 4 we had better just complete it. Does that give a comparison of the wages paid to dock labourers in August, 1914, and November, 1919?—(A.) That is right.

Q. In columns 2 and 3 do you show the rates per hour in August, 1914, and November, 1919, for day time and for overtime?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then in column 4 the increase in the present hourly rates over August, 1914?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then in column 5 the earnings in a full week with no overtime work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then in column 6 the increase in the earnings in the present 44-hours week over the earnings in the pre-war week of 56 hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There is one matter you have referred to, and I want to see what the facts are. You have referred to overtime payments. Is it to be assumed that a man who is paid overtime has, in fact, worked the full two half days, or is it merely the rate of pay for the hours worked after the close of the two half days, irrespective of whether one or both half days have been worked?—(A.) No. Overtime is not understood in the sense that it is time after a man has worked during the day, but overtime rates of pay to the man who goes out to his work at night, not having worked during the day; so that when you talk of overtime I think a better term would be night time. In arriving at this wage of £4 16s., which I mentioned included overtime, it does not follow that the men who earn that—it is only an average wage—were working during the day and part of the night. Many of them who contribute to make this average were working at night only, and not during the day at all probably, or working a very small proportion of the week during the day. There is an infinite variety in the hours of employment. May I elaborate that point while I am on it? I looked into the matter with regard to our own employment and I found great difficulty in arriving at an average, because there were large numbers of men who only worked in the employment one day in the week or two days in the week, and it was impossible to bring those men into an average so far as their wages were concerned, because they might have been working, and probably were working, elsewhere during the rest of the week. What I did was, I took the ten most regularly employed gangs over a period of the last twelve weeks of last year, and I found that those men earned £4 17s. 9d. right through those 12 weeks on an average, and I took that period of 12 weeks for this reason, that it was the most normal period that we have had since the ending of the war. The period earlier in 1919 was not a normal period, we had not got over the Armistice, things were not settled down, and, while I would not like to say that the last 12 weeks was an absolutely normal period, it was the only period we could get approaching the normal. If you turn to Statement 5 you will find that there the men who worked in those 12 weeks worked in all 6,268 hours, of which 2,251 were overtime. I think you will find that that works out roughly at 36 per cent. overtime, and 64 per cent. day time of the total hours worked, but if you apply the 44 hours' week, and say that overtime only counts after a man has worked his 44 hours' week, that is in the sense of working more hours in the week than it is possible to work during the day time hours, you will find that those gangs averaged only 8½ hours' overtime in any one week out of the 12. That is taking the average.

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning, at 10.30 o'clock.)

TWELFTH DAY.

Friday, February 27th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair)

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Mr. JAMES S. SPENCER, *recalled*.

Examination by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY (continued).

Q. In Glasgow you have an Agreement, have you not, prescribing the terms and conditions of dock labour in the port?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That Agreement is Statement No. 1 in the bundle H. 15 handed in to the Court yesterday?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Under that Agreement, is there a Joint Negotiating Committee constituted?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do the objects of that Committee appear on the first page of the Agreement?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Does the Agreement state this: "The objects of this Agreement and the aims of the Joint Negotiating Committee are: (a) To foster and encourage a good feeling between the employers and the employees. (b) To maintain good wages by ensuring steady work during the shorter working week now arranged for, and to look after the welfare of the employees. (c) To ensure that the work of the Harbour will be carried on in the most efficient manner, with a view to the rapid handling of cargo and despatch of ships?"—(A.) Yes.

Q. In your view, is the implementing of those three objects a vital matter in the interests of the employers, of the employees, and also of the public?—(A.) Assuredly so.

Q. Then does Clause 1 of the Agreement say: "There shall be a Joint Committee composed of representatives of the employers and representatives of the Union, known as The Glasgow Dock Labour Joint Negotiating Committee, to which disputes in connection with any of the following questions shall be referred for settlement, viz.: (a) Interpretation of the Agreement. (b) Claims or complaints by employers or by employees arising out of the operation of the Agreement. (c) Revision of rates of pay or hours of work. (d) The conditions of employment for any particular class of work. (e) Any question relating to the employment of dock labour in the port?"—(A.) Yes. The Joint Negotiating Committee has been of very great service to the work of the port, and we have found it a most excellent means of adjusting differences which the men have from time to time with their employers in regard to matters of dispute, claims for additional wages owing to exceptional conditions of cargo, and also adjusting any matters of more importance which may come up from time to time. Under this Agreement we have had for a number of years a system of inspecting cargoes by sending down representatives of employers who inspect the cargoes in conjunction with representatives from the Union, to ascertain what the real conditions are, and to what extent the workmen should be remunerated over and above the regular scale of wages in consideration of the objectionable nature of the work—matters of that kind. In this Agreement I think I am correct in saying that we had a clause which did away with that system, and no further claims were to be made in respect of such matters, but we found that it was not a workable plan, and we have gone back to a considerable extent to the old arrangement.

The CHAIRMAN: That is, inspecting cargoes?—(A.) Inspecting cargoes which may be of an exceptional nature. We do get these from time to time.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: In your view, in an industry of such complexity as dock or port labour, is it essential that all these questions should be

considered and adjusted upon a local basis?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Clause 2 of the Agreement provides: "The Joint Negotiating Committee shall have general powers to consider and deal with any questions concerning the mutual welfare of the employers and the employees."—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is not a mere paper provision, but it is actively carried out by your energetic Committee in Glasgow?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Your organisation and procedure here seem to be so admirably worked out that I want, with your assistance, to emphasise one or two other points connected with this important Committee. Clause 3 provides: "The Joint Negotiating Committee will give every facility for the prompt settlement of questions referred to it for settlement. Any disputes or claims shall be promptly notified in writing to the Secretary, and the Joint Negotiating Committee shall, if necessary, meet as soon as convenient thereafter." Then Clause 4 is a provision of importance, and one worthy of general consideration: "In the event of failure to settle any questions referred to it, the Joint Negotiating Committee shall have power to appoint a Neutral Chairman, who, presiding over equal numbers of representatives of each side, a total of five, including the neutral chairman, being a quorum, shall decide the question in dispute."—(A.) That is so. I would like to say about that, that as an illustration of how efficiently the Committee has worked we have only had on two occasions decisions from the neutral chairman. In one of these, the first of them, the chairman decided in favour of the employers' view, and in the second one in favour of the men.

The CHAIRMAN: Who was the chairman?—(A.) It is some time ago now, and I can hardly remember the name, but I think Sheriff Craigie was the chairman in the second instance.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It was Sheriff Thompson, was it not?—(A.) Sheriff Thompson in the first instance, I think, and Sheriff Craigie in the second instance.

Q. That is right, I think.—(A.) We have now another case for a neutral chairman, and I understand that Sheriff Fife is going to give the decision now; but in all the years that this has been in existence we have only had those cases, one of which is still to be decided; and really while it is an objectionable thing in a way to have to refer cases to a neutral chairman—it would be much better if we could decide by ourselves—at the same time it is better to have a neutral chairman and to get the matter settled than to go on wrangling.

Q. You remember that the Transport Workers' Federation official from Glasgow was in the Box and gave evidence about the registration scheme?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And that there appeared to be some dubiety in his mind as to whether suggestions from outside could be imposed in respect of registration upon the Glasgow dock workers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They do find it possible to live together and work under this scheme of, may I call it, local home rule, and you find it works well?—(A.) Yes, it does. It works very well indeed, and on many occasions we get assistance from the men in working out the provisions of the Agreement.

Q. Then is there a very important provision in paragraph 5 of the Agreement: "Decisions of the Joint Negotiating Committee on disputes and claims referred to it for settlement shall be binding on both sides, and shall be incorporated in the Agreement."—(A.) That is so.

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Q. If we may draw my Lord's attention to one or two other provisions of importance, paragraph 7 at the top of page 3 provides: "Pending the Joint Negotiating Committee's decision on any question or dispute referred to it, work shall not be stopped or interrupted."—(A.) That is right. That, unfortunately, is not always adhered to by the men. The men fairly often, when a dispute arises, stop work before any decision has been arrived at. I must say that I am strongly of opinion that the union officials do their best to prevent anything of that kind, and they certainly do get the men to resume work pending a decision by the Joint Committee. It is rather an unfortunate thing that that should take place, but at the same time everything I think is done by them to avoid incidents of that kind.

Q. Anyhow it is your sincere hope that one of the results of this Inquiry may be the implementing of the men of a provision such as this: No stoppage until disputes have been settled in a constitutional manner?—(A.) The sort of circumstances sometimes control it. For instance, if work is going on at a vessel, and the work is coming near completion, and circumstances arise which the men think entitle them to some extra remuneration, then they say, "There is no time for inspection here; the work will be finished; we will stop." That sort of thing goes on. There are other times also when perhaps circumstances which are not quite so favourable to the men occur, and they will stop, but there is always some reason of that kind behind it.

Q. But your desire is that the matter should be left to collective bargaining between the employers and the trade unions, and should not be a matter for pressure by the men apart from their leaders on their own account?—(A.) Quite. It simply comes to be a matter of trust in cases of that kind.

Q. Clause 9 is a clause upon which you want to say something, I think: "The employer shall be free to adopt the method of work which he thinks is best suited for his trade, and shall regulate the size of slings and other loads, with due regard to safety and economical working, and according to present practice." You have some difficulty from time to time in regard to that clause?—(A.) Yes, there is. The men regulate the slings to some extent themselves—to a considerable extent; but I think in regard to the working of slings, in my personal experience it is very often a matter of temper—the sort of spirit which happens to guide the men at the time. Sometimes men work quite all right; at other times they seem to take a notion that they are going to reduce things a bit, and so on. You cannot lay it down, so far as my experience goes, in Glasgow that the men are systematically cutting down slings. They do in certain classes of cargo.

Q. But there are particular instances where the men, apart from the trade union officials, do take a short-sighted view and insist upon cutting down the slings?—(A.) That is so. It does happen, but I would not like to say that it is general. I do not think it is general.

Q. But that is a sort of short-sighted policy which you hope may be remedied by the report of this Court?—(A.) Quite. In connection with that I think there is a certain danger to Glasgow in this, that slings have now been regulated to a considerable extent by the methods of working which are presently adopted in the port, but it is contemplated to alter these methods, and to use machinery to a considerable extent in place of hand labour; and it might be that the regulation of the slings which we have to-day would affect the full use of that machinery; in other words the

machinery would be capable of dealing with much greater loads than the men are capable of dealing with, but still the men might refuse to be put on those slings

Q. In other words, it would be a serious obstruction to the introduction of efficient machinery if this short-sighted policy of limiting slings were to be allowed to continue?—(A.) That is so. The general understanding with regard to slings was that a sling should weigh about 10 cwt. That is an old-established thing, and goes right away back in my experience to thirty-five years. At that time a great deal of the work was done, of course, on old sailing vessels, and the men always worked up to that figure of 10 cwt. as being a reasonable load for a man to work on a truck; but that again, of course, is subject to this, that 10 cwt. is really too great a load if you have a certain kind of cargo, whereas 15 cwt. of another kind of cargo could be handled more easily, owing to the manner in which the weight lies upon the truck which is used. Really the 10 cwt. is just a sort of average figure to guide them—a basic figure.

Q. I want you to turn to paragraph 10 of the Agreement: "All facilities will be given by the Union for the working of any mechanical appliances which may be introduced to facilitate the work of the Harbour."—(A.) Yes.

Q. Notwithstanding that, do you find yourself impeded by sections of the men in respect of the introduction of mechanical appliances?—(A.) We have had an instance of that recently. The Donaldson Line has introduced a grain-weighing machine, a machine which does the whole of the work of weighing and bagging by electric power. It is an electrically-driven weighing machine, and it does, according to the makers of the machine, 2,400 bags in a day, working a double scale, and employing six men to do that work. The employers entered into negotiations with the men to have this machine worked, and as to the rates which were to be paid for it, but the men would not agree to work it at a rate which was at all reasonable. They contended, of course, or, rather, I think they objected to it, largely because they considered that it displaced labour. The machine, we ultimately decided, would probably do 1,800 bags. Putting aside the manufacturers' figure of 2,400 bags, we reduced that in our negotiations with the men to 1,800 bags, and we said that, taking it on that basis, we were willing to pay them 10s. 0d.—ultimately, it came to 10s. 0d.; we offered a lower figure than that to begin with, but ultimately, as a result of the discussion with the men, it came to 10s. 0d.—per ten tons, or per 100 bags—they are 2-cwt. bags. The men refused to accept that, although that rate would have given them 30s. 0d. as against something like 21s. 0d. or 22s. 0d., I think, for their day's work. That is to say, we were offering the men better rates than they would make on the hand-weighing machine by a matter of somewhere between 8s. 0d. and 10s. 0d. per day, but still they refused to let the machine work, and it has now been lying idle, I think, for a matter of nine or ten months. One point about this machine was this, that it saved the labour which the man who puts the bag over his shoulder has to undergo when he is working a hand machine. It did away with that work altogether. There was nothing but trimming with this machine and the man holding the bag. The bag was never lifted on the man's shoulder at all. With the present hand weighing machine, every bag which is weighed has to go over a man's shoulder.

Q. Charges have been made in the course of this case against the employers of insisting upon men

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handling manually grain which could be handled mechanically; you have heard that?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Here in Glasgow a very definite attempt has been made to substitute mechanical handling for manual handling?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. And, as I understand it, the effect of the machine would have been at once, as a minimum, to have increased the men's earnings by 8s. 0d. to 10s. 0d. per day?—(A.) Yes, I should think so.

Q. But, notwithstanding that, they have refused to allow you to do exactly what Mr. Bevin has been charging other employers with not doing.—(A.) That is correct. Of course, there is one point about it from the men's point of view. I want to be quite fair, and I want to let you understand what I think is their point of view.

Q. Quite. We want to get that.—(A.) It is this: that this machine will do the work of three hand-weighing machines in the same time; on a hand-weighing machine you have five men employed, and on this weighing machine you would have six, so that three hand-weighing machines would be employing fifteen men against six for the same amount of work. That is their position, as I understand it.

Q. That is the necessary effect, is it not, of introducing mechanical appliances in place of manual labour?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Can the efficiency of a port be promoted if mechanical appliances are prevented from being introduced, as has taken place in Glasgow?—(A.) No. It is certainly going to retard the speeding up of output if that sort of thing does take place; and at the time when this grain-weighing machine was introduced there was a great deal of bulk grain lying on the quays in Glasgow, and we were having a great deal of difficulty in getting it away. That was one of the reasons why it was brought to the port at all.

Q. This machine was the first of its kind in Glasgow?—(A.) Yes, that is so. The idea was to follow it up with others.

Q. But owing to the refusal of the men to work the machine that important line of improved equipment has now been thwarted?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Has that prevented the employer and the port authority from doing what could otherwise have been done to minimise the unfortunate congestion which exists in the port?—(A.) In the Port of Glasgow I cannot say that we have any very serious congestion, but we could, if the cargo were taken away quicker, utilise the quays to better purpose, of course.

Q. Obviously that would be the right thing to do?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So much in regard to that. There are other difficulties in Glasgow with regard to which you would like to get the assistance of the Court to have them smoothed out, for instance, in regard to coalmen—men who work the coal?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is the position in regard to that? Does paragraph 84 of the Agreement make a provision in respect of night work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Does it say in respect of coalmen: "Men taken on to start after 11 p.m. shall be paid 9s. 10d. per man for work between 11 p.m. and 4 a.m., even if paid off before 4 a.m."?—(A.) Yes. That clause has largely ceased to be operative, because the men will not start work at 11 p.m. unless they are paid as from 6 p.m., the result being, of course, that the clause has practically fallen to the ground. We cannot get men now to start at supper-time to work coal; they want to get paid for the full night, although the Agreement distinctly states that they are only entitled to payment from 11 p.m.

Q. That provision was made so recently as April,

1919, and that is a fair bargain between the union on the one side and the employers on the other?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think, as far as Glasgow is concerned, the only work now paid for in Glasgow at piecework rates is the weighing and delivery of grain?—(A.) There is a little piecework also paid to men loading grain into railway wagons.

Q. And I think the bunkering of coasting steamers, too?—(A.) Yes, that is so; but these are trifling—very small. The principal piecework is the grain-weighing.

Q. There is no other piecework except that?—(A.) No.

Q. I just wanted to ask you in respect of the amount of work in Glasgow. Is there, as a rule, sufficient work to provide employment for all the available union labour?—(A.) Yes, I think so, especially recently. That, of course, was not the case during the war; there were considerable intervals of unemployment at that time; but now, I think, we have come to a better condition of affairs in regard to employment, and I think broadly one can say correctly that all the union labour can be taken up with the employment in the port. I say that for this reason, that there are still some non-union men finding employment at the port.

Q. After these general observations, I want to take you quite shortly upon the details of the claim as it affects Glasgow. Of course, my Lord, I am omitting overtime now.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Before I come to that, in order that the Glasgow information may be complete, you give on Statement 6, do you not, the proposed scheme of registration which was prepared by a sub-committee of shipowners and a committee of the men's Union in 1912, but rejected by the men on a ballot vote?—(A.) Yes, that is so. This scheme was modelled on the Liverpool Clearing House scheme. It is not exactly the same, but it is pretty nearly, and we hoped at that time, by means of this scheme, not only to deal with the Health Insurance Act and the payment of the contributions to that, but also to provide a means of finding out what the dock labour really was doing, what was the employment, who were the men who were receiving employment, and what rank and kind of men they were. We hoped to find some means of dealing with the question of casualisation—that was really what was at the back of it—and although we did not hope that the Clearing House Scheme would do away with casual labour, we expected to be provided with sufficient information to enable us to deal with it, perhaps, in some effective way which would be considered after we had the information. That was really what was behind it. It was turned down on a vote by the men. The men, I think, at that time thought that this scheme would militate against the power of their Union; they thought that it would take the place of the Union largely in regard to the employment of labour in the port, and I think that was the reason that they objected to it. There was no such intention; at any rate, there was no intention of that sort in the minds of the shipowners, because I may be perfectly frank with you, and tell you that many of the shipowners did not approve of it for the very same reason for which the men disapproved of it, only in the opposite direction: they thought it would place the power more into the hands of the Union. Some of the shipowners, I say, thought that; but I think that, had the men accepted it, it would have been

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accepted by the shipowners. I am quite certain of that.

Q. Anyway, this represents the carefully-considered proposals of an important Committee of Shipowners, and a Committee of the Trade Unions, as being the scheme of local registration best suited to local conditions?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Just to complete the story on that, a further scheme was drafted in 1917?—(A.) It was rejected last year, but it had been considered for a long time before the rejection. I think I am right in saying we had been considering it for at least twelve months before.

Q. That scheme does not materially differ, does it, from the scheme prepared in 1912?—(A.) No, it does not differ materially except that it was a purely registration scheme. The other went further.

Q. The 1912 scheme went further?—(A.) Yes, it was a bigger scheme altogether.

Q. And it provided for a Clearing House?—(A.) It provided for a Clearing House.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that here?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY:—Yes, my Lord, your Lordship has statement No. 6 before you, no doubt.—(A.) At the foot of page 2 of the scheme, my Lord, there are the recommendations, first, that "Clearing Houses should be provided by the Government at convenient sites in the vicinity," and so on.

Q. In your view, any scheme for the registration of dock labour in Glasgow should follow this 1912 scheme, I take it?—(A.) I would rather favour it, because it seems to me that a scheme of registration only really provides nothing to go upon. You register the men, but you have no means of knowing what they are doing. A scheme of registration by itself is merely registration, and one does not know what the men are doing; it provides no means of knowing what the extent of the casualisation of the work is, and it seems to me to be a sort of half-hearted arrangement altogether. As a stepping-stone to something better, I do not object to it, but as an end in itself I see nothing in it.

Q. If one looks on page 3 of this scheme it is provided that clearing houses will be used for certain purposes: (1) Registration, (2) Payment of wages, (3) Fulfilment of employers' and men's obligations under Part 1 of the National Insurance Act, (4) Weekly meeting of Clearing House Committees, (5) "—this is very important—" Dissemination of information, (6) Provision of Post Office Savings Bank facilities subject to the Postmaster-General's assent?—(A.) That is right. That was ambitious, perhaps, but I daresay if we aimed rather high we might have hit something.

Q. Anyhow, be it an ambitious aim or not, it was the unanimous agreement of the Committee of the Employers and the Committee of the Unions?—(A.) Yes. I may tell you that this clearing house scheme was drawn up by Mr. Houghton, of the Union, and I cannot remember at the moment the name of the other Union representative, but Mr. Houghton was the most active agent, and a Mr. McGregor, of Glasgow, and myself. We four formed a Committee which was appointed to draft a scheme, and Mr. Houghton, I think, was quite in favour of it,—in fact I am quite sure he was at that time, because I think he saw that through some such scheme some benefit might come to the men in the way of regularising the work. That was the chief object of the scheme.

Q. The scheme speaks for itself, of course, but obviously, glancing through it, there are some very

important provisions.—(A.) I was dealing with the first scheme just now.

Q. I thought you were.—(A.) The second scheme was not nearly so good in some ways. There is a provision there, I think it is clause 5 in the second scheme, which is quite an unworkable thing. I question if that could ever have been applied. You will see the clause on the back of the paper, it is the Port Labour Committee's scheme.

Q. It is the paper put in as D.34 last week?—(A.) I think you will find the whole scheme at the back of the paper on page 4. I have not it before me, so I am speaking from memory, but I think it is clause 5.

The CHAIRMAN: On page 4 it says: "Scheme for registration as approved by Sub-committee." At what date was that approval?—(A.) There is no date on it, my Lord.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The circular is dated September, 1919?—(A.) On page 4, clause 5, it says: "The Secretary of the Port Labour Committee, on being satisfied that all registered men are employed or are otherwise unavailable, may sanction the issue of temporary employment tickets available for one day to additional men not on the register in sufficient numbers to meet the temporary requirements." Obviously that clause was an absolutely unworkable one but I think that the men wanted that clause; they did not like the idea of giving tickets out to men who were not registered for a lengthy period, say, of a month or so. They wanted to keep down the admission of men outside the Union, of course, and they objected to having any better clause than that put in. Obviously that clause was unworkable, and I rather think the employers would have rejected it on that account, because it would not have helped in any way. It would have placed us in this position, that in the event of a sudden influx of employment, a lot of vessels coming into the port, we would have been unable to get men to carry on the work. You must have a certain amount of elasticity.

Q. I want you to come to the claim. The first item, as you know, is for a minimum day rate of 16s. a day or at the rate of 16s. a day. The lowest rate in Glasgow to-day is paid to the men employed at the coasting berths?—(A.) That is so.

Q. They receive 12s. 4d. a day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. To raise those men to 16s. a day would be an increase of 5½d. an hour as you have shown, or 3s. 8d. per day or 20s. 2d. a week?—(A.) That is right.

Q. That would be an increase of 29.73 per cent. That would, in your view, entail a corresponding increase of all the other grades of Port Labour?—(A.) That is my opinion. I do not think you can wipe out the differentials within a port unless it is a very, very trifling differential.

Q. Is there a reason for the differential which exists between the coasting rate and the deep sea rate?—(A.) The coasting rate has always been less than the deep sea rate within my memory, which, as I said before, is 35 years. I do not think it is possible now to wipe that out. If you raise the coasting men from 12s. 4d. to 16s., that means an increase of 3s. 8d., you would have, in my opinion, to raise the general cargo men proportionately.

Q. They now get 14s., and you say that would have to be raised to 17s. 8d.?—(A.) I do not say absolutely proportionately; I do not say you require to raise that to 17s. 8d., although I have put that figure down there; you might find it possible

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to raise them by a little less; but I question if that would stand for long.

Q. I am asking you to look at it as a permanent settlement which will endure in the interests of the port?—(A.) It would not endure; it could not endure.

Q. You say that having regard to your knowledge of Clydeside psychology?—(A.) Yes. You might get the men to accept it for a time because they were getting an increase, and that would content them for a time, but after a time you would find them going back to the old conditions; you would find them reverting to what they had before and they would not be content without it.

Q. Just on that point, have you prepared and submitted in Statement 8 a comparison between the rates and hours to dock labourers in Glasgow as against the wages and hours of other classes of tradesmen and workers in the same district?—(A.) That is so. This statement has been prepared with regard to sawmillers' labourers, shipyard labourers, and general labourers in the steel trade, bricklayers' labourers, and masons' labourers, simply because we thought that these forms of labour were the forms of labour in the district which were comparable with the dock labour.

Q. I think you have probably rightly started with Statement 7; I was taking Statement 8?—(A.) I thought you said Statement 7.

Q. I did, but I went to Statement 8. We will take Statement 7 first. Does Statement 7 give a comparison of the earnings in August, 1914, and December, 1919?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Of dock labourers, and sawmillers, shipyard labourers, steel trade labourers, mason and bricklayers' labourers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is purely a comparison of labourers?—(A.) That is so; that is not skilled men.

Q. And you show, taking No. 1 dock labourers, their hours and rate in August, 1914, the increase per hour up to the present time, and their wages in August, 1914, on the basis of 56 hours, and then, again, the wages in December, 1919, on the basis of 44 hours and what the increase in wage has been for a full week—namely, 39s. 8d.?—(A.) That is right.

Q. Then you give precisely the same details in each column as respects labourers in sawmills, shipyard labourers, steel trade labourers, and masons and bricklayers labourers. In your view on the comparison are the wages of dock labourers in fair relation to the wages of the other classes of workers there mentioned?—(A.) Yes; I think if you work them out you will find that that is so. The sawmillers' labourers, who are now working 47 hours, and the regular labourers under the saw millers who are working 47 hours also, have received a slightly larger increase, but they are working longer hours, which, of course, brings down the level. It makes the increase in the rate practically the same; there is not much difference. Then when you come to the general labourers in the steel trade, who are working 47 hours, their increase has been somewhat less than the dock labourers. The bricklayers, who are working 44 hours now, are also somewhat less—37s. 8d. as against 39s. 8d.—while the masons' and bricklayers' labourers, who are working 44 hours, earn a little more, about 1s. 10d. or something like that. They are a little higher, but, taking it all through, the increases which these classes have received are practically the same within a very few pence of each other; so that just now we seem to be, in Glasgow, on a sort of level—they all seem to have received much the same increase.

Q. You have heard Mr. Bevin's proposal for eliminating so far as possible the casual element in

dock labour, and putting it on a more or less permanent basis?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If that is to be the basis in your view, then this is a proper comparison to be made?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Just to complete the comparison you give in Statement 8 the details as to wages and hours of the different classes of workers in the docks, and then, on sheets subsequent to that sheet, of the different classes of workers in the building trade and in the shipbuilding and engineering trades?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And once again, if the wages of the Port Labour are compared with the wages of the other classes of workers, in your view does it show that they are much on the same basis?—(A.) That is so; there is a very trifling difference. The skilled men there, you see, have received, taking the column at the right hand, masons £2 4s. 3d., bricklayers £2 2s. 2d., joiners £2 2s. 5d., and so on; these being skilled men, against 39s. 8d. of the dock labourer.

Q. The claim is to put the minimum men on the docks on a wage at the rate of 16s. a day, which would mean 88s. a week.—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will you turn with me to the third page of this statement, where you give the wages in the shipbuilding and engineering trade. Looking down the left-hand column of the page, you come, for example, to a class of men, engine turners and engine fitters. Is the weekly wage for the engine turner 84s. a week to-day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. On a 54-hour week?—(A.) 47 hours.

Q. I am much obliged to you; I was looking at the wrong column. On a 47-hour week it is 84s. 3d. and for an engine fitter, a skilled man, 81s. 9d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But there are certain additions to be made to that, according to the note at the bottom of the page: "Tradesmen and Labourers in Ship Yards when engaged on repair work received ½d. per hour more than the average rate when at new construction work—2s. 0d. per week additional"?—(A.) That is so, but if you take the hourly column, the column which shows the increase in the rate per hour, you will find that in all these cases the increase in rate per hour is slightly less than the increase which has been already granted to the dock labourers per hour.

Q. Although there has been in the case of these classes of men working in shipbuilding and engineering, a similar—not to the same extent, but a similar—reduction of hours as in the case of port labour?—(A.) That is so.

Q. In your view, would it be a serious thing to so alter the local wage relationship by making the port labour workers so substantially higher than the most skilled men in the engineering and shipbuilding trade?—(A.) I think if the men's claim were granted that you would inevitably have a demand for an increase of wages in every class of trade; I do not see how it could be otherwise. Why should a dock labourer receive such an exceptional increase over his pre-war rate, while other men are to remain as they are? I should certainly think that, if I were an engineering fitter, or any other of these classes, I should certainly want more than the dock labourer does. I think that is only common sense. I do not see how that could be avoided.

Q. Anyhow, you, with your knowledge of the Clydeside, tell the Court what you think would happen?—(A.) I am certain that is what would happen. I think it is quite inevitable. I think it is only setting the ball rolling, and I am afraid you will not stop it when you do set it going.

Q. It does not take much to set the ball rolling on the Clydeside, does it? Just before I pass

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away from this particular point: does the great bulk of the workers engaged in the docks on Clydeside live comparatively near the docks?—(A.) Yes, I should say that 90 per cent. of them live within a mile of their work.

Q. And in cases where they have to travel to certain docks, like Shielhall Wharf and Rothesay Dock, are they paid for their travelling time?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The next point I want to put to you is that which is worked out elaborately in Statement 9, namely, the cost to the Port of Glasgow of the two items only of the claim, firstly the increased day rate, and, secondly, the overtime rate. Although we are only dealing with the day rate at the moment, this statement is prepared, and therefore I put the whole thing in at this stage. Does that show that the total estimated cost per annum of the claim for an increased day rate, and the claim for increased overtime rates, would mean an annual charge upon the Port of Glasgow of £621,196?—(A.) Yes, that is so. That is for casual labour in the Port of Glasgow; that does not include the Clyde Navigation Trustees' employees.

Q. The employees of the Clyde Navigation Trustees are not included, and they will put in a supplemental statement giving the cost in respect of themselves?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. Is that a serious charge upon the trade of the Port of Glasgow?—(A.) £621,000 is a very serious charge upon a port like Glasgow.

Q. It may be right, or it may be wrong, to impose that charge, but, in your view, for whatever reason it is imposed, will its effect be most serious?—(A.) I should expect it would be a very serious increase to the cost of the Port, and I think it might have an effect, I do not say that it would, but it seems to me there are possibilities of it having an effect upon the trade of the Port.

Q. I think, just that my Lord may have the whole story complete, the figure of additional cost in respect of the Clyde Navigation Trustees' employees is £85,000 per annum without overtime. You do not know that, do you?—(A.) No.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We shall prove that figure later.

The CHAIRMAN: You will prove that afterwards?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Kindly give it to me now.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: £85,000 in respect only of the first item of the claim, and excluding the second item of the claim, overtime, because in the case of the Clyde Navigation Trustees it would be difficult to get a precise figure for overtime.

The CHAIRMAN: That would bring it up to £706,000 per annum; is that right?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord.

Q. In Statement 10, you have got out some figures which my Lord in the earlier stage of the proceedings said he would like, which show the effect of the claim reduced to rates per hour; and by Statement 10 you give in the first column from the left-hand side, the present rates per hour in respect of the different classes of workers, and then, in the third column from the left-hand side, what the rates demanded per hour would be under the present claim?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I only want to ask you one further question: the proposal in this case is to establish a national minimum. In your view, would the establishing of a national minimum throughout the whole country be detrimental?—(A.) I think it would. I think it would lead to trouble if a national minimum, supposing you did establish it, had no regard to the differentials which existed prior to the war, most of these differentials having real cause for their existence. I think that you would undoubtedly create trouble through the establishment of such a minimum wage. I think you must have regard to the conditions in the various localities.

Q. The differentials which have existed between port and port before the war, and between the different classes of labour in each port, in your view are the result of the long operation of economic causes?—(A.) That is so. That, of course, operates more acutely with regard to differentials within the port than it would do with regard to differentials between ports.

Q. But in establishing one uniform national minimum, you disregard those two sets of differentials?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And in your view would that be detrimental to the great port and dock industry of this country?—(A.) Yes, that is my opinion.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I have to correct one figure, my Lord, in Statement 8. If you look in the column at the head of which there is a cross placed on Statement 8, and run your eye down two lines, you will see the figure £2 17s. 0d. Will your Lordship kindly turn that into £3 17s. 0d.; it is an obvious clerical mistake.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. Before you leave the examination-in-chief, I think you have omitted something; it is inconvenient that you should bring in the Clyde Navigation Trustees' employees day-work figure, without bringing in their overtime labour.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you give me any rough idea of what their overtime would be. May I suggest to you that there must be some general idea of the proportion which overtime labour under the Clyde Navigation Trust bears to regular labour.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is true. I have just been putting that to Mr. Macfarlane, of the Clyde Navigation Trust, who will be called quite shortly, and he thinks your Lordship would be right in taking approximately the total annual cost to the Clyde Navigation Trustees in respect of (1) day rate, and (2) overtime, at £100,000 per annum.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You gave the figure of 8,400 dockers in Glasgow. In the calculation of wages you have submitted to the Court a table containing £3 17s. 0d. as the taking of cargo workers?—(A.) The table which I submitted regarding the wages is compiled from a statement of wages actually paid, which has been sent in to our Committee by the employers of labour in the port.

Q. But that would be taken, would it not, from what we would regard, in dockland, as preference gangs; you used the term "leading gangs"?—(A.) No, my particular statement which I put in,

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the £4 17s. 9d., I think was the figure taken from 10 preference gangs, as you call them—we call them leading gangs—but they were taken from the 10 gangs which get the most part of the work.

Q. But £3 17s. 0d. assumes that the man works 44 hours every week?—(A.) Which figure of £3 17s. 0d.?

Q. You state that the wages in Glasgow were £3 17s. 0d.?—(A.) That is, every worker doing a full week, doing day work only, he could earn £3 17s. 0d. I understand what you mean now.

Q. Taking the 8,400 men in Glasgow, if you could average it, have you any idea what would be the average rate paid in Glasgow to spread the work over the year. Assuming that you had a clearing house system like Liverpool, have you any idea? You remember Sir Alfred Booth, on a figure of 11s. 8d. per day, with a clearing house scheme by which they could check the earnings, showed an average wage of £2 4s., I think it was on the basis of 21,000 men in Liverpool?—(A.) Yes. It would be rather difficult for me to give you an answer to that question which would not be misleading.

Q. I know it can only be approximate?—(A.) It can only be an approximate figure, but the figure which we arrived at in regard to what you call preferential men for the whole port was £4 16s. in the general cargo trade, and that is exclusive of my £4 17s. 9d. The £4 17s. 9d. referred to my own particular case. In the coasting trade, £4 10s., these are preferential men, men who get the most of the work, and what percentage of reduction one would require to allow on these figures is a very difficult thing to answer. I should think that probably it would be, if you take in every kind of man, the very casual man and all, roughly about £4.

Q. It would be £4?—A. I think it would be roughly about £4. That would be my personal idea, but really it is only guesswork.

Q. I only want to call your attention to the fact that in Liverpool, where they have registration, the difference between the possible earnings and the actual earnings were nearly 40 per cent.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Where you have no registration scheme, where you have no stands, no organisation at all for taking on the men, would it not be reasonable to assume that it would be at least, on the average, as bad as Liverpool, which has a registration scheme?—(A.) No, I do not think it would be as bad as Liverpool; to begin with, we pay a higher wage than Liverpool.

Q. I am talking about the percentage, not the actual money. I am talking about the figure that was shown by Sir Alfred Booth from the clearing-house scheme; that shows that between the potential earnings of a man by working 44 hours and the actual earnings spread over an average there was a loss of 40 per cent. through the registration scheme by the clearing house. Allowing for the higher pay, taking the potential earnings and the actual income divided over the whole of the men of Glasgow, would it not be reasonable to assume that the effect of casualty in Glasgow would be equal to that of Liverpool with a registration scheme, you having none?—(A.) I could hardly answer the question. I am sorry I cannot, because I should like to answer it, but I really find it a very difficult thing to do. I do not know whether I pointed it out to you, but in regard to those men that we spoke of before I think there are 34 hours of these men's time that is worked during the day and 18 hours worked during the night, making 52 hours for the week.

Q. That is the leading gangs?—(A.) That is the

leading gangs. Do you suggest that on that figure there should be a reduction to get the average rate of pay of roughly 40 per cent.?

Q. Yes.—(A.) I think it would be too much.

Q. Put it another way. I am afraid I have not made myself quite clear. Supposing you have ten leading gangs and you have ten second gangs, and, say, two C. gangs, if you may put it that way?—(A.) We do not do that.

Q. It is a sort of unwritten law, though there is no rule. The foreman picks out his first men, then he has a second crowd of men as a rule. I expect Glasgow is like other places?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And then, if he is wanting more, there is the man he only sees occasionally. If you take the earnings of your leading gang, and you take the earnings of your second preference gangs, who follow in, and your extremely casual, and you lump the three together and you divide them by the total, do not you think from the types spread over in that way there would be a 40 per cent. reduction over all?—(A.) Yes, but I think it would give you a misleading result, because some of these gangs would only be employed for two or three days in the week, but it does not mean that the men who compose those gangs are not working elsewhere during the rest of the week, and that is the trouble of the whole affair; we do not know what happens.

Q. Supposing you carried that principle that I have just mentioned with your ten leading gangs over the whole Port of Glasgow from one end to the other, and you could ascertain that possibly out of the 8,400 you had 4,000 what you might term preference men, that would be a crowd following you and following the Donaldson Line, and a third somewhere else, you would absorb 50 per cent. of your men which you would regard as partially permanent, that would be the first to walk aboard the ship when the ship was ready to start. Then you would have, would you not, at least another 30 per cent. who would be on the second line of men, and then you would have the extremely casual who drop in now and again?—(A.) I see your point now.

Q. Supposing you go through the whole of the Port of Glasgow and take the average of wages in that way, if you take the figures of the potential earnings as set out in your table, do not you think the actual income spread over the whole period would be reduced by a very substantial amount?—(A.) Yes, I think it would if you reduced it in that way, but what the reduction would be I would not like to commit myself to say, not even in percentage, because I think it is such a difficult matter to arrive at in all cases.

Q. It must be approximate, both of us know that; we are both sufficiently practical for that. Now I want to take the principle of the minimum wage. You said, I think, in your last answer, or almost the last, that if there was a minimum wage it should have regard to pre-war differentials. Exactly what differentials have you got in your mind when you say that? I put this question to see how far we are apart.—(A.) Those differentials which existed in 1914 were, I think I am right in saying, differentials which existed for real reasons. During the war in many cases, owing to the increases which were given during the war, and very largely to the alteration of the hours last year, the 8-hour day, those differentials became increased; the gap became a little wider. Now it seems to me that if the standard wage were fixed it might be more acceptable to the men—I am only saying if it were fixed—if those differentials were had regard to which existed prior to the war. To my mind it has

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really been a set of more or less artificial circumstances which have increased the differentials during the war, and I think it is better to get back to what appears to me to be the natural basis.

Q. Let us just follow that up?—(A.) I may be quite wrong: that is only my opinion.

Q. Having regard to the constitution of the Court we have to pay great weight to the judgment of the Scotch. I want to put this to you. Take Glasgow, Liverpool, Manchester. All three of you are serving Scotland, the North of England, and the North-West particularly, are not you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If you take what I will call the railway range.—(A.) Glasgow, I think, does not do very much for the North of England, but if you are taking the whole area as being supplied by these three ports, yes.

Q. They would be the three nearest ports which would be in competition, would not they?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it not a fair thing to say that the minimum rate of wages, as apart from standard rate, should be the same in those three ports.—(A.) That the minimum rate of wages should be the same—I do not know that that is so. It has never been the same. It was not the same before the war: there were always differences between the rates of pay. I have no doubt that these differences had some real foundation behind them. Whether that foundation consisted of economic conditions, or whether it was a case of supply and demand—that is to say where you get a large supply of labour you get it cheaper than where you have a shorter supply—all those facts come into it, and I do not think I could commit myself to a common opinion regarding the standard minimum.

The CHAIRMAN: Could you put that in figures?

Mr. BEVIN: I want to put that in figures, my Lord. (*To the witness.*) I think the Glasgow rate pre-1911.—(A.) That was before the formation of the Union.

Q. That was before the strike of 1911—was 7d. an hour.—(A.) That is correct.

Q. You were working then a 10-hour day?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. So you had 10 sevenpences?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Seventy pence. In Liverpool the rate at that time was 6d. an hour for 9 hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So if you take the 10-hour day average, 2 hours was paid for the tenth hour overtime—(A.) Excuse me; was that 6d. an hour for porters or for ship men?

Q. I am talking of quay men.—(A.) Those are the porters.

Q. I am going to bring you to the two in a moment. The porter in Liverpool was paid 6d. per hour; the shipman approximately to within a fraction 6½d. an hour, I believe?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Pre-1911?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Liverpool worked nine hours a day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Glasgow ten hours a day. If Liverpool, which, I understand from Mr. Sexton, they principally did at that time, actually worked ten hours and got paid double for the tenth hour, so as to get the ten hours' work, does not that make the rate pre-1911 almost the same in pence per hour. You pay the same aboard and ashore, do not you?—(A.) I agree from your statement that

does appear to be so. They worked ten hours, and the additional hour they got paid for—

Q. At double in Liverpool?—(A.) At double, but that would be overtime. You cannot take in that hour which was outside the day time rates and put it into the Liverpool day time rate, and then compare the day time rate with Glasgow. I do not think that is a fair comparison.

Q. We are only trying to get a comparison. When you were giving your evidence you said that in docks you did not take overtime rates in the sense you take then in an engineering works, did not you?—(A.) I do not remember saying that.

Q. You said that it may mean night rates, and not overtime?—(A.) That is so. I treated it rather as night work, and not overtime.

Q. In dock work a man may start at dinner-time, and then get into overtime at 5 o'clock, and so on?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Liverpool, I think, at that time was in fact working on the big liners, probably ten hours, with a view to getting the ten hours' work, but the day rate finished at 5 o'clock, and you were paying double rate for the last hour. So, if you take what was actually in existence, the amount of money the two men received in the day was near about the same, I think.—(A.) I do not understand how that position could have been the case. Why was it that the Liverpool men gave away that double payment for that last hour?

Q. They have not given it away?—(A.) I understood that in Liverpool the conversion to an eight-hour day was from nine hours to eight hours; but if what you say is correct, and the day was regarded as the ten-hour day, with the last hour paid double, then it should not have been a conversion from nine to eight; it should have been a conversion from ten to eight, with the wages including that double hour. I think there must be something not quite right about that. I cannot imagine the men giving that away.

Q. It was, in fact, a nine-hour day, but I was only giving you the practice, which, as you know, is fairly loose in docks. However, leave the hour out: let us cut the double hour out. If you take Manchester, which was 6½d., I think, before the war, or just at the outbreak of the war—there was a dispute just about the outbreak of war at Manchester, and the result of the intervention of the Mayor was that there was a settlement for 6½d. per hour. That was very near Glasgow's 7d., was not it?—(A.) Yes, it was.

The CHAIRMAN: For how many hours?

Mr. BEVIN: A nine-hour day. (*To the witness.*) Let me take you to two more ports. You paid in 1914 8d. per hour?—(A.) Quite.

Q. London paid 8d. per hour, did not they?—(A.) I take that from you: I believe they did.

Q. That was for shipmen, for discharging?—(A.) That would not be the minimum rate for London at that time, I think.

Q. No, the P.L.A. was the minimum. I am taking discharging ships, general cargo.—(A.) That is for stevedores' men.

Q. No, the stevedores are slightly higher, but the rate of the men discharging was 8d. employed by shipowners as apart from the P.L.A.?

The CHAIRMAN: Both you and the witness, I think, and myself, are all aiming at the same thing, comparing like with like. If there is any difference about that, you will clear it up?—(A.) Yes, if I can.

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Mr. BEVIN: You have been associated with the Dock Labour Committee for a long time in Glasgow, have not you?—(A.) Ever since its formation.

Q. Have not you used the argument to my friend, Mr. Sexton, before now, that you could not do certain things for Glasgow because of the competition of Liverpool and Manchester.—(A.) I do not know whether I personally have used it, but I have certainly heard it used.

Q. Would it not be conducive to good relations if that argument was wiped out once and for all?—(A.) You mean good relations in regard to competition between the ports?

Q. Yes?—(A.) There would be no jealousies between the ports in regard to rates, so far as these expenses were concerned.

Q. Would not that be very, very helpful, and save an awful lot of bother to the trade of the country?—(A.) Yes. I think there would be some controversy as to what would be the best method of arriving at that, as to whether you should increase wages to arrive at it, or as to whether you should average them.

Q. There is just a difference in method, but in principle I think you agree with me that if we can say that the labour charge covering the biggest bulk of the men—and I am not now talking about little differentials, like iron ore and deals, and things which I think both of us are agreed must be different for all time, owing to the nature of the work: dusty cargoes, things of that kind—neither you nor I could hope to settle nationally. I think we are both agreed about that?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think you will also agree it depends very often on the nature of the cargo, the construction of the ship, and the question whether the ship was ever built to carry that kind of cargo?—(A.) That is so.

Q. As you understand the Transport Workers' claim, you have never had it in your mind that we had ever intended or desired to get rid of local negotiations on all these points and differentials?—(A.) No, I quite understood that.

Q. But you did understand that we were trying to get rid of being sent from port to port with this argument and unable to settle?—(A.) Is not the idea which I put forward quite a satisfactory idea so far as the standard minimum is concerned? I do not agree with the idea of a minimum at all. I think it should go up and come down, but I am using your own term. Is not the idea of getting back to the natural differentials a better one than wiping everything out, and making it all level, just to start having differentials over again. That is what was in my mind. If anything should ever be done in that way I think those things should be had regard to. I do not think it is a good thing to say to all the workers in the ports: "This shall be your wage" without regard to past history or anything of that sort or past conditions.

Q. Have we suggested that?—(A.) I thought that was your suggestion. You, for instance, have put in your claim a national minimum of 16s.

Q. Yes.—(A.) That you put in for all the ports.

Q. Yes.—(A.) That wipes out differentials.

Q. It depends, does not it, on what you mean by "differentials"? For instance, if Manchester was paying 6½d. before the war, Bristol was paying 7d., you were paying 8d., London was paying 8d., Hull was paying 7½d., and Newcastle 8d.—let us take our mind back to pre-war; let us forget there has been a war for a moment, and assume that this inquiry was then with the then conditions—do you seriously suggest that if at that time there had been a national minimum there would have been

any serious objection to saying: "Well, the difference of ½d. between Glasgow and Manchester shall be wiped out, and the difference between Bristol and Southampton"—which was only ½d. an hour—"shall be wiped out"? Do you think there would have been any real difficulty at that time had we been meeting?—(A.) That is going back to 1911, nine years ago. I think perhaps you are going back too far.

Q. Let me take you back a bit further. We cannot go back too far. When the great movement of 1889 took place the docker set his mind on the "docker's tanner," did not he? You have read a bit, if you cannot remember quite as an employer?—(A.) Yes.

Q. All over the country he set his mind on the "docker's tanner." Was it not a fact, if you trace from 1889 onwards, that the "docker's tanner" lived as a minimum in nearly all the ports. Is that not so?—(A.) My earliest recollection of the wages was 6d. an hour in Glasgow.

Q. At that time, was the "docker's tanner" all over the country established in exactly the same manner, not by the same machinery, but a great strike movement which took place in place of the Court of Enquiry, and simply fixed 6d., whether the rate was 4½d., 3½d., or 2½d., as it was in some of the ports; they all got lifted to the "docker's tanner" as it was then described in 1889?—(A.) I do not know whether that is correct or not; it may be.

Q. It is a historical fact.—(A.) I am quite prepared to accept it from you.

Q. Were not alterations, which you call differentials, between the ports determined between 1889 and 1911 by just the strength of the Trade Union organisation in the different ports. For instance, if you find the slightest difference like Bristol as against Liverpool, is it not a fact that the ½d. or 1d. an hour which Bristol had was due to the fact that the Trade Union lived in Bristol, but it went weak in Liverpool?—(A.) Yes, I believe that had a very great influence on the movement.

Q. If that is so, now that it has become strong in every port, is not it only reasonable to assume we will rectify the period of weakness that existed in those twenty years?—(A.) If you go back to that time, and adjust the matter on the basis which existed so far back as 1889, when you had the level wage of the "docker's tanner," it is a long stretch. If you are carrying it out logically beyond that, where would you arrive? Why stop at 1889? Why stop at 1911? Should we not rather regard the matter as one of more or less natural growth up to 1914, and that after that the natural growth was disturbed—that was the view I took—instead of going so far back as 1889.

Q. His Lordship wanted us to take like with like. The only like period I suggest with this moment is 1889?—(A.) I believe that is correct.

Q. I think we are on common ground?—(A.) That is the period when wages were most level.

Q. In 1889 we had a great strong economic movement which enabled us to straighten things out, and you suggest, do not you, that these differentials grew as a result of a natural growth?—(A.) Yes, I think so.

Q. I put it to you that, while it may have had a natural growth where they got an increase, its growth had merely been hindered where the Union was weak?—(A.) You mean it did not grow well because it was not so well nourished?

Q. That is so. Now we have dealt with the weak plants, and got just as economically strong as we were in 1889. Let us assume that this was not a Court of Inquiry, but it was a great strike movement—that is to say the Transport Workers'

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Federation so organised its forces that the country was held up like it was in 1889. Do you not think, to settle that strike, it would be possible for the parties to sit down and agree on a common basis just as the ports settled in 1889?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is my point. I am suggesting that common basis is 16s. a day. We have now got to the point where the common basis could be settled. If it can be settled as a result of a well-organised strike on a common basis, what is the reason the employers are trying to prevent this machinery by all this argument which has taken the place of the strike, settling it on the same common basis that you yourself admit it could be settled on if there was a strike?—(A.) I take it that the employers' attitude in regard to the present demand is that it is going to create a great disturbance through all the country if the dockers' wages are going to be raised—unduly—that is the principal point—and they think that it may have an adverse effect on the trade of the country, and they also think that the money which the docker would receive under those conditions would be of no value to him, while at the same time it would be hurtful to the community as a whole. That, I think, is a sort of general skeleton of the idea.

The CHAIRMAN: I have no doubt that is right, but Mr. Bevin and myself can only take one thing at a time. The point that Mr. Bevin is on is the principle of a universal minimum. Mr. Bevin has put to you the question that that might be achieved, of course, by a strike. Do you see any objection in principle yourself, if the amount could be adjusted, of having that amount universal?—(A.) You mean a minimum amount, my Lord?

Q. Yes.—(A.) Personally, my own views are against a minimum as such.

Q. You are probably entitled to say, "Well, it might be done, but, being a witness, I am entitled to my opinion on whether it should be allowed to be done."—(A.) Yes, that is my attitude.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, you have got the right of asking him, if I may suggest it to you, why does he disapprove of it, even although it might be achieved, as he admits.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord. (To the witness). I will now ask you: If it can be accomplished on this common basis, why do you disapprove of it?—(A.) I disapprove of it on very broad grounds. I think that if wages are capable of being put up, or go up through natural causes, they should also be capable of coming down. For instance, if you can conceive of this country going through, perhaps, ten years hence a period of very great industrial depression, loss of trade, unemployment, people starving, and want of work, I think it would be better that the wages should be capable of coming down to meet the requirements of the merchants' costs competing in the markets of the world, and so securing some trade rather than that we should go with none at all simply because we had established a minimum wage. That is my attitude.

Q. The objection now is not to the common basis, but the way in which the common basis should be worked?—(A.) I am talking of the principle of a minimum wage.

Q. Has it been in your mind that, because a minimum wage is demanded, a minimum wage becomes for all time, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, unalterable?—(A.) No, but I

think once it has been established it might operate adversely under the circumstances I have described. If you fix a certain rate of wage for any industry, is not that rate fixed until it is altered?

Q. Certainly.—(A.) Why, then, have a minimum? Are you afraid that the alteration should be downwards rather than upwards?

Q. No.—(A.) Then why have a minimum?

Q. I am questioning you, not answering you.—(A.) If the minimum is not to be the permanent minimum, but an adjustable minimum, it really seems to me to come to the same thing just as regulating wages from time to time as circumstances may require.

Q. Now, I want to put this to you: Prior to our demand for a 16s. day wage, and as the cost of our standard of life ought to have increased, did you at any period, when things were going up, ever go to the Joint Committee, and suggest, "Here is prosperity ahead of us, and wages must be arranged to go up, so that you men can share in the merchants' prosperity"?—(A.) No, Mr. Bevin, I did not.

Q. And I suppose it would be fair to assume that if it had been suggested you would say, "It is impossible for a merchant to decide what is going to happen in a year's time."—(A.) Yes, it is very likely I might have said something of that sort.

Q. Is not it just as natural for the workmen to say, "We fix our wages for the present, and the future must take care of itself," just as the merchants have done to us in all the days that are gone?—(A.) I think that the workman is quite entitled to say that.

Q. I want to come now to the question of the introduction of the machinery. I think we admit there is a dispute and we think you have stated the facts quite accurately; but have you ever considered as an employer that when you introduce machinery the man who suffers is always the oldest man? That is to say, have you considered that the younger man with a new form of industry can adapt himself to it, but the man who gets displaced and put on the stones is the elder man, who has little chance of adapting himself to new conditions?—(A.) That is to say, that the machinery displaces the man who is least physically capable; he is thrown aside because he is not so capable as the others.

Q. Yes.—(A.) I think, generally speaking, there is a good deal of truth in that, but in this particular instance, as it happens, I think the truth to some extent is the other way, because the hand weighing machine cannot be done by physically unfit men.

Q. May we look at the machine generally?—(A.) They must be very fit to work on the hand weighing machine. Old man cannot do it; but old men could work on these machines.

Q. Supposing these machines are put in in Glasgow right through the whole port, I do not know how many men will be involved in the total (whether it is one or one hundred does not matter), but it is going to reduce the number of men by a third, if I remember your figures correctly?—(A.) Working on the machines the number of grain weighers—

Q. Six against nine, is not it?—(A.) Fifteen against six.

Q. So that nine men have got to go out?—(A.) That is right.

Q. What is to happen to those nine men? Doing casual work, they have followed a line of employment which has become a tradition to them. They

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would have to go out and get on the fringe in all probability somewhere else, would not they?—(A.) I do not think that is quite correct, because the grain-weigher, as I said before, is a very physically fit man, and when he has no grain-weighing to do he never has any difficulty in getting employment on general cargoes, but, of course, when he does that he is displacing somebody else who is working at general cargoes. I quite admit that.

Q. Would you admit as a principle that, if science can invent a machine which reduced the amount of labour, labour ought to have a share by a reduction of hours in enjoying the value of that machine.—(A.) I think that would naturally follow, would it not, Mr. Bevin, from the fact that the machine does so much more work in a given time? Do not you think that that would follow? Suppose, for instance, in this particular case the men get wages which give them considerably more money than if they were working with a hand machine, and it does the work three times quicker, does not that mean that those men would have more leisure and still not suffer in pocket—be better off?

Q. What would you put in total wages for the machine; what would the wage bill be to the body of workers in Glasgow? I want to see, in proportion to the introduction of machinery, whether my total wage bill is going to be reduced?—(A.) The wage bill to the owner of the machine would be reduced.

Q. By what amount?—(A.) I gave you 30s., say, roughly, about 22s.

Q. You would have fifteen men at 22s. and six men at 30s.?—(A.) You would have three times 22s. That would be £3 6s. You would have a saving of nearly 100 per cent.—80 to 100 per cent. in wages.

Q. The one dispute between you in working this machine, where the employer is saving 100 per cent., is halving his wage bill?—(A.) Perhaps not quite so much as that; I am giving it very roughly.

Q. Say half, or nearly half. To within 10 per cent. he is halving his wage bill. As I understand, the dockers' position is this, is it not, that out of that halving of the bill they want another 30s.; they want one more man?—(A.) How do you mean one more man?

Q. You offer four; they want five?—(A.) We offer four for one-scale, and six for two-scales. The men want five, I think, for one-scale, but as there is no work for the fifth man to do, the employer does not wish to do it.

Q. How many did they want for the two-scale machines?—(A.) Six men. When the additional scale goes on, two additional men are required.

Q. It is easy always to say there is nothing to do. I would like to see the machine before I accept that fact, especially a machine working, as you say, 1,800 bags a day, is it not?—(A.) 1,800 bags. The manufacturer says 2,400, but we give the lesser figure.

Q. The ordinary weigher now does 640 bags, you say?—(A.) 640 is the average we have taken. As a matter of fact, it is quite a common thing for the ordinary weigher, working with the hand machine, to do 800 and 900 bags, and we have had them doing 1,000, which represents 100 tons.

Q. If they do 1,800 bags it would be getting on, if it was wheat, to 200 tons, and on 200 tons of stuff the dispute between you and the men about introducing this modern appliance is 30s. a day? (A.) Yes, that is, roughly, it.

Q. It is not a great price to pay for such a tremendous saving in the wage bill?—(A.) Yes, Mr. Bevin, but in all these figures, as you know, in dealing with labour you must be very careful about constituting precedents.

Q. I know, and there is no one more careful than the Scotch employer.—(A.) What happens is this, as I daresay you all know, that when an employer agrees to put on men where men are not required, somebody else in some other section is discontented, and one has got to be careful that, while work is not under-manned, but should be adequately manned, it should not be over-manned: there should be a fair and reasonable amount of labour employed, such an amount as will not harass the men at the work, and, at the same time, will not lead simply to malingering. That is the position. The employer, with regard to that machine, thinks that four men fulfil the proper requirements.

Q. There ought to be a way of settling it by somebody who understands the two things by test?—(A.) Mr. Bevin, on that point we have offered this, that the men will work the machine for one week on these terms, to see really what it does, and we have offered to adjust the terms on the experience of that week's working, and to make that adjustment retrospective.

Q. Would you reverse that offer?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Let him finish.—(A.) I do not think we could do fairer than that, and even then the men have refused to touch the machine.

Mr. BEVIN: Suppose you reverse it. Is not the difficulty always this, that the employer says: "Test a thing by my method." Why not let the workman make the test on his method, and then you adjust it after?—(A.) If you started with 5 you would never get back to 4; but if you started with 4 there is a possibility of putting on 5. You can always go up much easier than come down in these matters.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Spencer, if Mr. Bevin on his part and you on your part were assisted by an opinion of this Court that this was a matter for reasonable arrangement in the interest of the trade, and the increased output on the one hand, and in the interests of the men who ought to share to some extent in that prosperity, do not you think it is not too late now for this arrangement to be consummated in a harmonious way?—(A.) I think not.

Q. Would you be willing, if Mr. Bevin and those whom you represent from Glasgow are willing, that the negotiations should be resumed in that sense?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will remember Mr. Spencer is only carrying out the provisions of the Agreement of April, 1919, paragraph 9.

The CHAIRMAN: I am quite aware of that, Sir Lynden, that that Agreement has been broken. Another element has been introduced into this case on which I am going to put a few questions to you. All I wanted in the meantime was to show that there was no spirit of direct antagonism, and it is only necessary to have a good understanding on both sides, a meeting and probably adjustment.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: As long as your Lordship has in mind that Mr. Spencer—

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The CHAIRMAN: I am not forgetting that what the men have done is in breach of the Agreement at the port; but I am taking things as I find them in the interests of peace and harmony.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to ask you a question with your experience, because you referred to the general question of machinery going in docks or ships or anything else. I want to get you back to the point I first put, that one of the difficulties of introducing machinery is the question of the elder men. I am not referring to grain-weighers now, but the general question. We are agreed on that, are not we?—(A.) Yes, I think it is quite true.

Q. If there was a system of maintenance, and if industry had some system of compensation for the man displaced, so that he would not be thrown on the scrap-heap, as it were, do you think that would materially help to introduce other methods in industry or in docks generally?—(A.) That is a system of unemployment insurance.

Q. Something bigger than that, because that is starvation. The Government schemes and all that are starvation. It is a very poor outlook for a man, 15s. as you, I think, will agree. Let us assume a man has been in your leading gang for 10, 15, or 20 years. You find a different method of handling your cargo. When you have to make up your new gangs to work with your new method it is your younger men who adapt themselves most readily, is not it?—(A.) I should think that is true.

Q. The older man sees nothing but a blank in front of him because he is going out. I think it is not enough, is it, to say that railways are a great improvement on the coach; it does not help a man who has starved as a result of the stopping of the coach. I think that is a fair analogy. Now, if something can be done to prevent that starvation, or prevent that man being thrown on the scrap-heap as a result of the change, do not you think there would be a more ready admission of newer methods into industry?—(A.) Yes, it might possibly have an effect, but on the general question of the introduction of machinery, as displacing labour, I am not in agreement with you there, because the history of all introduction of machinery into industrial processes has been this, that, while it may have temporarily decreased the amount of employment available, it has ultimately increased it enormously. You mentioned the railways just now. No doubt when the railways were introduced into this country the very same arguments were put forward against them, and the men who lived by driving coaches were very much averse to the introduction of the railway.

The CHAIRMAN: The same about the spinning jenny?—(A.) The same about the spinning jenny, and I think that you would have the same effect if machinery were introduced possibly into the discharging and loading of ships. I am quite sure that it would ultimately have that effect, although immediately it might have a bad effect upon the men who were employed.

Mr. BEVIN: I think we are agreed, but in view of our experience with the coach and with the changes of machinery, it is this temporary period that I am troubled about, and I want to find out from you whether there ought not to be some provision to prevent that blank prospect of the man who suffers in the temporary transition period, and whether that provision for this temporary transitory period could not be made. We are

both agreed about machinery. I am not opposed to machinery; I would let the machinery do all the work as long as I distributed in proper ratio to the community what the machine produces so that we are all benefited; but I am troubled about this temporary change. Is it not the law of self-preservation which makes the young man join with the old man who is going to be displaced to resist machinery because of this blank prospect in front of them, there being no provision to tide over the temporary change?—(A.) Yes. I think, however, that you could hardly make any provision which would be specially applicable to such men as were displaced by machinery. One would require to have some form of unemployment insurance which would cover any case, not specially those displaced by machinery. Whether the rates which are paid for unemployment insurance suggested by the Government are inadequate or not is a question which I do not go into, but taking the principle, I think you could only act on the larger principle, and you could not make any provision for special cases such as you are considering.

Q. Having regard to this blank temporary period—because we are all being asked to agree to payment by results and the introduction of machinery and more rapid methods, and I think you will agree that we have to look to the blank side which has got to face some of our members—do you agree that it is rather difficult for any federation or union to enter blindly into an agreement like you have in Glasgow where the union undertakes to facilitate the introduction of machinery, while, on the other hand, there is no provision at all for this temporary period of transition? Is it not difficult to give effect to?—(A.) Yes, I think that there is a good deal to be said from that point of view. I do think so.

Q. With regard to those coalmen working at night, I want to ask one or two questions. At what time do you call them on?—(A.) They are taken on usually at 6 o'clock at Glasgow.

Q. Then they have to go home and out again at 11?—(A.) They are not taken on at 6 o'clock, or are not supposed to be taken on rather, unless there is work for them.

Q. But when you do take them on they come out once to the call place, and they are told: "Come back at 11 to start work." They get a ticket at 6 o'clock, and they come back at 11 o'clock?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it not rather natural that if a man has got to start almost in the middle of the night he should want to get paid for the whole night?—(A.) That, I quite agree with you, is quite natural—that if a man starts in the middle of the night he will want to be paid for the whole night; but that was not the point: the point was that the Agreement lays down certain conditions which are not being fulfilled; if the men want that altered, then there is machinery provided for that purpose. The employers' attitude regarding that is simply this: that any provision in the Agreement should be adhered to, and that if an alteration is desired it should be brought about by constitutional means.

The CHAIRMAN: What are those means?—(A.) The Joint Committee, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: Have the men made application to the Joint Committee to have this altered?—(A.) Not that I am aware of. I personally am not aware of such an application; but may I say

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that I have been unwell for some time, and absent for some time, and it is possible that some application may have been made in my absence. I am not prepared to say now, but to my personal knowledge there is none.

Q. I understand that they did make application, and your Joint Committee refused it. If there comes a time when the men feel that they ought to have a change, men ought not to be driven to strike action and the change resisted, and then held to the Agreement, ought they? There ought to be at any rate a reasonableness to meet them, and they should not be driven to extremes?—(A.) Of course, it would probably result in this, in many cases: that men would not be called out at all and the work would be allowed to stand. There is always that danger in these things, and the employer probably would feel when he came to consider it that it was better not to agree to the demand.

Q. I cannot understand this table of cost, and exactly how you arrive at it. I think it is Table 9, where you say the cost will be £621,000?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How do you arrive at the exact cost without the number of working days inserted?—(A.) It is taken over a period of the last twelve weeks' work of last year, and the figures which are in the table are figures which have been contributed by the various employers in the port of money actually paid in wages within that period.

Q. I think I understand it now: you have assumed that the same work and overtime, and everything, was worked on similar cargoes in the future. You have taken the twelve weeks which have been worked and assumed that these new wages were in operation?—(A.) Yes. We could only make that assumption.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You see, he puts a note at the bottom, which really explains it.

Mr. BEVIN: I could not quite understand it, but that makes it clear.

Q. I want to turn to the registration scheme.—(A.) Which one—the first one?

Q. Both of them at once. Do you not think that if there had been a less ambitious scheme originally, it might have been accepted in Glasgow?

(A.) Do you mean a scheme simply of registration?

Q. Yes.—(A.) I hardly think so. I am not of that opinion.

Q. Were not the men rather afraid that you were going to register Non-Unionists as well as Unionists? Was there not some kind of fear of that sort?—(A.) They may have had such a fear, but if you read the provisions of it you will see that that fear was groundless, because no man could be admitted to the scheme without the consent of the Union.

Q. But it is a very bulky scheme, is it not?—(A.) Yes, there is a good deal of it.

Q. It is a big scheme even for a Glasgow docker to swallow right off, is it not? It is a huge scheme. If there had been just a simple provision which would not have carried a man into weekly wages and into clearing houses, do you not think it might have been accepted? The men were really rather afraid of the Savings Bank, I think.—(A.) The weekly wage was one of the points, of course, which we were anxious to establish, and the reason for that is this: I think most people will agree with me that the system of paying a man every day when he has finished with his work is not a good system for the man.

Q. I quite agree.—(A.) It is a system which, as it were, cuts the man off from his employment at the end of each day. It tends to make him more casual in his habits. The sort of link which a weekly wage gives between him and his employment is broken. I do not think that that is a good thing; I think it is bad for the men, and I want to do away with it.

Q. We quite agree about that, I think—that, as a system, it is bad; but it has been in existence for generations, has it not?—(A.) It was not in existence thirty-five years ago.

Q. I was not a docker then.—(A.) I was.

Q. In any case, I am putting it to you, if the Glasgow men had begun registration, if there had been a gradual change of habit as there has been in many ports, whether there would not have been less fear of the whole scheme?—(A.) It is possible that that might have been so, but at the time when we were considering it we did not think so. You must remember that at that time—I am referring to the first scheme—it was the time of the introduction of the Health Insurance Act, and we wished to work that in through the Clearing House scheme.

Q. Have you heard that in some of these registration schemes Government officials have been trying to use them for returns of income tax, and a lot of other inquiries, for which they were never intended—school board fees, and all sorts of Government bureaucratic methods of interference? To the ordinary citizen, where there is no registration, of course, this kind of thing could not occur at all.—(A.) I sympathise with that because, in regard to income tax, I take it that at the present time the ordinary citizen simply has to make a personal declaration; it is not a case of having his income officially inspected, as it were. I can understand the very natural feeling on the part of men against having their income subjected to anything of that kind; but surely a clearing house, or some system of that kind, could be established and still leave the men free in that regard.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to call his Lordship's attention to this. After all, we are free citizens. One of the greatest troubles with this registration business is the readiness with which a Government official uses another Government Department in a manner which could not happen with the ordinary citizen, and it has created a prejudice against some form of registration in consequence.

The CHAIRMAN: You are putting the workmen into the same extraordinary position as His Majesty's Judges are in—they are totally deprived of the power of defrauding the revenue. The Government pays the money and knows exactly what it pays.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord, that is quite true; but they do not know how much His Majesty's Judges get otherwise than through the Treasury.

The CHAIRMAN: There may be a fringe, perhaps, for some of them.

Mr. BEVIN: There is a point with regard to registration. I am as anxious to de-casualise labour as anybody in the country. Supposing this thing were discussed in Glasgow openly as this Court of Inquiry has discussed it; suppose that the Federation had a sort of inquiry on the spot so that the men's case, and your case, and the intentions of everybody, were quite open, do you think that would help to get the men to understand

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exactly what are the intentions of everybody, and help to smooth the way to the introduction of some system of registration?—(A.) I think it would.

Q. With regard to the Savings Bank, would there not be rather a fear in Scotland that if the men put money into a bank and the employers knew how much they had, the employers would then use it as an argument that the men did not want any further increase?—(A.) The employers are not quite so subtle as that.

Q. I heard of one who got his men to save 1s. a week in an employer's bank, and at the end of the year he said that as they had saved the 1s. it proved that it was not necessary, and he wanted them to take a reduction. With regard to slings, I notice in your Rules that the question of the size of slings, and gangs, and everything is left to the employer?—(A.) Certain gangs are stipulated for, or rather portions of gangs are stipulated for, in the Agreement.

Q. On page 3, Clause 9, you have these words: "The employer shall be free to adopt the method of work which he thinks best suited for his trade, and shall regulate the size of slings and other loads, with due regard to safety and economical working, and according to the present practice." Does not that rather leave the safety of the men and the size of the sling, if the employers or the employers' foremen were arbitrary, to a very arbitrary decision; because this work is dangerous work, after all, and the man down in the hold is dependent, to a very large extent, both on the gear and on the way in which it is worked, and he has sometimes very little chance of escape, has he?—(A.) That is quite true.

Q. If you leave the size of the slings and the methods of working to the employer, you leave that man in the hold to the tender mercies of the foreman, or the employer's representative?—(A.) The question of the safety of the workmen is one which is to the employer's interest just as much as it is to the employee's, and an employer who would insist upon loads being put on the slings or methods of work being adopted which involved risk of accident would be doing a thing which would be absolutely against his own interest. I do not think that any employer would insist on such things. Really that clause was meant to leave such matters in the hands of the employer, because, after all, it is the employer's duty to say how things shall be done. It really conserves a right which exists without even putting it down in print.

Q. Would it not be better that on as many commodities as possible—I am putting it to you: on as many commodities as possible—you should really discuss this question of slings with the men? I am putting it to you now because there have been so many disputes over this question of slings, not only in Glasgow but all over the country, and I would like to see them avoided. I put it to you for this reason, too, if you will permit me: the man in the hold is sometimes guilty of putting up too heavy a sling so that he can have a little rest—I know the delinquencies of our own people—but it nearly breaks the back of the man ashore who takes it on his truck; so for the purpose of the better regulation of the work, for our sake and yours, do you not think that there is a way of solving or reducing those disputes between the men and the foreman and yourselves, without interfering with the ordinary power of the employer to say how stowing or dis-

charging shall be done, and where it shall be put? Do you not think it would be well if there were a discussion on this question of gear and slings at your Joint Committee?—(A.) We have had some discussion regarding it, but really the best way of dealing with the matter, after all, is practice. It comes to this, that if slings which are too heavy to be worked by the men on the quay are sent up from the vessel's hold, those men immediately object, and if their objection is reasonable the sling is adjusted. That is really what happens. On the other hand, sometimes men not being in a good spirit—they are just like employers, they sometimes go wrong, too—do not send up a reasonable sling; I mean they cut it down, and then there is a complaint from the foreman; and we have always found in our experience that when that happens, a very little judicious handling puts the matter right and puts it on a reasonable basis for everybody. I do not think that the discussions of the Joint Committee will ever better it; I think it will always come back to actual practice.

Q. Your Counsel raised it as an argument against our 16s. 0d., or I would not have touched it.—(A.) Of course, when I speak of practice in the dock I am talking of Glasgow.

Re-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. First of all, in regard to the question of giving an increase, are there two ways of giving an increase of wage: either accepting the existing differentials and giving an increase on top of them; or neglecting, as is proposed here, the existing differentials and giving an increase by merging them all on a flat national basis?—(A.) I did not catch the drift of that question properly.

Q. Are you drawing a distinction between the two ways of giving an increase in wage: either giving an increase on the top of existing rates—that is one way—or neglecting the differences between the existing rates and merging them together on a flat national minimum, and increasing them in that way?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It is to the latter that you have expressed your objection?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I want to ask you whether in connection with goods coming into a port there are charges on the shipping and charges on the goods apart from the handling of the goods?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And is there the greatest variation in the different ports between, first of all, the charges on the ships?—(A.) Yes.

Q. For example, here I have a statement of the rates on vessels levied at Glasgow, along with those levied at other thirteen ports.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you let me see that?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, we will put this in.

(*The document was handed in and marked H.16a.)

Q. Will you look at that statement. Does that show a great variation in the different charges on vessels at different ports?—(A.) It does, varying I think from 4d. to 2s. 2½d. I think that is the variation in the first column.

Q. Will you hand that to my Lord?

* See Appendix No. 84.

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The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin may have some questions to put upon this.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Very possibly, my Lord. Q. In the same way, are there the greatest variations in the rates on goods which are levied at Glasgow as compared with those levied at these other ports? For example, will you look at this statement?—(A.) Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We can prove this later, my Lord.

(*The document was handed in and marked H.16b.)

The WITNESS: I notice they put ale, beer and porter at the top of the list.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not know the procedure of the Court at all—I am quite an amateur—but is this really a re-examination, or ought I to go over the whole thing again? I should just like to know, because it all seems foreign to me.

The CHAIRMAN: In an ordinary law court this would be held to be new matter, but we are not going to keep it out for that. But it was for that reason that I said that if this was gone into you would have a special right to cross-examine upon it. We are not going to close people's mouths.

Mr. BEVIN: No; I am not suggesting closing it down, but I think it was rather a pity that it was not put in at first.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you are right, that you will have to consider that. Will you kindly consider this table? (*Document H. 16a was handed to Mr. Bevin.*)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is a pure question of saving time, and of proving it by Mr. Spencer or by some other person.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Spencer will have to explain, perhaps, what is the importance of it to the issue.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We will come to that point.

Q. It is suggested, apparently, that you equalise economic conditions between the different ports by putting into operation a uniform minimum standard of wage?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Does that equalise economic conditions with these varying charges on ships and varying charges on goods?—(A.) No, it would not equalise the economic conditions; the economic conditions would remain as diverse as they were before.

Q. Coming to another matter, Mr. Bevin has suggested that the dockers' "tanner" came into general operation in 1889. If you examine the effect of economic circumstances since that date, do you find in 1914 in different ports considerable variations in the hourly rate of pay from the 6d. introduced in 1889?—(A.) That is true.

Q. And in your view, is the existence of those subsequent differentials proof that the uniform rate of 6d. could not be maintained under the varying economic conditions of the different ports?—(A.) That is true.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

* See Appendix No. 84.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There is one other matter that I want to ask you to clear up, and that is in respect of the grain-weighing machine. When grain is weighed by hand, will you tell me how many men are required in respect of each scale?—(A.) Five men.

Q. Taking the machine, how many scales are there?—(A.) There are two scales, but they do not require to work both at the same time.

Q. How many men do you say were necessary in respect of each scale on the machine?—(A.) Four men are necessary when one scale is working, but not more than six men are necessary when the two scales are working. If I may explain that, the machine is in the form of a sort of conveyer, which conveys the grain from the bin in the shed to the scales, and the men trimming to that conveyer trim more than enough for the one scale; that is to say, the machine working one scale over-fills itself very rapidly and it has to be stopped. The two men who are trimming to it stop it at once simply by pressing an electric button. That stops the machine, and it ceases to convey the grain to the scale. When the scale is ready to go on again, the man at the other end—that is the man at the scale end—has an appliance whereby he starts the machine; or, rather, I have put it the wrong way: it is the man at the scale end who stops it, and the man at the trimming end who starts it.

Q. So, that to put it quite clearly, four men for one scale and six men for two scales are necessary?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. What did the men ask?—(A.) Five for one scale.

Q. Would that fifth man, if employed, have been standing still doing nothing?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Is that the position to which you, on grounds of principle, objected?—(A.) That is so.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is all I ask.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, have you anything to ask with regard to that new matter which was introduced?

Mr. BEVIN: I have not had time to look at it, my Lord. I would like this question put on the subject of the machine, through your Lordship: Whether the man could not be employed on trimming the wheat to the machine?—(A.) Yes, but he is not necessary.

Q. That is a matter of dispute, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you found in experience in Glasgow that the Joint Negotiating Committee have acted in an amicable spirit?—(A.) I think so, generally speaking.

Q. Do you think that many causes of friction have been removed?—(A.) Yes, I do.

Q. By their intervention?—(A.) Yes.

Q. One question which I particularly want to ask you is this: Do you think that it increases the confidence between the men on the one hand, and the port authorities and employers on the other, that they should have in existence a Joint Negotiating Committee of that kind to which they can go?—(A.) Undoubtedly.

Q. With regard to the introduction of any novel methods, just be quite frank about it—frank as you have been in the rest of your evi-

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dence: Do you not think that there is a feeling sometimes on the men's part when anything new is going to be introduced that they are going to have the screw applied to them in some way?

—(A.) I think there is undoubtedly that feeling.

Q. Do you think that the existence of a Joint Negotiating Committee to whom an appeal on such a subject could be made is a great safeguard?

—(A.) Yes, I do.

Q. I am rather anxious, if you will be so kind as to look at the Agreement which was made on April 22, 1919, to ask you a question on Clause 5. You have been good enough to point out that Clause 5 to us, and I want to ask you whether, looking back on those months since this Agreement was come to, the Joint Negotiating Committee has made decisions, and upon the whole these have been acquiesced in?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. There have been exceptions to that happy state of matters, have there not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is the reason for the exceptions?—(A.) The principal exceptions have been stoppages of work to enforce demands which have arisen through more or less exceptional circumstances.

Q. Can you, as it were, tighten up the procedure of that Committee by enabling it to intervene on the spot?—(A.) I had not quite finished; I was going a little further.

Q. I am sorry.—(A.) I was going to say that there have also been cases of exceptional circumstances where the men have shown very great patience in the face of delays which have arisen in settling their demands, owing to circumstances which prevented the representatives of either one side or the other from attending at the vessel where the dispute had arisen. The men have, in some cases, continued their work until these representatives were present for quite a while, even although, in a case which I have in mind particularly, the circumstances were somewhat aggravating to the men; so that it is not all on one side in that way. But apart from that, there have been these stoppages.

Q. What I want to get at is: Do you think that the men having been parties, through their leaders, to this Agreement, the spirit of discipline in the sense of honestly abiding by their word is growing?—(A.) I do.

Q. It is growing on the part of the men?—(A.) I think so. I think the Joint Committee is becoming more and more recognised as the medium for dealing with these matters.

Q. Of course, you understand as well as any of us that after the war, with all its conditions, there may be certain elements of disorganisation entering into the furnishing of the labour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. As these disappear, will your hope be that exceptions to what I call, for the sake of shortness, honest abiding by the Agreement, will disappear?—(A.) Yes, I think so. There have been some indications, I think, that that state of affairs is coming about now.

Q. I think you are at one, are you not, with the evidence up to date in the case that the efforts of the Union and their officials as such have been all in the direction of honestly abiding by the bargain made?—(A.) Yes, I think so.

Q. Turn now, please, to Article 7. That says, "Pending the Joint Negotiating Committee's decision on any question or dispute referred to it, work shall not be stopped or interrupted." The evidence which you have just given applies practically to that also?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I now ask you a few words with regard to Article 10. The terms of that Article are these: "All facilities will be given by the Union for the working of any mechanical appliances which may be introduced to facilitate the work of the Harbour." In the case which you have given, I gather that your evidence is that the machinery introduced would be machinery which would relieve the physical strain upon the workman to a very large extent?—(A.) That is true.

Q. And, therefore, it is not a case in which the weaker man would be shoved out; on the contrary, the weaker man would have a greater chance of being continued for the work which does not require the same physical strength?—(A.) That is true.

Q. That is on the one hand. On the other hand, consider this. Six men instead of fifteen represents a big problem for the workmen, does it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you any arrangement at present under which, before a mechanical appliance is set going, there will be a consideration by both sides of the question of how to employ, for this temporary period which has been referred to, the labour which thus becomes surplus labour?—(A.) No arrangement has been suggested for that purpose.

Q. I suggest to you this, that the Joint Negotiating Committee might quite well take that serious matter into consideration?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. I suggest to you, further, that when Article 10 says that all facilities shall be given by the Union for the working of any mechanical appliances, there shall be added to that Rule a provision, or a new Rule made to this effect, that with regard to labour necessarily displaced, the question of that labour will be the subject of the jurisdiction also of the Negotiating Committee?—(A.) That is a matter which I would require to put before the Negotiating Committee, and I am personally prepared to recommend that to them.

Q. That is quite a judicious and proper answer from a man of your position and skill. We really want what light we can get. You assent to my view, do you not?—(A.) I do.

Q. If that were done, do you think that the temporary difficulties upon which you were cross-examined by Mr. Bevin might to a considerable extent be eased off?—(A.) I think that is possible.

Q. Again, if that were done, then the disadvantage to the men would be eased off, but the advantage to the port and, if I may say so, to the people of this country would be secured, and secured at once without being hung up?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. In fact, a port like Glasgow or any other well-advised port cannot afford not to be in the position of having the latest up-to-date appliances?—(A.) That is true.

Q. Do you think that that principle is a principle which will assist the output of business in this country if widely adopted?—(A.) That is, the principle of introducing mechanical appliances?

Q. The principle of introducing mechanical appliances to save human labour?—(A.) I certainly think that it will tend to improve the position.

Q. You know, of course, that anything which does that, unless the whole of our industrial history be false, ultimately improves the position of the worker also?—(A.) That is true.

Q. But it is the temporary period that I am thinking of.—(A.) Might I interrupt your Lordship for one moment in regard to the practical difficulty of finding employment for those men who are temporarily displaced?

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Q. Yes —(A.) Take a case in point where you have a certain number of men employed in weighing grain. In such a port as Glasgow they are not a large number of men. If you displace nine of those men through this machine, there may be employment for them at the time of the displacement at the grain, if it is busy. On the other hand, if it is a time when there is little or no grain being handled by the hand weighing machine, you have a large number of men comparatively to the number engaged in the grain who are unemployed in any case, and it is rather difficult to know which nine men.

Q. I am just coming to that very point. —(A.) If you come to the point practically, I think one would find difficulties bristling. The principle I quite accept; it is the application of it that seems to me to be the trouble.

Q. You see, unless that temporary difficulty were got over, and had been got over in the past, we should have been at the back instead of the front of the industrial nations of the world. —(A.) That is so.

Q. And our working men would have been the poorest paid in the world at this moment, if we had not introduced the best-known appliances that the world's genius can give us. Here is the point which I want to get at with regard to Glasgow: The moment men are put out of employment they come upon the risk of that awkward embarrassment with regard to casual labour, that they are thrown out of labour altogether? —(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you not think that the time has come when authorities and bodies such as you represent should seriously contemplate some kind of subsistence or maintenance allowance for the whole of that casual labour? —(A.) For the unemployed portion of it?

Q. Yes, for the unemployed portion of it. Granted a register honestly constructed of men who are ready and willing to work, but who were thrown out of work, it may be, for a time by this very thing to which you refer, should there not be some arrangement made, if possible, by which that casual man would still remain on the staff and have his subsistence allowance, and be ready to be called into more active and remunerative employment? —(A.) Yes, I agree to the principle. Again, you would require to have, not only a register I think, but you would also require to have some means of ascertaining what the earnings of the individual men are. You would have to go further than mere registration.

Q. I quite know that. I am only just now on the question of principle, because you have been amongst these men for years and years, and you know what is in their minds. What is in their minds is the fear that they will be put out on the streets? —(A.) That is true.

Q. In regard to that, any maintenance allowance to that class to that extent would minimise the objection to the introduction of mechanical appliances, because they would know that whatever happened they would have their safe right? —(A.) I grant that.

Q. Then if that state of matters were achieved in Glasgow, do you see anything in the principle of the thing to prevent it being achieved in other ports? —(A.) No, I do not.

Q. I mean you are not holding up Glasgow as a place so model and so high that it is beyond the power of imitation by other ports? —(A.) No.

Q. Can you tell me upon this point of your 8,400 dock men in Glasgow, what is the fringe of casual labour or unemployed labour? —(A.) Under-employed!

Q. Yes, under-employed labour. —(A.) It is a very difficult question.

Q. Do you not know that it is very nearly the foundation of the building? —(A.) I should think that the under-employed labour would probably be from 10 to 15 per cent.

Q. I think, probably, you are right. With regard to the man who is claiming 16s. per day, his claim would be 88s. if he worked eleven half-days? —(A.) Yes.

Q. What, on an average, does the ordinary dock labourer work? —(A.) Do you mean what, on an average, does he work in number of hours?

Q. Number of hours in the week. —(A.) On the average?

Q. Yes? —(A.) That again is difficult.

Q. Another port—I think it was Hull—yesterday said that there were only four days worked out of 5½ possible days. —(A.) I do not think that that is the case in Glasgow—not at the present time, and I can only speak for the present time.

Q. Would you say that they work 4½ days anyway? —(A.) I think that it would easily get to five days; but when you talk of five days, I think instead of talking of it in terms of time it would be better to deal with it in terms of money. It is not time I am thinking of, it is money. A man, I think, in Glasgow could easily earn money equivalent to five days' employment at time rates. Probably part of that money would be earned at overtime rates. He could earn much more than that, I think, when I come to think of it.

Q. Take the case that is in my mind, the case of a man who does not work overtime, but gets his job on the Monday morning and starts at 8s. per half-day. —(A.) The man I am talking of just now, of course, is the under-employed man. When I talk of a man being able to earn five days, I am talking of a man who is under-employed, because the man in Glasgow to-day who is in fairly good employment I think can earn his full week's wage and perhaps a little more; but that under-employed fringe of which we have been speaking are the men to whom I am referring, and when I talk of men being unable to find, perhaps, more than 4½ to five days' work, I think even that fringe just now in Glasgow can find that. That is what I mean; because employment at the moment in Glasgow is good.

Q. So that the charge for maintenance would not be so serious in that view? —(A.) No, so long as these conditions were maintained.

Q. I see that you favour a sliding scale, do not you? —(A.) I favour a sliding scale in regard to what? On what basis, the cost of living?

Q. No, a minimum wage you say should be fixed upon a sliding scale? —(A.) No, I did not quite mean that when I spoke of it in my evidence.

Q. I rather think that all of us thought you meant that, but give it in your own way, please? —(A.) What I rather intended to convey was that the wage should be adjusted according to the circumstances of the times. I do not say at the present, but ordinary times; that is to say, that when you have periods as we have had where trade has been good in comparison with the available labour the natural thing was for wages to rise, but when we get the reverse condition the natural thing is for wages to come down; and my objection to the minimum was that it would interfere with that natural operation.

Q. You mean to say that the minimum would be fixed, and should be fixed so long as present conditions remain? —(A.) So long as the conditions warranted it. I personally feel, my Lord, that the use of the word "minimum" is a dis-

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advantage. I would rather say "wage"; the wage that now is.

Q. We are not on that, and that is not the Remit to us; the Remit to us is to determine a minimum wage. What I want to ask you is, have you any hope within a year or two of the scale of living being lowered, or do you think it will keep up for some years?—(A.) I think that if the scale of living comes down it will come down very, very slowly.

Q. And when will it begin? We are all rather interested in this question. One of the witnesses, I forget who it was, said that he looked forward to a period of seven years as the period in which we could hardly expect to see any great improvement in this case.—(A.) I am not prepared to say he is wrong, but I should think that seven years is rather a long period for it.

Q. Perhaps you might put it at five years?—(A.) I should think a year or two less would be nearer to it.

Q. Your sliding scale would not be required at all except in the sense of sliding up, possibly, for seven years?—(A.) During that period, but I do not object to its sliding up, my Lord.

Q. I know, but now I will put to you another view which I want your evidence about. You know that if you have a better output at a port, if that were applied to all the ports of the kingdom it would certainly help the diminution of prices?—(A.) I do.

Q. And that particularly applies to incoming cargoes of foodstuffs. It is the duty of the port, is not it, to have the very best appliances for getting these expeditiously and as cheaply as possible sent on to the consumers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And wherever there is congestion interfered with by Government department action you are totally against that?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you think that that congestion caused by Government action is distinctly against the interests of the consuming, and more particularly the humbler, members of the public.—(A.) I do.

Q. In that production the activity and loyalty of the men to their Agreement is a very important factor?—(A.) It is.

Q. I will put to you this consideration: if the scale did not come down, would not that factor be a very active factor as the men gradually realised that their wages were bringing them more than at the time the minimum was fixed: it would be an incentive to a greater output on their part?—(A.) It would be an incentive to greater production.

Q. And in the term "greater production" you mean that quick handling of goods of which you and I have been speaking?—(A.) But even with that, my Lord, there are circumstances outside of the country, in connection with foreign trades, which may arise, which would necessitate even greater production and less cost. I mean if we were to arrive at such a condition as I mentioned in my evidence this morning, when the country was really up against very, very serious foreign competition, our export trade seriously affected, which is really after all the trade on which the country lives, we would find ourselves in such a position that we required to reduce our cost, independently of the sympathetic attitude which every man has, I trust toward the working men, the economic conditions would compel it; and I feel that that should not be interfered with in any way, no matter how far off in the future it may be, by anything which might be decided at the present time. It should be left as free and open and as elastic as the circumstances which arise in the future may permit. That is my feeling.

Q. And it is very well worthy of consideration; but the point is, as I understand, according to you, we are up against world conditions as well as the conditions of the individual ports?—(A.) That is so.

Q. But, again, I put to you: suppose there is no reasonable prospect at present of these world conditions so tightening as to compel ports to lower their labour rates, why should we enter upon that? Sufficient for the five years is the evil thereof.—(A.) You mean that we should take the short view?

Q. I am really meaning that simply because of this, that when the new conditions come in they may demand reconsideration from both sides—both from the employers' and from the workman's side—but, as we at present stand, with all those difficulties in face of us, do not you think that it would be safer to give the working man a distinct interest in increasing the output by disabusing his mind of any experience in the past, that when the output goes up his wages will go down?—(A.) I think, my Lord, that that is a very big question to ask me to answer in the witness-box. I have considered these labour questions almost entirely from a local point of view; and now that the workmen have taken national action one has got to adjust their mind to the altered circumstances. I freely confess that I have not yet been able to so adjust my mind as to feel that I am qualified to make a pronouncement upon the national question. That may come with experience.

Q. It is in a good direction, you admit?—(A.) And certainly as a result of this inquiry one may get some enlightenment upon that point.

Q. I gather from you that the men do not like fresh arrangements, or rather they view fresh arrangements with some suspicion?—(A.) They always do.

Q. That is when they do not make them themselves, is not that so?—(A.) Yes, it does not happen if the fresh arrangements are such as to give them a monetary advantage.

Q. I am taking still the sliding scale. Suppose in a year's time a couple of shillings is docked off that minimum, do not you think it might be found to be productive of a good deal of friction?—(A.) I think it possibly would; it is almost certain.

Q. You would have to take that into consideration along with the long view that I present to you. I am particularly anxious to know what it is in principle that you think distinguishes ports from each other with regard to the wages earned.—(A.) You mean the differential rates between the ports?

Q. Yes. The request is for a universal minimum. Upon what is your differential founded except on this: that differentials have risen up in the past and they must be assumed to be grounded upon good reason?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is all?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Now, I present this to you for your consideration. The case for the present minimum is largely founded upon what I may call the human needs of the position. Do you present any case on behalf of Glasgow that living, and rent, and general human needs and conditions are more cheaply obtained in Glasgow than, say, in London?—(A.) No, I would not put forward that view, my Lord. I do not know.

Q. You do not know?—(A.) No.

Q. That is not the kind of thing that you are giving evidence about?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That is a thing that we want. If there is any special case of that kind please let us have it, because, you see, if a man can live in Glasgow for 10s. a week cheaper than in London, then, of course, the London men would all go to Glasgow!

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—(A.) I am afraid that would cause trouble; I do not know where we would put them.

Q. In so far as it is a case for a minimum grounded upon what a decent man requires to live a decent life, that case for a minimum is a universal case just because it is a human one?—(A.) Yes, I should agree.

Q. With regard to your registration scheme, that is the only thing I will trouble you on further. I am afraid both you and the Trade Union leaders accomplished too much; you bolted too much at one meal, did not you?—(A.) I do not know that we did. I think that we drew up a very good scheme indeed.

Q. I do not doubt it for a moment?—(A.) If we had only been able to get rid of that natural disinclination, which you yourself have mentioned, against change of any kind.

Q. I know it is that?—(A.) I do think there is something in this that the men themselves have a feeling that their liberty is being interfered with, that when they are asked to be members of a registration scheme they become a mere cypher. I think they have got that in their mind, that they lose a certain amount of individuality.

Q. One of the witnesses referred to the Port of Glasgow, and said that the officials were of one mind about it, but they could not get the men to abandon the system of taking pay for a day?—(A.) That is so; they want individual liberty in everything.

Q. Would they be helped, do you think, to agree to a register if there were any principle of maintenance applied to those within the register?—(A.) I think that might be an inducement.

Q. It would be a very substantial inducement, would not it?—(A.) I think so. Of course, the details of such a scheme would necessarily have a very great effect on a man's mind as to whether he would accept it or not.

Q. If the condition of having a register would let the measure be made for the amount of the subsistence money of the unemployed casual labour; if the existence of the register were accompanied by this, that there would be rights to all within it, you think, the Glasgow men would be keen enough to sink the loss of their rights and agree to a register at once.—(A.) I think they might.

Q. I mean the Scotsmen in Glasgow?—(A.) Well, my Lord, that does not affect me, I am glad to say, because I happen to be in the happy position of being an Englishman when in Scotland, and a Scotsman when I am in England.

The CHAIRMAN: You must not prepare the way for a stiff law case on the subject of your domicile. Still, you do not think this an insuperable difficulty about the register?—(A.) No, I think the difficulties could be got over.

Q. Perhaps it will be started on a less ambitious scale the next time?—(A.) I do not think the publicity which has been given to it should be instrumental in getting it adopted.

Q. You agree with the Trade Union that it is in the interests of the men?—(A.) Oh, yes.

Q. I would like to say to you that we very much appreciate the tables that you have given us, they are very skilfully prepared, and also for the very frank evidence you have given.—(A.) Thank you, my Lord.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. JAMES MACFARLANE, Sworn.

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you the Treasurer of the Clyde Navigation?—(A.) I am.

Q. You are thoroughly acquainted with the general conditions of service and rates of wages of the employees of that Trust?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The Trust has been incorporated, has it not, by Act of Parliament?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It is conducted on the basis of making no profit out of its revenue, which comes from dues on ships, and rates on goods, being levied just sufficient to cover its expenses?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You have a Statement, have you not, which will show the Court what the precise constitution of the Trust is?—(A.) Yes. (*Statement H.17 handed in.)

Q. We will hand that Statement in, but we will not read it in detail. You simply say that the whole Trust consists of 42 members, 12 elected by the Corporation of Glasgow, 18 elected by adjoining County Councils and Town Councils, and 6 elected by Chambers of Commerce of Glasgow, the Merchants House and the Trades House. Then 18 are elected by the payers of dues upon goods; that is right, is not it?—(A.) Yes, that is all shown on the table.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the second 18?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: They are elected by adjoining County Councils and Town Councils?—(A.) No, it is 6 elected by adjoining Town Councils and County Councils, making 18 in all.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am afraid I misled your Lordship.

Q. The total number of 42, of which there are 12 elected by the Corporation of Glasgow, 6 by adjoining County and Town Councils, 6 by the Chamber of Commerce, Merchants House and Trades House, and then 18 by the payers of dues upon goods imported into and exported out of the port?—(A.) That is so.

Q. It has been suggested that these Public Trusts are not progressive; that they do not keep ahead of the spirit of the time, and various things of that sort. That does not apply, does it, to Glasgow?—(A.) No, I think not.

Q. Have you a table prepared which will show the enormous extension of the Port of Glasgow from 1825 to the present time?—(A.) Yes, that is Table A. The increase in the total revenue is symbolic of the whole progress and advancement since 1825.

The CHAIRMAN: In 1825 what was the revenue?—(A.) £8,367. In 1850, it was £64,000; in 1875, £196,000; in 1900, £441,000; and in 1914, that is to June 30 of that year, the pre-war year, £633,000. The other columns deal with the net tonnage of vessels, the tonnage of goods, the capital expenditure, and the outstanding debt. There are corresponding increases in those.

Q. You have gone up to 10,000,000 tons of goods now, I think?—(A.) Yes, we have no complete record of 1825, but in 1850 the tonnage of goods was 1,023,000, and in 1914, 10,067,000.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That table also shows, does it not, the expenditure on the docks at Glasgow since 1825 up to 1914?—(A.) Yes, in 1825 the total expenditure on the Port of Glasgow was

* See Appendices Nos. 85-89.

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£103,964; in 1914 it had reached the sum of 27,000,191.

Q. That represents the conversion of a stream across which people could wade at Glasgow Bridge into the third great harbour of the Kingdom, does it not?—(A.) Yes, I think so; until about the year 1800 it was just a shallow stream.

Q. As far as you can see, there is no suggestion for the absence of that organising genius of which Mr. Bevin has spoken?—(A.) No, I think the successful management of the undertaking is attributable to the special expert knowledge and experience of the Trustees of the requirements of the trade and the commerce of the district, and to their foresight in the provision of accommodation on the Clyde to meet the growing trade.

The CHAIRMAN: You may like to know, in my own personal acquaintance, that an aged man told me that as a boy he had waded across two miles below the Broomielaw from one bank to the other; and now, I suppose, there is a draft of 30 ft. of water?—(A.) 36.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will get those very figures on Table 1.B, if your Lordship will turn to the next page of that Statement.—(A.) That is during the same period, from 1825 to 1914.

Q. Do you show in that Statement the wonderful extension of the harbour in respect of the increased depth of water, and of the length of quays?—(A.) Yes, if you take the length of quays there again it is symbolic; in 1825 there were 865 lineal yards, barely half a mile, while now there are 19,234 lineal yards, or 11 miles.

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord, I just want to raise objection to the form of evidence, because really we were given a promise when we entered this Inquiry, and I think that promise by the employers' representative ought to be adhered to, because I objected to the Inquiry unless I received a promise from Sir Alfred Booth that the case would not be delayed with all this kind of thing.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I am going to say this: I am not going to allow Mr. Bevin to come here and make, as he did, charges against all the port authorities of being reactionary, or unprogressive, without having that refuted for the benefit of the public.

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Lynden Macassey of course, these schedules are very valuable, and they speak for themselves, but with regard to the details as to the management, it is no part of your case to be required to go into them.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, my Lord, I should have thought not.

The CHAIRMAN: That may shorten it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: These sort of things are said in public against the great public authorities of the Kingdom; they rankle and they ought to be disproved.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, Mr. Macfarlane has given his evidence on that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You have prepared, have you not, on Statement No. 1, a list of the employees of the Clyde Navigation Trust who

come within the claim that is before his Lordship's Court?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That shows a total number of men of 1,400.—(A.) Yes.

Q. The regular employees consist of cranemen, hoistmen, capstan-men, granary-men, watermen, enginemen, firemen, greasers, switchboard-men, and all the other classes of labour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Making the total number 1,400?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Any increase in wages which has to be made by the Trustees must be paid by them out of the revenue derived from charges on vessels, and charges on goods?—(A.) Yes, and other services.

Q. In order to meet the increased cost of the port, have you already had to obtain Parliamentary authority to charge rates in excess of your statutory maxima?—(A.) Yes, under a recent Order we are charging 66½ per cent. above our statutory maximum, and we have, under that Order, power to go up to 80 per cent.; that is an additional 13½ over our statutory maximum, or 8 per cent. on what is at present paid.

Q. Have you also very considerable charges to be met out of your available charging powers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. To come to the position of the Clyde Navigation Trustees, except at your granary and grain storage sheds, you do not employ labour for the actual handling of cargo on ship or quay?—(A.) No.

Q. Of your total number of regular weekly men, do a considerable number come now within the building or engineering trades' awards?—(A.) Yes, about 400; that is in addition to the 1,400 in the table put in. We have another 400 who come within other awards, mainly engineering and shipbuilding trades. There are some isolated cases of other trades.

Q. So that, so far as the Clyde Navigation Trustees are concerned, this cannot be treated as an isolated matter affecting the whole of their employees, but only one section of their employees?—(A.) Yes, that is to say, those who do not come under special trade awards.

Q. And the other sections of the employees will be dealt with under the engineering and shipbuilding awards?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And under those awards the different rates of wages are paid, which Mr. Spencer referred to this morning?—(A.) That is so.

Q. So that you have thorough intermingling of the different classes of men in the employment of the Clyde Trustees?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think all your men are paid on a weekly basis?—(A.) They are all paid on a weekly basis, our regular men.

Q. You give on the statement, which you call Statement No. 2, the full details of the wages and conditions of employment of your employees?—(A.) Yes, it shows very many different grades and classes of men, and rates of pay.

Q. That statement speaks for itself, does it not?—(A.) Yes, the full information is there.

Q. I think your men have holidays of 12 days every year, with full pay?—(A.) That is so.

Q. On Statement No. 3, do you give the average weekly earnings of your hoistmen, cranemen, and others engaged at the cranes and hoists?—(A.) Yes, over a period of three months, ended 31st December last. It gives the ordinary time in the first column, that is the ordinary wage, overtime during that period on the average of all men employed, and it gives in the third column the exact amount in money with the overtime earned per man per week during that period.

Q. There, again, that statement gives full de-

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tails, and we need not go into it in any further detail?—(A.) No.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you prepare these statements?—(A.) They were prepared under my instructions.

The CHAIRMAN: They are really admirable, and it is a pleasure to see them.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think, my Lord, it will give the Court the exact information which they want in respect of these different classes of men, and it will avoid a long detailed examination.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite true.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Just to make the point that you want to make, in Statement No. 3, does that show that the average wage over the period mentioned in the table averaged from 8s. 3d. to 16s. per week more than for the ordinary time of 44 hours?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Representing an average overtime of about 8 hours per week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In addition to that average wage, are there certain allowances not included, which are paid to cranemen and capstanmen when operating grabs by cranes?—(A.) Yes, in addition to the average weekly wages, the steam cranemen and some of the electric and hydraulic cranemen and the capstanman earn from 3s. 4d. to 8s. 5d. per week for working the grabs.

Q. Would you just state very shortly what the privileges of your permanent employees are?—(A.) Well, the main privileges, I should think, would be security of employment, and the holiday of 12 working days each year with full pay. In certain sections, we also give a suit of uniform, for deputy harbour masters, pierhead attendants, and others, which has a monetary value. Then there is a superannuation scheme, to which the employees and the Trust contribute an equal amount on the wages paid, and, in addition, the Trust pays a contribution of £2,000 a year. Under that scheme an employee who becomes incapable of discharging his duties, or has attained the age of 65, or has completed 45 years' service, is entitled to receive during life a superannuation allowance.

Q. There are differences between the different classes of your employees, as appears from Statement No. 2; are those differences definite differences put into operation by the Trustees, having regard to the different classes of work, and the different conditions under which the work is done?—(A.) Yes, after consideration from time to time, owing to the skill required and the physical energy necessary, and other matters which weigh with them, as to the different rates of pay.

Q. Take, for example, a steam craneman. In 1918 were grabs introduced for the discharging of ore?—(A.) Yes. The steam craneman thought that he had to use a little more physical energy for the performance of his work than the electrical or the hydraulic craneman, and his rate was fixed at 8s. 5d. more, and the hydraulic and electric craneman at 6s. 9d. per man more per week, subject, of course, to overtime.

Q. The difference between the 6s. 9d. for hydraulic and electric craneman and the 8s. 5d. for the steam craneman was in respect of the extra energy required by the man working on the steam cranes?—(A.) Yes, it was a matter of arrangement with the local Union.

Q. I am taking that one illustration to show that the differentials that exist are not adventitious differentials?—(A.) No.

Q. But they are based upon a definite principle?—(A.) Yes, from time to time.

Q. That will serve to illustrate the whole of the differentials, without going through them in detail. Again, I may take it quite shortly, I think, your war advances for all your men came out at a total of 28s. 6d. per week, plus 12½ per cent. on the total?—(A.) Yes, on the total earnings; that gives them an average war advance over ordinary time ranging from 35s. to 39s. 5d. per week.

Q. Has the Clyde Navigation Trust taken the view that their men in respect of their work, and the conditions under which the work is done, follow much more nearly the case of railway men than the case of dock workers? (A.) That is so; in both employments the men are largely concerned in the transport of goods, and the continuity of employment in both cases is very much alike, and also in both cases a certain class get uniforms and holidays. I do not know that the railway companies have a superannuation scheme for their workmen in most cases.

Q. In point of fact, has that view been urged on you from time to time by the men themselves?—(A.) In one case only did they base that they should get an advance on the railway advances.

Q. In only one case?—(A.) I think that was the only time they really based their claim on the railway advance; otherwise, latterly, it has followed the shipbuilding trades' advances.

Q. This is the first time, is it, in which the whole of your men are sought to be brought in under the banner of the National Transport Workers' Federation?—(A.) Well, it is not the first time they have sought it: it is really the second time that they have endeavoured to be brought in, but so far we have never come into, nor have we followed at any time a dockers' award.

Q. Up to the present, you have never at any time followed a dockers' award?—(A.) No.

Q. But up to the present you have followed the awards of the shipbuilding and engineering trades?—(A.) Yes, after arbitration cases.

Q. In point of fact, has your endeavour to insist upon your men coming under those awards been supported by the Committee on Production?—(A.) Yes, that is so. (*Tables H.19 and H.20 handed in.)

Q. I do not want to take you through all the details. We have got the big broad fact that up to the present you have followed the shipbuilding awards. You have made a comparison, have you not, between the wages of your men and the railwaymen? Take for example your capstanman?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The wages of your capstanmen vary?—(A.) From 58s. 6d., that is from the beginning of their service; they get 1s. increase after six months and another 1s. at the end of the year, and the greater part of that for another year or two. The wages range from 58s. 6d. to 67s. 6d., and the railwaymen is one grade only, 62s.

Q. For capstanmen?—(A.) Yes. I might add the Clyde Navigation do not employ shunters. That is all done by the railway servants, but for comparison their wages range from 60s. to 69s., against the Clyde capstanmen of 58s. 6d. to 67s. 6d., that is 1s. 6d. in each case higher.

Q. The shunting on the docks is done by the railwaymen?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have permanent-way men have you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So, of course, have the railway company?—(A.) Yes. We have about 60 miles of railway lines within our premises, and those, of course, are repaired and kept in order by our own men.

* See Appendix No. 90.

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Q. What are your wages for your permanent-way men?—(A.) I find that a recent agreement with the railway company gives them a wage of 60s. a week. Our men have 61s. a week, that is under-men. The sub-gangers in the railway company's services have 62s. a week. Our men have 63s. 7d. per week, so that we compare favourably.

Q. In the view of the Clyde Trust would it introduce a very regrettable confusion if your permanent-way men repairing your 60 miles of railway along the dock were being paid at a different rate from the rate of the men repairing the fails which connect with your very lines?—(A.) I should think it would lead to discontent among the railwaymen.

Q. Introducing a different rate of payment for men doing precisely the same work simply because one happens to belong to one Union and another happens to belong to another Union?—(A.) That is so.

Q. We will take those two classes of men as illustrations only of the point and not follow that into further detail. I want to take you first of all to the Claim. The Claim is to apply to permanent men?—(A.) We appear to be embraced within it. We were embraced within it in exactly the same wording in October, 1918, when we appeared before an Arbitration Court in London. The Claim at that time was for 4d. per hour advance, and the Award came out granting 1½d. per hour advance. That was claimed by the local Union, the Scottish Union of Dock Labourers. They claimed that we came within the Award. Our view was we did not come within the Award, and a special Arbitration Court heard our case again in Glasgow. Their decision was that we did not come within the Dockers' Award, and they awarded 3s. 6d. a week. That was one-half of what the dockers had got, but not based in any way on the Dockers' Award, based on an engineering Award which had been previously granted by a separate Court.

Q. We will make the point clear, that what his Lordship is asked to do is to decide the contrary of what has already been decided twice by the Committee on Production?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Assuming that his Lordship does do that, and applies, what has never been done before, this Claim to your permanent men, we want to see just what the effect would be in respect of that. It is proposed that the wages of the permanent men shall be raised so as to bring them within the same amount in money of the casual men when their wages are raised as they are within that amount to-day. You appreciate the effect?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have first of all made on that basis an estimate of the cost?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Where is that Schedule?—(A.) There is no separate Schedule.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: For day work alone it works out at how much?—(A.) £85,000

Q. And if you add to that an approximate estimate of the additional cost in respect of overtime that brings us up to the figure I gave his Lordship this morning of £100,000 per annum, does it not?—(A.) Yes, that is a rough estimate.

Q. To meet that, as you have said, the dues you charge at present can only be raised by 8 per cent. ?—(A.) That is so.

Q. So that you would require to obtain substantially increased charging powers from Parliament to meet the additional cost of this claim?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In your view, would it be detrimental to the interests of the port that the charges of the port should be so substantially increased?—(A.) It

might be detrimental in driving some part of the trade from the port, and therefore injuring the men who are making the present claim.

Q. Looking at it from the point of view of the port, you would regard it, would you, as exceedingly undesirable if it could possibly be avoided?—(A.) Yes, if it can be avoided. It would react on the whole trade of Glasgow and Scotland if the dues were unduly high.

Q. Just to follow that point out, in Statement No. 4, have you given a Table which shows the total tonnage of vessels and goods dealt with at the Port of Glasgow for each of the six years ended June 30, 1914 to 1919?—(A.) Yes, that is Statement No. 4.

Q. Are you able to give a rough figure of the additional charge which it would mean upon goods at the Port of Glasgow if the claim was substantiated?—(A.) Taking the tonnage of our last financial year, that is June 30, 1919, it will be observed there was a very heavy fall of the tonnage in comparison with the pre-war year, taking the tonnage of 1919 of 6,941,000 odd tons, say, 7,000,000 tons, if it required, as has been estimated, £700,000 to pay this increased wage, that would mean 2s. per ton on the tonnage dealt with.

Q. Already the tonnage of vessels frequenting the Port of Glasgow has dropped from 13,821,000 tons in 1914 to 7,930,000 tons in 1919?—(A.) Yes, due entirely to the war.

Q. That is to say they are to-day only 57.4 per cent. of what they were in 1914?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Similarly the tonnage of goods has dropped from 10,000,000 odd tons in 1914 to 6,941,000 tons in 1919, or, to-day, 69 per cent. of what they were in 1914?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The Clyde Trust have considered the question, have they not, of the time it takes to load and discharge goods in the port?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And if the same trade is to be accommodated in the future as was accommodated immediately before the war, at the present rate of output, will additional berthage and quayage have to be provided?—(A.) That is what is thought, yes.

Q. On the other hand, if output is increased that *pro rata* avoids the necessity for constructing additional docks and quays?—(A.) Yes. It should be the interest, we think, both of the employers and employed rather to increase the output so that the present quays may rather accommodate more tonnage than they have done in the past, than have to build quays at the immense cost of present-day prices, just to do the same trade as we have done in previous years. It will add very considerably to the cost of commodities if that has to be done.

Q. Does it cost to-day something between two and three times the pre-war cost to provide new quayage or new berthage?—(A.) That is so, and that is in addition to the wages claimed, of course.

Q. Therefore, will the Clyde Navigation Trustees welcome all the assistance which this Court can give them to secure greater expedition in the handling of goods in the Port of Glasgow?—(A.) That is so. We are at present considering labour-aiding and saving appliances for the handling of goods, and within the last few weeks there have been deputations of the officials visiting various other ports to look at the latest means brought into use to see if we can improve ours.

Q. You are already considering taking steps to ascertain the latest devices in respect of mechanical appliances?—(A.) That is so.

Q. All for the purpose of avoiding this most undesirable burden of increased capital expenditure which otherwise is necessitated to provide berthage and quayage?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And in only one of those two ways, either by

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increased expedition using the existing quays or by new quays increasing the diminished rate of production, can the commodities coming into and out of the Port of Glasgow be dealt with?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The question of overtime does not arise at this moment, therefore I will not take you through those details of your claim, reserving that for a future occasion. I have taken the statements which you have put in shortly, but before I conclude, if there is anything you would like to say on any particular statement, I would ask you just to make the point yourself to his Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: I have the report of the Committee on Production, Sir Lynden. I have marked it "H.19." Would that be right, Mr. MacPherson?

Mr. MACPHERSON: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the report of the Committee on Production.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There were two Awards. Is that the first Award?

The CHAIRMAN: This is the one dated 14th of November, 1918. The other should be "H.20." It is dated 16th of October, 1918.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, I think your Lordship has them both. (To the Witness.) That is right, is not it?—(A.) Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. The first point I want to take you to is the question of cost. Did I understand you to say that the total cost of £720,000, that is the cost of handling goods and dues, the Clyde Harbour Trust costs, and the costs as mentioned by Mr. Spencer this morning, would amount to 2s. per ton?—(A.) Yes.

Q. On the goods entering Glasgow?—(A.) Entering and leaving.

Q. You heard Sir Alfred Booth say that the cost to the country would be £20,000,000 per annum?—(A.) I do not recollect his figure now.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to ask your Lordship if you would be good enough to look at "D.1," where I estimated the cost of 2s. 1½d. per ton, based on the exports and imports of the country—in view of this Witness's evidence. You will see on a basis of 110,000 men for the past year the estimate was £4,290,000, or on the ascertained imports and exports 2s. 1½d. per ton on all charges; and on the second page I estimate the coming year on 125,000 men employed at a cost of 1s. 9d. per ton, having regard to the increase of the tonnage this year as against last. This Witness says that at Glasgow this will be 2s. a ton. I have called your attention to that because the Witness and I agree on the cost.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: So far as Glasgow is concerned only.

Mr. BEVIN: So far as Glasgow is concerned. (To the Witness.) You say that the Clyde Harbour Trust prefers to follow the Engineering Award?—(A.) We are prepared to follow a definite basis for our men. I do not say that the Engineering Award is so good in principle as the Railway Award is now, because the Railway Award is definite for some time to come, instead of having

constant disputes or arbitrations. It goes on a sliding scale, and the men and ourselves know where we are.

Q. You have heard Counsel putting to all the Witnesses that the existing differentials must be maintained, have not you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Up to December 1st, 1919, what was the difference between the railwaymen and yourself?—(A.) I am afraid I could not give the exact differences.

Q. Did the Engineering Award give another 5s. on December 1st, 1919?—(A.) It did.

Q. Have the Clyde Harbour Trust paid it?—(A.) No, we were not asked to pay it. May I explain this, my Lord. On the last occasion when the Engineering Trade Award of 3s. 6d. was given—I might go further back in the first place. Our men are not all connected with the National Transport Workers' Federation; some of them are in the Iron and Steel Trades' Federation, and some are members of the Scottish Union of Dock Labourers, which is affiliated with the National Transport Workers' Association. An Award came out by the Committee on Production granting 3s. 6d. to the members of the Iron and Steel Trades' Federation, who had made an application for an increase. This was refused to be accepted by the Scottish Union of Dock Labourers for their members. We are quite unable to say who are members of the one Union and who are members of the other, and as regards that there is great difficulty in paying the men. Therefore on this occasion when the 5s. Award was granted in December last to the Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades the Trustees did not voluntarily offer it. If an application had come in from the men I have no doubt it would have been granted. I think I may say it would have been granted. But as this later application is in we would rather wait to see what the result of the application to the Court may be.

Q. If the application had come in on December 1 you would have paid it undoubtedly?—(A.) I think it is fairly likely that we would.

Q. The effect of this claim on Glasgow would be to give to the casual dockers 11s. a week, would not it? They work on 11 half days; the present wage is 14s. a day, I believe, so that, taking the basis of the majority, the advance would be 11s.?—(A.) You are taking the rate of 14s., but we do not agree with that. We say that it is a coasting rate which would go up to 16s.

Q. What I have made perfectly clear is that in the case of permanent employees we will take the majority line.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, I have made that perfectly clear. (To the Witness) The advance in Glasgow to the harbour people would be 11s. a week if the 16s. is given.—(A.) Do you mean the casual men?

Q. Yes.—(A.) No, I do not agree with that figure.

Q. The general cargo men then. The 14s. men would go to 16s., would not they?—(A.) No, I do not agree with that. The general cargo men would go to 17s. 4d.

Q. You are more generous than we have laid down for ourselves; we have not even asked for that, I can assure you; so it is possible you have been under a misapprehension. Is that so?—(A.) No. You are asking for a minimum wage of 16s. per day, where the minimum payment in Glasgow, so far as I recollect, is 12s. 8d. per

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day; that is up 3s. 4d. The men in grades above that would all naturally expect 3s. 4d., too, so that if you come to the ocean-going steamer with its 14s. they want 3s. 4d. also, that is 17s. 4d.

Q. Let us get to the application, not what you think would be the result. The application is that the coastal rate, and the liner rate, should become one rate for Glasgow, similar to Liverpool, of 16s. right through the port, whether it is a 12s. 4d. man or whether it is a 14s. man. In the case of Glasgow the application is quite distinct: it is 16s. for both sets of men?—(A.) Minimum, yes.

Q. That is, the men on the liner who work for 14s., and on the coaster, under this arrangement, if the Court decided, would have 16s. That is the application?—(A.) Yes, it gives the minimum rate.

Q. Taking the liner as the basis, the advance for those men under those conditions would be 11s., would not it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that if we had made an application for the Engineering Award we should have got 5s. of that on December 1?—(A.) I think it very probable.

Q. So that you want to halve nearly your estimated cost, because you were willing to give us 5s. in December, and it is only 6s. to advance now to adopt this settlement?—(A.) Yes, but I do not base the £85,000 on that; I base it on your 16s. per day.

Q. This is the point I have been wanting to get at. You base your £85,000—(A.) I do not base it on the lowest; I base it on the highest amount that is likely to be paid under the claim.

Q. If you do not have to pay so much you will be disappointed. You have based it on the assumption that the advance in Glasgow is going to be 3s. 8d. a day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Whereas, in fact, if our application is interpreted rightly, the advance is 11s. a week or 2s. a day?—(A.) Yes. That would bring down the £85,000 proportionately.

Q. That brings your £85,000 down to £50,000 at least?—(A.) No, not quite so low.

Q. Well, nearly?—(A.) Between £58,000 and £59,000, I think.

Q. Out of that you would have given us 5s. a week. Just take 5s. a week off that, and see what we are really asking now for Glasgow?—(A.) £33,000.

Q. So out of your £85,000, if you have regard to what you were willing to give us, what we are asking the Court for now is really £33,000 instead of £85,000?—(A.) I beg your pardon.

Q. At this stage, assuming you had adopted the Engineering Award on December 1, and you were paying it, what we would really have been asking for at the moment would be £33,000 per annum?—(A.) No, I think you would have been asking the present claim. If you are going to alter your claim—

The CHAIRMAN: No, assuming the claim to stand.—(A.) It would be less by that amount.

Q. It would then have involved you in an extra expense of how much; not £85,000 but—(A.) £33,000.

The CHAIRMAN: Now ask him to add the overtime to that, Mr. Bevin.

Mr. BEVIN: Before that I want to ask you this. Supposing you have to work your permanent staff overtime, who pays the overtime?—

(A.) It depends on the section of men who work overtime.

Q. In conjunction with shipbuilding. Take your cranemen and all the other men?—(A.) Of recent times we have charged that on to the party requiring the extra work.

Q. So that does not come out of the Harbour dues?—(A.) It has to be met in the first place just like dues. We charge the whole wages away in some form or another; they have all to be met, and it does not matter if we charge the overtime in a different way to the ordinary time.

Q. Mr. Spencer may have estimated for overtime this morning in his estimate of £621,000, because he would have to allow for payment of overtime, and probably have to pay that money to you. I want to know what it is going to cost on the Glasgow Harbour dues, not what it is going to cost ultimately. On the overtime, the overtime is paid by the shipowner or merchant, or whoever asks you to work?—(A.) Yes, at certain sections.

Q. So that really the bulk of the overtime would have to come off this estimate of £15,000 which you put in this morning?—(A.) No, it has got to be paid.

Q. It would not be paid out of the Glasgow Harbour dues?—(A.) Yes, it is a form of dues; it is a charge.

Q. We want to get at the facts, that is all, and it does not help if you evade. What I want to get is this, whether that charge of £15,000, which Counsel mentioned this morning after looking around to you, is paid for out of the Statutory levied dues on Glasgow Harbour, or is that £15,000 overtime paid by the shipowner or merchant who may order you to work?—(A.) To a large extent by the shipowner or merchant.

Q. Then it might have been included in the £621,000 estimated as the cost this morning?—(A.) I think it very unlikely.

Q. There is a possibility of duplication?—(A.) I do not think so personally.

Q. A shipowner in estimating his overtime would estimate the overtime that he had to pay the crane man or the stevedore, would not he?—(A.) I think they were only looking at their own men in estimating that figure.

Q. I just wanted to ask you two other questions. You quoted the railwaymen just now as £3 2s. You heard Professor Bowley's Budget the other day, which gave £3 13s., and you heard Sir Alfred Booth's statement that a man's overtime ought not to be calculated in arriving at his standard of life. With those three figures do you suggest that this £3 1s. and £3 2s. is a living wage, taking the minimum standard of Budget as submitted by Professor Bowley?—(A.) It seems a low wage, taking his minimum standard.

Q. You supply uniform, you say. What do those suits of uniform cost you, supposing you were arguing with the Union against an advance of wages, and you were quoting it as one of the privileges?—(A.) It depends largely on which section. It ranges up to 3s. 10d. per week per man: that is about £10.

Q. About £10 a year for uniform?—(A.) Yes, for certain individuals.

Q. The uniform is one set a year, and one oil coat every second year?—(A.) That is not the particular uniform I am referring to when I submit that figure. It is a Deputy Harbour Master.

Q. What would that have cost?—(A.) What I stated just now, about £10.

Q. If you take this uniform, and one oilskin coat, which has to last two years, it costs the

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Glasgow Harbour Trust, buying wholesale, £10 a year?—(A.) No, not that particular suit.

Q. What does that cost?—(A.) I took out the figures this last week. It ranges from 2s. 3d. to 3s. 10d., that is a little over £5 to £10, say.

Q. That is what it costs you buying the clothing wholesale?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I will let the Court draw its own deductions as to my budget. With regard to this difference in rates, is there not a clear line of demarcation in Glasgow Docks between the building sections and the other maintenance staffs, that is those who automatically follow shipyards or automatically follow other trades?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If those men go up this 11s. and there was an Arbitration yesterday with the Engineering Trade, and assuming this Court's decision is adopted, and it comes out about the same time, there will be no real difficulty, will there? (A.) It depends on the amount that is awarded.

Q. Do you think the difficulty will be rather with the Glasgow Harbour Trust than with the men?—(A.) No, I do not see what you mean exactly.

Q. The men have always asked to come with the dockers; because they have been to arbitration twice, and the arbitrator turns them down; that does not always prove they are wrong in their claim, does it?—(A.) No, but personally I do not see any analogy between the work of our permanent men and the docker. There is no analogy between ferrymen, lamplighters, platelayers, and dredging men, and the dockers doing casual employment.

Q. There will be a difference in their wage, will there not?—(A.) There is.

Q. But is there any reason why that difference should be made wider? The difference already exists between them, does it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If the same advance is given to the permanent man that is given to the casual, will not it keep the difference exactly the same?—(A.) Yes, it will keep that difference the same.

Q. Has not Counsel been asking to retain differentials in exactly the same proportion?—(A.) Yes, but we think the differentials should rather obtain with similar employment outside rather than with casual employment in the harbour itself.

Q. Is not really what you are asking is that you should standardise with the lowest rather than maintain the differentials with the highest? Is not that what you are asking when you ask for the railway settlement?—(A.) No, I am just asking for a principle which will allow us some foundation to work upon in the future.

Q. Would not this give you a good foundation: supposing you said these men should be fixed in definite ratio per day with a casual worker, and then they go up and down with the casual worker—they will never go down, but that they should go up with the casual worker, would not that settle the matter?—(A.) I do not see why, because your men come within a dock authority you should not try to regulate the policemen, seamen, and railwaymen, and all others that come within the undertaking, as well as our permanent men.

Re-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. You have put in on Statement 1 a classification of your permanent men?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That list gives the different categories, crane-men, hoistmen, capstan-men, weighers, granary-men, watermen supplying water to vessels, enginemen, firemen, greasers, switchboard

men, and others engaged in the hydraulic and electric engine houses for working the cranes, hoists, and capstans. Then it goes to deputy harbour-masters, pierhead attendants, masters, engine-men, firemen, stile-men, and others. Then dredging plant masters, engineers, firemen, and deck hands engaged on board dredgers and hopper barges; general labourers, platelayers and lamplighters. Is your point this: that there is no analogy between those different classes of permanent men and the dock labourers?—(A.) That is so.

Q. As I understand it, your objection is to having it prescribed that these men are to follow and have their wages varied with the wages of the casual dock labourer?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Do you justify yourself on that by distinguishing between the duties performed by those men and the different duties performed by the dock worker?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have calculated the annual cost to the Clyde Navigation Trust, on the basis of this claim, as £85,000 for day work, and for overtime, bringing it up to £100,000 per annum?—(A.) That is so.

Q. As I understand you, if the advance of 5s. granted to the engineering trade had been paid there would be a reduction from that sum. I understand Mr. Bevin to put to you that if the advance conceded to the engineering and ship-building trades of 5s. had been paid there would be a deduction from your figure of £100,000?—(A.) Yes.

Q. To give the present effect of the claim you have given the figure of £100,000?—(A.) Yes.

Q. He has put it to you as to whether certain overtime costs which you have included in the difference between the £85,000 and the £100,000 had not been included by Mr. Spencer?—(A.) He did.

Q. Do you know whether that is so, or whether it is not?—(A.) I cannot speak quite definitely, but I think it highly improbable that Mr. Spencer included that in his overtime charge.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Mr. Spencer is here, and he can tell your Lordship it is not included. It is desirable that it should be cleared up.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that so, Mr. Spencer?

Mr. SPENCER: The figures which are in my statement, my Lord, are figures which apply only to the casual workers employed by the stevedores and shipowners, and others employing labour directly in discharging and loading the vessels, and have nothing to do with the overtime which might be paid by such employers to the Clyde Trust for the use of cranes.

The CHAIRMAN: Your Parliamentary authority depends upon statute?—(A.) That is so.

Q. What is the Act of Parliament that you refer to?—(A.) I will give your Lordship a copy of it. (*Document handed to his Lordship.)

Q. What is the date of it?—(A.) It is called The Clyde Navigation Superannuation Order Confirmation Act, 1908. It is dated 27th of March, 1908.

Q. Is there anything about your range of charges in that?—(A.) Under that we have power to increase our due to 80 per cent. above the statutory maximum fixed by various preceding Acts.

Q. What section is that?—(A.) I beg your pardon: that is the wrong one. It is the Clyde Navigation Order Confirmation Act, 1919, dated 19th of August, 1919.

* Not printed.

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Q. You have power to increase your existing range of charges by 80 per cent., did you say?—
(A.) By 80 per cent.

Q. What section is that?—(A.) That is Section 5, my Lord.

Q. Was this a claim under a provisional Bill, or passed through to Parliament with a private Bill?—
(A.) A provisional Bill heard in Glasgow.

Q. It was heard locally in Glasgow?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And then sanctioned by Parliament?—(A.) That is so.

Q. About other proceedings I see that you are right about that, because I was looking at the Award of the 14th of November, 1918, which says in Section 7 of it: "The wages of the men concerned have not been regulated by movements in the wages of dock labourers, but have been dealt with on the basis of advances given to the engineering and allied trades."—(A.) That was so.

Q. That was the point you were wanting to make?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Suppose the men in your employ are in the Dockers' Union—are there some?—(A.) Partly, and partly in the Iron and Steel Trades Federation, and partly, probably, in no union. As to what extent they are in either of those Unions, or in no Union at all, of course, we are not aware.

The CHAIRMAN: How does this stand, Mr. Bevin? Do you represent the entirety of the workmen who are employed by the Clyde Navigation Trust?

Mr. BEVIN: I understand the difficulty with the Iron and Steel Trades Federation has now been removed, and with the exception of very few old members of that Union the Scottish Union of Dock Labourers now covers practically the whole of the men, and are acting for them here to-day.

The CHAIRMAN: You have no reason to doubt that?—(A.) No.

Mr. BEVIN: That position was not quite the same at the period when it was before the Court. It has rather changed the circumstances due to changes that have been made.

The CHAIRMAN: Do your regular staff employed by the Trustees have to work hand-in-hand with what you might call the general casual staff employed by shipowners or stevedores?—(A.) No. If you look at the Table which was put in showing the list of our employees, I should say that practically only No. 1 work in conjunction with casual dock labourers, and to a certain extent No. 3.

Q. As to this 5s. to which you made reference, if the request had been made following the engineers' rise, you would in all probability have granted it?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The effect would have been very marked on your finances, would not it? It would have run, as I gather, to £33,000?—(A.) Yes, something like that.

Q. Would you have required further Parliamentary power?—(A.) No, if that was all.

Q. Limited as in the way that you have mentioned, that is to say that that was your standard rate at the time of this Inquiry, and that the claim is limited to 16s., how much per ton would have to be added to your charges?—(A.) Do you mean, take the £33,000 from the £85,000, and say that is the balance. Of course, we increased that to £100,000 for overtime. That has got to be met: it is not met directly on the rate per ton.

Q. I will come to that: take this apart from that, if you please. Assume that the wage bill was up by the 5s.; what would the present demand therefor be in the way of increase?—
(A.) As near as may be, 1s. 6d.

Q. Would you require Parliamentary authority for that?—(A.) It depends very largely on how trade comes back to the normal.

Q. I know; but assume trade were to come back to the normal, I rather think you could do it, so far as my calculations go?—(A.) Yes, if we had not to extend our quayage, which would be much more serious than the wages.

Q. I will put it in this way. Assuming the resumption of normal trade, and assuming the resumption of normal output, then you could do it?—
(A.) That is so, if we could get the berthage for the old tonnage.

Q. Of course, the output would help that. I am not much frightened, as I mentioned to the learned Counsel, about you having to go to Parliament at all; but as far as I can see, I think you would manage without on those conditions—
(A.) Of course, we have deferred a great many repairs while war was on, both from shortage of labour, and owing to the difficulty of getting material, and these have now all to be faced. We estimate that for the immediate coming year there is £500,000 to be spent on the quays just to restore them.

Q. I know it is a very anxious time for all concerned. I am concerned to notice the falling off in the tonnage handled; that is most serious?—
(A.) It is.

Q. One of my colleagues wishes me to ask you this. Has that anything to do with the shortage of coal supply?—(A.) I think not.

Q. What does it arise from, do you think?—
(A.) Just the loss of tonnage that is coming back now due to the war, present requisitions, and vessels lost through submarine sinkings.

Q. Just give us a little gleam of hope. You know that the number of bottoms is being increased, and the available tonnage is being increased by the efforts of the shipbuilder?—
(A.) Yes.

Q. That, of course, would assist in increasing the number of tons carried to and from Glasgow?—
(A.) That is so, and the cost of dealing with additional ships or additional cargoes is very little because the present staff, and the present accommodation, as output is returning to its old conditions, would be sufficient; therefore you would have a much larger increase proportionately of revenue to the increase of cost.

(Adjourned till Tuesday next, the 2nd of March, at half-past 10.)

THIRTEENTH DAY.

Tuesday, March 2nd, 1920.

Present:—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair)
Sir LIONEL FLETCHER Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON
Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H. Mr. JOHN SMETHURST
Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON } Secretaries.
Mr. G. H. INCE }

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I propose to conclude now the Glasgow evidence.

Mr. DAVID HOPKINS, *Sworn*.

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you the Mineral Traffic Superintendent of the Clyde Navigation Trust?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is there an average importation of ore into Glasgow of 1½ million tons annually?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is that ore vital raw material for all the Lanarkshire Iron Works?—(A.) Yes, it is.

Q. Is the position in respect of the importation of that vital ore that while wages have gone up the rate of the discharge of the ore has gone down?—(A.) Very much, yes.

Q. Is that a serious position?—(A.) Very serious. I should like to mention in regard to wages that in the last twelve months they have come down to time rates; they are lower now than they were on piece rates.

Q. I was just going to take you to that. For the purpose of showing exactly what the position is, have you prepared a Statement which gives the details?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is that Statement No. 1*?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Does that Statement show the average rates of the discharge of ore during the year 1918 and the year 1919?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is the material column in that table the column headed, "Approximate average discharge per crane per hour"?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is the sixth column from the left-hand side?—(A.) Yes.

(†Statements 2 to 5 were put in and marked H. 21.)

Q. To lead up to Statement 2, which his Lordship has, during the years 1918 and 1919 was ore worked by grabs?—(A.) Grabs and tubs.

Q. Does that mean that a grab is lowered into the ship and you dig down the ore, down to the bottom of the vessel?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then the tubs are afterwards lowered in, and the men work at the toe of the ore, pull out the ore, and put it into the tubs.—(A.) Yes, they fill the tubs.

Q. For the years 1918 and 1919 was the average rate of discharge per grab per hour between 32 tons and 34 tons per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Up to the end of July, 1918, was the average rate of discharge of ore from tubs 64 tons per hour?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: What are you speaking of?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will not find these figures upon the tables which you have.

Q. Has that 64 tons fallen now to 21 tons?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Per grab per hour?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Per grab per hour the rate of discharge has remained constant between 32 and 34 tons per hour, but the rate of discharge by the tubs, which are put in after the grabs, has dropped from 64 tons per hour down to 21 tons per hour.

Q. Those figures are right, are they not?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Give me the 64 tons period.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The 64 tons subsisted, did they not, up to July, 1918?—(A.) Yes.

* Not handed in.

† See Appendix No. 91.

Q. Since July, 1918, has it steadily dropped down to 21 tons per hour now?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: That is now?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, that is now.

Q. Is that a very serious diminution?—(A.) Very serious.

Q. It means that the rate of discharge by the tubs which are filled by the men has decreased by two-thirds?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is the explanation of that?—(A.) The explanation is that during the period from January to July, 1918, the men were working on piece-work, and they were paid by results; last year they came on to time-work, and, of course, the tonnage has gone down in consequence.

Q. So that you got the rate of 64 tons per hour while the men worked on piece-work; and when they declined any longer to work on piece-work and insisted upon working on time, the output fell down to 21 tons per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Having regard to the fact that this ore is a vital raw material for the great Scottish iron-works, is that a very serious thing from the national point of view?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. Now the proposal is to increase the day rates which have led to this reduction by this enormous amount?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I want to ask you about one other point. Will you compare Glasgow with Ardrossan?—(A.) Yes. Glasgow at the present time have to put 19 men in a gang, and they are paid at day-work rates. At Ardrossan they work on piece-work with 10 men in a gang; and at Bowling, a small port just below the Rothesay Dock, they work with 10 men in a gang on piece-work. At these three ports the men are members of the same Union; they are competitive ports, and, of course, Glasgow is at a great disadvantage in consequence of the time rates.

Q. Then, just to complete that point about the number of men per gang, when you got 64 tons per hour per tub at Glasgow, were there only 15 men in the gang?—(A.) There were only 15 men in the gang, yes.

Q. Now, when you are down to 21 tons per hour, have you got actually 19 men in the gang at Glasgow?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that your gang has gone up at Glasgow from 15 men to 19 men, and your output is down from 64 tons per hour to 21 tons per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. To pass quite shortly to your statement No. 2, which is the one before my Lord: that is a comparative statement which shows, does it not, the average rates of discharge of ore by tubs during the year 1913?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that Statement 2 on Document H. 21?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my lord.

Q. With your rate of discharge to-day by grabs and tubs of 21 tons per hour per tub, the men are assisted with grabs?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is that a very material assistance?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. On Statement No. 2, which gives the average discharge per crane per hour in 1913, the men were not assisted with grabs at all?—(A.) No.

Q. And, notwithstanding that, the rate of dis-

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charge in 1913 was 29.60 tons per crane per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In spite of the very much heavier work then performed?—(A.) Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will see that figure of 29.60 tons at the bottom of the fourth column, and the point which the Witness makes on it is that under those conditions in 1913 the men had not the assistance of grabs, which dig down the ore inside the hold; they had to do all the digging down themselves. It is pure digging down by time.

Q. Then on Statement 3 do you give some official figures which were obtained, I think, by the Ministry of Munitions during the War?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And those bear out in detail the broad facts which you have just spoken to?—(A.) That is true.

Q. Again, just to show how the broad facts to which you have spoken operate in respect of particular vessels, you have taken similar vessels and compared the average rates of discharge in 1913 and 1919 on Statement No. 4?—(A.) Yes.

Q. All showing the great reduction in the rate of discharge?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Again in Statement 5, to show how it works out in detail, you have given figures in respect of a further number of vessels, showing the average rate of discharge per crane per hour during the years 1913, 1918, and 1919?—(A.) That is right.

Q. Is the broad point which you desire to emphasise this: the inexpediency from the point of view of the port and of the large industrial districts supplied by the port that the day wage should be increased while, as shown by these tables, there has been a persistent and continuous reduction in output?—(A.) That is right.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. This system of piece work in Glasgow was introduced, was it not, at the special request of the Ministry of Munitions as a war measure?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There was an urgent appeal made to the Glasgow dockers, was there not, to give a very big output owing to the shortage of shells?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will you tell the Court—I have not any figures and I do not know—what is the comparison with 1914 when they were on time work, now that they have returned to time work again?—(A.) I have not taken 1914, because the war came on in August. I have taken 1913, which was a normal year.

Q. Take that—that year will do.—(A.) 1913 gives us 29.60 tons as against 21 tons.

Q. Therefore the proper comparison to take, I suggest, would be 1913, to arrive at the reduction of output?—(A.) In regard to time rates, yes.

Q. It is hardly fair, is it, if the Court wants to arrive at a proper judgment, to take a period when the men did their very, very best to help the country in a period of war, after very tremendous appeals both by the Federation, the Union, and the Minister of Munitions? I think you will agree, will you not, as a superintendent who has watched the proceedings, that that output during the later days of the war, when there was such a shortage of munitions, was an output which could hardly be expected to be kept up perpetually?—(A.) I should not like to say that, but what I should like to say is this, that with regard to output, with the members of the Scottish Dock Labourers' Union, we should be in as favourable a position as the

other ports, where they are working on piece work at the present time.

Q. But you will agree, will you not, that the piece-work system in Glasgow was very much like dilution in the engineering shops: it was introduced at the request of the Government, with a promise that the men had the option to return to their pre-war conditions if desired?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that you see, compared with 1913, the reduction actually on a pre-war basis was practically 8 tons?—(A.) Practically 9 tons.

The CHAIRMAN: It is 29.6 tons against 21 tons?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: When you did introduce piece work, by what number did you cut down the gang?—(A.) I think you should ask Mr. Houghton that; it was they who cut them down from 19 to 15; at least the men themselves did.

Q. I mean the gang was cut down?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I know, and I am going to admit quite frankly, that the Glasgow man is opposed to piece work, and we begin with that; but supposing there had been another basis of negotiation: supposing there had been a minimum wage, and the same number retained, and, if I may suggest it, rather smaller tubs used than there are used in Glasgow, and lighter gear, do you not think that there would have been a possibility that the men would have grown rather to like piece work as against the other?—(A.) I do think so, and I would go so far as to say that if you were to take an ordinary ore, say Bilbao or Seville ore, as your ground to start from, and fix the rate from that, and come down to Santander ore or washed ores—any of those washed ores—and go up to the heavier ores, so that the men could earn, practically speaking, an average all the way through, I believe the men would take it.

Q. Did you have one rate for all classes of ore?—(A.) One rate for all classes except copper ore; there was 1d. on that.

Q. I think we are agreed that that is a mistake, are we not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I want to put some questions to you about the grab. Do you trim to the grab as she is going down through?—(A.) I am sorry to say that the men do not trim to the grab.

Q. I want to get a solution of the problem. Supposing you had regard to the whole question, as we have had to settle this in other ports, and supposing the whole gang was put on when the grab went on, it would be argued by the employer that there would not be much to do, would it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But supposing you did put the whole gang on, and the rates, spread over the grab work and the shovel work, were worked out in output, and it was therefore to the man's advantage to get as much out by the grab as possible, because none of them would be unemployed, do you not think that there would be more trimming to the grab?—(A.) I believe there would—yes.

Q. Have you discussed that with the Joint Committee?—(A.) I have only just been made a member of the Joint Committee. I shall have an opportunity later on, perhaps.

Q. You have not considered it from that point of view?—(A.) Yes, I have thought of it, and I have spoken to stevedores about it many times.

Q. I put this to you because I have settled the introduction of grabs in a great many ports for the Port and Transit Committee or the Ministry of Munitions, or have assisted in the settlement; and if his Lordship will forgive me for not putting a question, but making a little statement to help

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to get over this problem, my experience was that if all the men got the advantage of the grab, then they worked with the grab, and the result was that instead of the grab cutting right down through and leaving a wall, or almost a wall—which makes it, I think you will agree, harder for the shovel men to go in under those conditions when it is a wall, because there is no bottom really?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Especially if it is a hard ore. I found that the men trimmed from the wings and from each end, to the grab, and the grab would take out nearly two-thirds of the ore instead of probably 50 per cent.—(A.) That is my impression, too.

Q. If I may make a suggestion with regard to this problem, if this problem, apart from these wages—assuming a minimum wage is fixed—is re-discussed with the Federation and the men and the Union in Glasgow, is it your opinion that we may be able to find a solution of the problem?—(A.) I believe so.

Re-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. In your view, is it very essential in the national interests that a solution should be found?—(A.) Certainly—yes.

Q. And therefore if, through the assistance of his Lordship's Court, that solution is found, it will be a matter of very great public benefit?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. Mr. Bevin suggested that a piecework system combined with a guaranteed time rate minimum should be offered. Was that in fact offered in June, 1919?—(A.) No, I do not think there was a minimum.

Q. Are you quite right?—(A.) I do not know. I cannot say about that.

Q. We can prove it by another witness?

Mr. BEVIN: We will agree to that.

Mr. HOUGHTON: Yes, it is quite right.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: But the men turned it down?—(A.) Of course, I do not know that.

Q. So that the proposition which Mr. Bevin suggests as a solution has been put before the men and rejected by them?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: Only one part of my solution.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That one part.

Q. One other point: Mr. Bevin has put to you that the fair comparison is between 1919 and 1913?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In 1919 the output was 21 tons per tub per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But grabs were in operation?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. In 1913, as shown by your statement No. 2, the output per tub per hour was 29.60 tons?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And grabs were not in operation?—(A.) They were not in operation, no.

Q. Having regard to the great assistance afforded by the grabs, should the output in 1919 have been very much greater?—(A.) We should have at least 10 tons per hour more with the grabs than with digging down.

Q. So that when you make an allowance for the assistance afforded by the grabs, there is a much greater disparity in output than appears by merely comparing the two figures of 21 tons per hour and 29.60 tons per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. As representing the Clyde Trustees, would

you welcome sincerely any solution of this difficulty in getting discharge of the important traffic of iron ore on the Clyde?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. And you think that merely increasing the day rate is not the way to secure that end?—(A.) No.

Mr. BEVIN: I should like this question put: whether the supply of trucks was good?—(A.) They have been better during that time. The statements are on actual time, not on any waiting time.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there a Joint Committee of Management?—(A.) There is a Joint Committee.

Q. What does it consist of?—(A.) It consists of shipowners, stevedores, and representatives of the Dockers' Union.

Q. Are you on the Joint Committee?—(A.) I have just been appointed. I have not been to a meeting yet.

Q. How long has this deplorable state of matters of limiting the output lasted?—(A.) It commenced very soon after the armistice was signed.

Q. Can you tell me whether that has been taken up by the Joint Committee?—(A.) I believe so, but I could not say for certain.

Q. Were you ever consulted by the Joint Committee about it?—(A.) No.

Q. Can you give any reason why this, which is so damaging to the company, should have gone on without being a matter of express arrangement if possible with the men?—(A.) I believe some negotiations took place, but they could not come to any arrangement. I believe that is the actual fact.

Q. Can you give any reason why piece work was objected to?—(A.) I think the men took advantage of the Government Bill which said that trade unionists could go back to pre-war conditions.

Q. But under the piece-work system the wages were much higher than under the time-work system?—(A.) Very much higher, yes.

Q. In what proportion were they higher?—(A.) I think you can take the average at something like about 26s. per man per day as against 15s. 8d. per day.

Q. Was the 26s. per day of piece-work rate in your opinion a natural or an undue strain upon the men?—(A.) No, I do not think so. It would be in some cases, in the heavier ores.

Q. I am anxious about this view: do you think that a working man's life could be run at that pressure without any damage to his constitution?—(A.) There are men there who have been there ever since I have been there, who look hale and hearty at the present time.

Q. How long have you been there?—(A.) I have been there thirteen years.

Q. Suppose I put the figure at 24s., do you think piece work yielding 24s. per day would be no undue strain upon these men?—(A.) No. I do not think so—not 24s.

Q. I am still groping for a reason why, if that is so, they do not take it. What is your idea about it?—(A.) My opinion was that the men objected very much to the flat rate. The rate I think was 6½d. per ton. There were some vessels upon which, although they were working very very hard, they would not do possibly more than 200 or 250 tons in the day; and on other vessels which were washed ore, they would do about 800 tons or more in the day.

Q. Was the difference so great as that?—(A.) It was as great as that. At the end of the day

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when it came to the pay, one man would be getting very nearly £2 and the other man would very likely get about 18s., or perhaps less.

Q. Then it comes to this, does it not: if you were to measure the work by what I call the inferior ore, in the sense of ore which could not be so easily handled, what would the man's piecework rate come to?—(A.) By the inferior ore your Lordship means the hardest ore for working?

Q. Yes, the hardest ore for working?—(A.) His piecework rate very possibly, especially with the digging down if he has to dig down, would not be much more than 15s. or 16s.

Q. So that the piecework rate leaves the workman in a condition of great uncertainty?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. Do you not think that, as Mr. Bevin has indicated, the like of that could be put upon a proper basis?—(A.) I believe so.

Q. What is your general idea about how it could be worked?—(A.) If I might make a suggestion to the Court, it is this: that in the first place we should have registration; in the second place, weekly pays; in the third place, adopt a proper gang system. We have no gang system at the present time. The men go to the stevedores' office in the morning, and they are picked out in gangs; you never see the same gang twice; and they are paid off every night. I would then suggest that you should take what you might call the normal ore—we will take Bilbao ore, which is a fair ore to work—as the basis, to work the rate from.

Q. The piece rate?—(A.) Yes, to work the piece rate from. Then for the ores of which you can put out double the quantity, the rates should be reduced, and for the ores on which they have to work very hard to give a very much less output you should increase the rate, so that at the end of the day the three sets of men would earn something about the same.

Q. Do you think that if you all met together in the spirit of the questions which have been addressed to you from both sides by the parties to this Court, and those ideas of yours were put before the parties, there is a reasonable prospect of some arrangement being made?—(A.) I certainly think so, yes.

Q. If you had that arrangement made, that would be in a sense a flat rate, but it would be a flat rate which took account of the variety of work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Alongside of that, which would be a piece rate, you would without damage to anybody—could you not—introduce a minimum time rate?—(A.) Certainly, yes.

Q. That would pave the way for a minimum time rate which would be acceptable to the entire body of workers?—(A.) I believe so.

Q. Viewed from that point of view, you would approve of the minimum rate?—(A.) Yes, I would.

Q. And if the effect of that time rate were accompanied by some provision for healing that open sore of what we call casualisation, that would be of great national advantage, would it not?—(A.) Yes, I believe that if you were to adopt the gang system, the fringe of which Mr. Bevin speaks would be practically done away with.

Q. The ore trade, which is your particular care, is so regular that the fringe of casuals would be negligible?—(A.) I believe so. It could be adopted so that it would be.

Q. Just as a matter of curiosity—I am afraid I am not skilled enough to know—would you mind telling me why Glasgow is chosen as the port for ore which is to go away to the Midlands

of England?—(A.) Not the Midlands, Lanarkshire.

Q. I beg your pardon, I thought you said Lanarkshire. Where is it shipped from?—(A.) North and South Spain, and the North of Africa. Sometimes we get some Swedish ore, but not much.

Q. Suppose you had casuals reduced in this way, and the system which you sketched introduced—a reasonable time work minimum, and piecework arranged with some regard to the work which men are actually handling—have you any reason to doubt that the old rate of 29.6 tons as the average discharge per crane per hour might again be reached in Glasgow?—(A.) I would hope, if that were adopted, that that figure with the assistance of the grab would be nearer 40 tons per hour.

Q. Now that you have the assistance of the grabs?—(A.) Yes, because the hard work is the digging down.

Q. In order to get full value out of the grab system, you must have some inducement, must you not, to have the whole gang putting their hands to all the time to keep the grabs supplied?—(A.) I would not exactly say that with 19 men. There would be no room for the 19 men to work. The gang would have to be reduced for the grab work. The number that we have at the present time I think would be just right if they fed the grab.

Q. But that is the point that I am on. If you had the 19 men, and some arrangement were made by which they fed the grab, that would be right, would it not?—(A.) You could not do that with the 19 men. You could not put 19 men in a hold.

Q. Let me see how it stands, because we want to get the men all having an interest in the output. What is your idea?—(A.) Nineteen men would be far too many in the hold. Really they could not move to do any work at all, with the grab moving backwards and forwards, because when she takes the grip the men have to keep clear until she is away from the hatch, and then when she is coming back again they have to keep clear again, so that 19 men could not work there.

Q. What is your idea of the proper size?—(A.) The number that they have at present is this: they have four men in the hold and a hatchway man and a tipper—that is 6; and I believe in Ardrossan they put the gang up to 8—that is to say, eight altogether. That is in the hold only. I am not speaking of the gang on deck, but eight men in the hold; and that gang, I believe, works right through.

Q. Is that the 15 gang?—(A.) No, 10 is the total gang.

Q. So that your idea is that by keeping more continuous employment of all the men with a gang, or as near to that as possible, you can reduce the gang, increase the output, and increase the wages?—(A.) I believe so, yes.

Q. Is there any reason why that should not be done?—(A.) No, not to my mind.

Q. If that resulted in any displacement of labour, that also could be considered by the Joint Committee?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. And provision made for it?—(A.) Yes. I would suggest in that sense that the number of men be taken into consideration. We would assume so many grabs working daily and so many tubs working daily, and on the so many cranes or tubs we fix the number of gangs employed.

Q. We are particularly anxious to know two things: First, there would be great national advantage, would there not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Now can you figure anything but advantage to the men under that better organisation which

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you have sketched?—(A.) No; it would be a distinct advantage to the men.

Q. There is one thing which they would have to do, I gather from you, and that is that all they would have to sacrifice would be the old habit, which has not very much to recommend it, of going on for a day and knocking off for another?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You want them to go on in a more settled way of living?—(A.) I would like to see them do that, and I do not think we will have any peace until it comes to the weekly pays.

Q. There again the workmen and employers meeting together could make a settlement?—(A.) I believe so.

The CHAIRMAN: I am rather anxious about this, gentleman of the Bar. I hope I am not carrying my functions too far in putting these questions. I am entirely with both sides in endeavouring to get some solution which would be of national advantage as well as individual advantage.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite.

The CHAIRMAN: I beg your pardon if I have gone too far.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I say that we certainly on this side appreciate very much what is obviously your Lordship's intention, because no greater public benefit could be conferred than putting a system into operation which I gather Mr. Bevin would support just as much as we should.

The CHAIRMAN: I have been encouraged by the nature of the cross-examination—if I may say so, most enlightened cross-examination. The inquiry has now come to this stage, that it is not being conducted on partisan lines at all, and there can be nothing but good, I should hope, coming from these questions. I beg your pardon for keeping you, Mr. Hopkins.

Mr. BEVIN: I should like to make this statement with regard to Glasgow: that when the fundamental principles of this inquiry are settled the Federation, which is the controlling body in the end, would be quite willing to send its national representatives down to assist the local Union at Glasgow in the light of what has been done at other places to get over this problem, with a view of trying to find a solution, if we met in the spirit which the witness has indicated this morning.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Of course, your Lordship will appreciate that this is the first opportunity of putting this matter publicly forward before your Lordship and before the Federation, and, my Lord, before the public.

The CHAIRMAN: I think both sides are much to be congratulated.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. JAMES B. DAVIES, Sworn.

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you a representative of Messrs. G. and J. Burns, Limited?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are you in a position to give evidence with regard to the coasting section of dock labour at Glasgow?—(A.) Coasting liners.

Q. And your evidence will also cover Greenock?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Because all the coasting liners which call at

Greenock ultimately go to Glasgow?—(A.) Yes, if they are coming inwards: going outwards it is the other way.

Q. All the companies owning coasting liners in Glasgow do their own stevedoring, do they not?—(A.) They do.

Q. And they conform with all the terms and conditions of the National Agreement of April 22, 1919?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Your checkers and your foremen are permanent men, are they not?—(A.) They are.

Q. Enjoying holidays with pay?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you prepared a statement which will show my Lord the earnings of the men employed by the firm of G. and J. Burns?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is that statement No. H. 22?—(A.) Yes (*same handed).

Q. Does that statement H. 22 give the average earnings of men on the Belfast trade, the Liverpool and Manchester Trades, and the Dublin trade?—(A.) It does.

Q. You have taken the names of the men, have you not, who work regularly with the firm?—(A.) I have taken the names of two full squads, thirty of each department, and the remainder, the casuals, I have put all together.

Q. And you have taken a period of time, namely, the quarter ending December, 1919?—(A.) That is so.

Q. There is a lower rate in respect of coasting trade than in respect of deep sea trade?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Was that lower rate originally arranged having regard to the greater regularity of the coasting trade?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And is that a recognised differential?—(A.) It is.

Q. Is there a considerable amount of difficulty encountered by you in respect of restriction of the weight of slings?—(A.) Not so much at Glasgow as at Greenock. It is at Greenock particularly.

Q. You find that at Greenock, unlike Glasgow—(A.) There is restriction at Glasgow, too.

Q. There is restriction at Glasgow in respect of the weight per sling, but a greater restriction at Greenock. Is that the position?—(A.) Yes.

Q. From the point of view of getting work through, is that a regrettable state of things from your point of view?—(A.) Yes, the reduction is 20 per cent. exactly.

Q. Is there any reason, so far as you know, for that reduction in the weight of slings?—(A.) There is no reason whatever for it, unless it is to spin out the time occupied.

Q. That is a matter to which you would ask the Court to have regard in considering the question of wages?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Again you have considerable difficulty in respect of non-compliance with the agreement for the eight-hour working day. I am asking you to speak with regard to both places. With regard to Glasgow, is there any difficulty experienced so far as the coasting trade is concerned as to an eight-hour day not being worked?—(A.) There is just one point in which it is not being complied with.

Q. That is what I want you to tell my Lord.—(A.) The arrangement is that we get eight full hours' work per day, and the agreement stipulates that the men shall present themselves at 7.45 a.m. They do so, but it is a very common thing to make a start in the coasting trade at 1 o'clock, 6 o'clock, and 11 p.m. The men have been presenting themselves a quarter of an hour before those hours until quite recently, when one of the delegates ordered them to stop the practice of coming a quarter of an hour before the time to be booked on.

* See Appendix No. 92.

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Q. What is the effect of that?—(A.) The loss of about ten minutes.

Q. Each time?—(A.) Each day, yes.

Q. Ten minutes in all each day, or ten minutes at each of those periods?—(A.) Ten minutes in all.

Q. Have you prepared another statement which shows the cost per ton of cargo handled by your firm at Glasgow?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And do you take for comparison the quarter ending December, 1919, and the quarter ending December, 1913?—(A.) I do.

(*Table H. 23 handed.)

Q. Were the classes of cargo in that, the ships carrying the cargo, and the conditions of the shed substantially the same in each period?—(A.) Substantially so.

Q. Does that show this serious state of things, that for the last thirteen weeks of 1913 the average cost per ton of handling the cargo was 1s. 3.5d.?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. As against that, for the last thirteen weeks of 1919 was the average cost per ton of handling the cargo 5s. 1.8d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is to say there has been an increase in the cost per ton of no less than 3s. 10.3d.?—(A.) That is right.

Q. Or a percentage increase of 298?—(A.) That is so.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not want to take you into the details of overtime because that is not going to be dealt with at this stage; we are only on the point of the general claim.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. With regard to the coastal trade, it would not be too much to say that before the war the irregular nature of that calling provided the greatest indictment of dock labour, did it not?—(A.) The irregular sailings of coasting steamers, do you mean?

Q. I am referring now to the coasting trade generally: that is to say, you expected men to be at your sheds to start at any hour, whenever a boat arrived, prior to the war?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You also claimed such things as to pay them off with just a few hours' work at any time, subject to just the 4-hour minimum?—(A.) There was no minimum in those days.

Q. Then when you took your 1s. 3.5d. per ton, it was a period when the life of the men associated with the coastal work could not be regarded as fitting twentieth-century civilisation, could it?—(A.) I do not think the shipowners are to blame for that.

Q. I am not asking who is to blame for it, but if it is the fact. I am saying that the conditions of coastal traffic in those big ports in 1913 and 1914, prior to the war, was of such a character that it could not be regarded as fitting to modern civilisation or a modern state of affairs such as ought to exist.—(A.) It depends altogether on one's idea of what ought to have been.

Q. I do not want to be unkind, but I submit to you as an employer that you would not have selected a coastal docker's job for your son, would you?—(A.) I have a higher ambition for him than that.

Q. Quite right, too. Then is not that rather an admission, having regard to our equal rights as citizens, that a coastal docker's job was not a very highly ambitious job to look for?—(A.) It is not an ambitious job.

Q. Did not that result in this, that the people who were driven to work at it were, unfortunately,

the dregs of our dock life, particularly the shore gangs in the big ports?—(A.) That is probably true with regard to perhaps 50 per cent. of them.

Q. They had no chance of developing family life or anything of that kind: in other words they are the occupants, unfortunately, of the doss-houses of our docks?—(A.) I put it in this way, that they have had no desire to develop family life at all.

Q. I beg your pardon?—(A.) I would rather put it that 50 per cent. of them had no desire to develop family life, but were content to live in lodging-houses.

Q. Supposing they had had the desire, with the awfully irregular nature of coastal work could they have achieved that desire?—(A.) The coastal work is very regular; it is the most regular work in the harbour.

Q. For 50 per cent. of them?—(A.) Yes, for all.

Q. How long do your ships last discharging at Greenock, say?—(A.) I am taking Glasgow just now.

Q. You were referring to the restriction of slings and the terrible wickedness of the Greenock docker: how long does a ship take to discharge at Greenock?—(A.) Not more than 3 hours as a rule.

Q. So that a man is out for your business at any hour when you want to get him for 3 hours' work. Sometimes I have been in and out of Greenock in 2 hours, and a man gets 2 hours' pay. Your boats run in at 11, 12, and 1 o'clock; 2 hours' work is done, and that is all the men get. That is not a very highly civilised state of affairs, is it?—(A.) Bear in mind that these men are probably working 2, 3, 4, or 5 boats in a day from morning to night.

Q. And probably not?—(A.) It is very improbable.

Q. I want to ask you about these men not being on a quarter of an hour before time. You have a Joint Committee in Glasgow, have you not?—(A.) We have.

Q. You communicate with the Union pretty frequently if anything is wrong, do you not?—(A.) We do.

Q. Have you any letter that you have addressed to the Union on this point?—(A.) Yes. This question has arisen within the last six weeks or two months, and by a coincidence Mr. Marshall, the Glasgow Local Secretary, and myself wrote a letter to the Secretary of the Organisation on the same day. It is to come before the first meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee, but as both sides have been rather busy over this Court of Inquiry the question has never been brought up.

Q. It is not really a matter for this Court of Inquiry at all: you can settle it locally.—(A.) That is so.

Q. With regard to this 5s. 1d. a ton, part of that is due to the 44-hour week arrangement, is it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You have admitted that things were very bad before the war.—(A.) I have admitted what?

Q. That things were very bad before the war—that is the irregular nature of the calling and of paying men off with just a little pay, and so on.—(A.) Are you referring to Glasgow just now?

Q. To Glasgow and Greenock.—(A.) Greenock I will admit, but not Glasgow.

Q. Will you tell us what the freight was, say, from Glasgow to London in 1914?—(A.) I am sorry that does not come within my knowledge: I am not in the freight department.

Q. I do suggest that the comparative freight and the comparative wages ought to be at the dis-

* See Appendix No. 93.

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posal of the Court.—(A.) I am responsible for the spending of money, not for the earning of it.

Q. Some of us have to do both. You would know something about freights, would you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Would it be right to say that the freight has nearly trebled in that period?—(A.) I have a statement to make to the Court with regard to that. I do not know whether this would be an opportune moment to make it.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, this will do quite well.—(A.) I desire to bring before the Court certain information showing the position as it affects the coasting liners, which is altogether different from that of deep-sea vessels. In the case of the latter, in normal times the vessel accepts the rate ruling at the port of loading, but as a general rule the coasting liners' rates are governed by conditions outside the owners' control. For example, the coasting liner, as distinct from the cross-channel liner, is, as a general rule, in direct competition with the railway companies, and rates must be sufficiently low to secure a share of the traffic travelling. Again, the cross-channel liners have not a free hand to increase rates, and it is this section that the companies I represent are most interested in. The major portion of the traffic travelling across the channel is carried at through rates—namely, a rate which combines rail and steamer charges. Alteration in these rates under the Railway and Canal Traffic Act of 1888 must be sanctioned by the Railway Commissioners (now the Ministry of Transport). During the war the power of increasing rates was vested in the Railway Executive Committee, and increases were authorised from time to time to meet the increasing expenses. As recently as January 15, 1920, the Ministry of Transport put a new series of tolls, rates and charges into operation. This had the effect of cancelling all war rates in operation prior to that date, and the position now is that pre-war rates have been reverted to with the following additions to meet increased expenditure:—

Manures and everything used in the manufacture of manures.—No increase is allowed on pre-war rates.

Potatoes, fruit and vegetables in Class "C," 25 per cent. plus flat rate of 3d. per ton.

Merchandise in Class "A," 30 per cent. plus flat rate of 3d. per ton.

Merchandise in Class "B," 40 per cent. plus flat rate of 3d. per ton.

Merchandise in Class "C," 50 per cent. plus flat rate of 6d. per ton.

Merchandise in Classes 1 to 5, 60 per cent. plus flat rate of 1s. per ton.

I wish the Court particularly to notice this. In addition to these percentages a surcharge of 10s. per ton is allowed for the sea transit portion of the journey. That is to say, in the case of manure the increase is 10s. per ton over pre-war rates.

The net result of these alterations is in many instances a reduction of 10s. to 14s. per ton for staple traffics on the figures ruling prior to January 15, 1920. These rates include harbour dues and labourage at both ends. The new rates have only been in operation for a few weeks, and it is too early to judge as to what the result will be, and these rates were arrived at after months of negotiating between the Ministry of Transport and the Railway and Shipping Managers and Deputations from Chambers of Commerce, and any drastic change such as has been put forward by the National Transport Workers' Federation would entail the nullifying and revision of all this work.

Mr. Bavin: In addition to that, the subsidy is continued until the freight charges re-arrange themselves, is it not?—(A.) Which subsidy is that?

Q. The coastal subsidy on import and export traffic.—(A.) The coastal subsidy only applies to traffic for transshipment or which has been transhipped.

Q. But that is still being continued?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is in addition to what you have read?—(A.) Yes, but the shipowner does not get that.

Q. Who gets it?—(A.) The consignor of the goods.

Q. But you get your freight?—(A.) He gets the difference between the rail rate and the steamer rate.

Q. By reason of that subsidy a tremendous traffic was sent back to coastal which had previously been lost, was it not?—(A.) A proportion, yes. In a great many trades none of that travels at all. It only applies to ports like Liverpool and London.

Q. Taking your freight from Glasgow to London, in view of all that you have read, what is your freight now?—(A.) We have no steamer to London.

Q. You are speaking for the Glasgow trade?—(A.) Yes, in general.

Q. You cannot speak for the Glasgow trade and only base your figures on one firm, can you?—(A.) I made it quite clear that I was speaking for G. and J. Burns; but what I say with regard to them would apply generally to other companies.

Q. Could it apply in a general way if you had no steamer running to London?—(A.) As regards Glasgow, it does apply in a general way.

Q. With regard to this rate of 12s. 8d., the man does not get as long a period of employment in your ships as he would in a deep sea liner, does he?—(A.) It is every day.

Q. He would not get as long a period aboard one ship?—(A.) Not aboard one ship, but we have ships there every day.

Q. It is very irregular, because you have four calls as against one or two of theirs.—(A.) I think it is about the most regular class of work you have.

Q. I notice that in calculating the wages you have 65 hours a week: are not 25 of them night work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Does not that indicate a very irregular existence?—(A.) It indicates regular sailings.

Q. It is all very well to look at everything from the point of view of the ship, but if your ship has to be met at any time when it comes in that is an irregular existence for the men, is it not?—(A.) Yes. For some things that cannot be avoided.

Q. I am not asking you for the reason, but for the fact. It is an irregular state of existence, is it not?—(A.) At certain berths there is a lot of night work done: in fact, at one berth in particular, which I should like to mention, there is three times as much night work done as day work, and we cannot alter it.

Q. The men fit in with your requirements?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. That is one to the men at any rate: I am glad they are capable of something. Then I want to ask you if it is not a fact that the coasting men in Glasgow have been asking for the liner rate for a long time?—(A.) I do not think that has ever officially been before the Negotiating Committee.

Q. I submit to you, that from 1911 up to now there have been several applications from the

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coasting men through the Union to have the rate put level.—(A.) If you say so, I will accept it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am not going to accept it, my Lord.

Mr. GOSLING: The Witness did.

Mr. BEVIN: Do you fear that you will get no men to work for you if the rate is put up from 12s. 8d. to 16s?—(A.) Not at all. We are getting plenty of men just now.

Q. Plenty of men?—(A.) Yes, sufficient.

Q. If you can get plenty of men at 12s. 8d. when the other rate is 14s., does not that rather indicate a tremendous surplus in Glasgow?—

(A.) No. The coasting men—

Q. Would not they go for the bigger rate?—

(A.) The coasting men do not go to the deep sea liners.

Q. That is because there is no work, I presume?

—(A.) I do not know the reason, but they do not do it.

Q. You do not anticipate a strike on your boats if they are put up level with the deep sea liners?—(A.) No, I should not expect that a man would strike if he was getting more money.

Q. You do not anticipate a strike in Glasgow at all if this thing is levelled, do you?—(A.) It is not likely that men are going to strike if they get more.

Re-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. You can only speak with regard to the coasting trade?—(A.) The coasting liner trade.

Q. So far as G. and J. Burns are concerned?—(A.) Yes, and in a general way with regard to the others.

Q. You personally have nothing to do with the deep-sea trade?—(A.) No.

Q. That has been spoken to by Mr. Spencer early in the case?—(A.) Yes. Shall I have an opportunity of putting the reason before the Court why there is so much night work over day work?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Certainly, if his Lordship wants the information I shall be obliged if you will give it. What is the reason?

The WITNESS: This is on Clause 2 of the Federation's claim, my Lord. The coasting liners could not maintain regular services if there is any material alteration in the overtime conditions. The amount of overtime worked as a rule varies from one-third to three-fourths of the actual time the vessel is working. This arises through the vessels arriving at different hours of the day, and being scheduled to sail next day, and entails work being continued throughout the night. To make my meaning clear, I would instance the case of steamers engaged in the trade between Glasgow and Dublin. The steamer arrives from Dublin on Saturday afternoon too late for any work to be done that day, another steamer arrives on Sunday, both these vessels are in port on the Sunday night, but only one of them gets into a discharging berth. Work is commenced on the first steamer at midnight Sunday, and she sails at 12 noon Monday; as soon as she leaves the second steamer comes into the berth, but as the men require a rest work is not generally resumed until 11 p.m., and is carried on until 12 noon on Tuesday. No work is done for 24 hours or more thereafter, but on Wednesday afternoon the first steamer arrives back, and work is proceeded on her right through the night to enable her to sail on the Thursday at 12 noon. The steamer

which sailed on Tuesday lies in Dublin until Thursday and arrives back in Glasgow on Friday. The work is started at 6 o'clock or 11 o'clock p.m., and continues until she is finished early on Saturday morning. She is then shifted to another berth, and sails to Belfast that night. I wish to put before your Lordship that we could not alter those arrangements in order to have night work done away with, and day work substituted. We have got to consider the men at the other side of the Channel as well as on this side, and we make our sailing arrangements to suit both sides as far as we can.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your point is that it is not fair merely to consider the Scotsman. You have to have some regard to the Irishman?—(A.) We have.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am glad that piece of evidence has been put before the Court.

The CHAIRMAN: With regard to that last statement you made, if only day work were to be insisted on in the shipping trade, of course it would result, in regard to Irish ports and Scottish ports or English ports working together, in complete disorganisation, would not it?—(A.) That is what would happen.

Q. And if, notwithstanding that, the rule were adhered to, that would result in days being wasted?—(A.) Yes. These ships coming in have got to be coaled as well as loaded and discharged, but the coaling must be done during the night, too.

Q. Tell me about this. You said that there was a restriction in the output by the slings of 20 per cent.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are these slingmen paid by time or by piece?—(A.) Time.

Q. Have you never introduced piecework into that kind of operation?—(A.) The cargo is of such a varied nature that it would not pay the men to take piecework. For instance, it would not be very advisable to have men handling boxes of eggs on piecework.

Q. I want to ask you about the Railway and Canal Commission. Am I right in understanding that there is, in addition to the various rises of percentages on the grades of goods which you have given, a surcharge of 10s. per ton for all goods?—(A.) To the sea portion of them.

Q. You know, of course, the very serious interference that came through the seizure, shall we use the term, of the railway transport by the Government?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And the coasting trade was injured by that, was not it?—(A.) It was to a very great extent.

Q. Just describe how that occurred?—(A.) So far as it affects our own company, we were unfortunate in losing one of our ships; other two were taken away or requisitioned by the Government, and we were in the unfortunate position of doing the work of four ships with one. Consequently, we have not been able to carry anything like the tonnage in the purely coasting trade.

Q. Was not there an injury caused to the coasting trade by some differentiation in the rates?—(A.) Yes; the railway rates were not increased.

Q. Of course, it was impossible to carry on shipping business in this country at the old rates, looking to the extraordinary increase in insurance rates owing to the existence of mines?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And the Government policy seemed to be to fix the rates still on the same basis, and thereby to prevent the development of the shipping trade on anything like a reasonable term?—(A.) That is so in regard to the coasting trade between two

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ports in Great Britain where the railway company is in competition.

Q. I heard you say that you did not know about the freights between Glasgow and London; but take Glasgow and Southampton. As an ordinary coasting voyage was not that, in the circumstances of the war, a voyage accompanied by very serious peril?—(A.) It was indeed.

Q. With enormous cost in the way of insurance?—(A.) Of war risk insurance.

Q. You had been able to stand competition with the railways before the war?—(A.) We had.

Q. But that addition to your own costs made the competition quite ruinous so far as the shipping coasting trade was concerned?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then comes the last arrangement, as I understand, of the surcharge of 10s. per ton?—(A.) Yes, and these percentages.

Q. How long is that to last?—(A.) For an indefinite period.

Q. Is that surcharge of 10s. plus the percentages you have mentioned over pre-war rates?—(A.) Over pre-war rates.

Q. I look at your Table "H.23." You say that in the last 13 weeks of 1919 there has been an increase in the cost per ton of 3s. 10d.?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. If those surcharges and increases of rates per ton go on you will be able to cover a good deal more than that 3s. 10d., will not you?—(A.) We are hoping so. We have no data to go on; the arrangement has only been in operation for six weeks, so that we have really nothing to go on.

Q. What is the nature of that freight; is it free on board, or is it cost insurance and freight?—(A.) Free on board, including harbour dues at both ends.

Q. Does it include any charges at either end?—(A.) Yes, it includes the loading and discharging.

Q. That is what I was putting to you. So far as your end is concerned, where there is the loading, that is 3s. 10d. more?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That would have to be added, of course—(A.) At the other end.

Q. And assume the same at the other end?—(A.) The two ends.

Q. That would be 7s. 8d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That seems to be pretty well covered, does not it, by increases of rates from 25 per cent. to 60 per cent., and a surcharge of 10s. a ton?—(A.) We are hoping that it will be ample.

Q. So that you could not represent that this charge, high as it looks on paper, would block the trade if the Government had the good sense to continue that arrangement with regard to the increases?—(A.) No, we are satisfied if it does not go any higher.

Q. Then I see a note on "H.23" on which I am bound to ask you a question. You say that the large increase in rate of cost is attributable to the slower working of the men?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In your opinion is there distinctly slower work of the men?—(A.) Yes. They are not idle, but they are not pulling their weight.

Q. Notwithstanding getting the 44 hours?—(A.) Notwithstanding that.

Q. What do you base that on?—(A.) My observations.

Q. I mean what do you attribute it to?—(A.) I do not know what the mentality of the men is, but the more money they get the less work they seem to do.

Q. Could piecework be introduced to stimulate them, do you think?—(A.) I do not think so. In the coasting trade the cargo varies to such an extent.

Q. We are groping for the light, you know. Have you no idea as to the improvement of this? You know quite well that it is in the interests of everybody, including the men, that the output should be increased, so long as it does not impose an undue strain?—(A.) With goodwill on the part of the men we could increase it, and we are not complaining seriously in the coasting trade. What we want is to be left alone.

Q. What do you mean by that?—(A.) No further burdens put upon us either in the way of increased wages or restrictions on night work.

Q. You mean to say that if they were left with their "old" figure you think that the normal rate of work would be resumed?—(A.) It might be in time.

Q. I put to you another view. Suppose their flat rate, so to speak, their minimum rate, was substantially increased, and suppose the conditions of their labour were, by mutual arrangement and accommodation between masters and men, improved, would that have a beneficial effect on output?—(A.) I do not know how we can improve the conditions any farther.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, that will conclude the evidence which I propose to give on behalf of Glasgow. I have a number of other witnesses, but I think the case has been sufficiently put before your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, very fully.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I propose to proceed with the case of the Port of Plymouth.

Mr. HUGH GORDON MURDOCH, *Sworn.*

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you Chairman of the Plymouth Employers' Association?—(A.) I am.

Q. Are you Board of Trade representative on the Plymouth Port Labour Committee?—(A.) I am.

Q. I think you are qualified to give evidence as to the labour conditions both in the Port of Plymouth and in the Port of Falmouth?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Taking the Port of Plymouth, is that a naval port, a commercial port, and also a mail port?—(A.) Plymouth is mainly a naval port, but there are many overseas steamers which call in and drop anchor in the Sound alongside which tenders go to bring ashore the passengers and mails. Plymouth is a small commercial port, but at the present time there are great prospects of Plymouth getting back its birthright, and becoming a larger commercial port. The Admiralty, who have restricted the commercial part of Plymouth for many years for national purposes, have decided that part of the Dockyard shall be used for the building and repairing of ships, and other portions of the dockyard shall be used for the landing of cargo from large ocean-going steamers. They have also relaxed their regulations with regard to the making of commercial docks by private enterprise, and they have recently, for the first time in fifty years, passed plans for them.

Q. I gather that there is now some appreciation on the part of the Admiralty of the commercial possibilities of the Port of Plymouth?—(A.) That is so. They felt the lack of it during the period of the war.

Q. That being so, and there being this claim for increased wages at Plymouth, is it your strong view that the conditions of labour at Plymouth should be put on a proper basis?—(A.) That is

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so. At the present time they are exceedingly high, the highest in the Kingdom.

Q. The rates now paid for labour, you say, are exceedingly high?—(A.) Exceedingly high.

Q. It is not putting it too high because we shall prove it in detail: are the whole conditions of work there quite deplorable?—(A.) They are.

Q. Taking first Plymouth, are there four docks at Plymouth?—(A.) There are, each separately owned. There is no one authority, no board.

Q. There is no port authority?—(A.) No—well, there is a port authority: I am the port authority representing the Government there, but there is no Water Board there controlling the whole of the docks. Each little dock controls its own work.

Q. Are there making up these four docks, first of all, the Great Western Docks, belonging to the Great Western Railway Co.; the Sutton Harbour, belonging to the Sutton Harbour Improvement Company; the Victoria Wharves, belonging to a firm of Victoria Wharves, Ltd.; and then—
(A.) The Cattedown Wharves, owned by Messrs. Burnard and Algar, Ltd.

Q. At those four wharves are there different system of work in operation, different systems of pay in operation, and even different numbers of men in the gangs performing the same class of work?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Just to take the broad points first, before we come to them in detail, are there exceptionally high rates at present in operation for labour, resulting in diversion of traffic from the Port of Plymouth?—(A.) That is so. Steamers will only come to the port with cargoes if there is a likelihood of them getting cargoes out again. The only bulk cargo which can possibly be got out of any of the ports in Devon and Cornwall is china clay. Ninety per cent. of the exports out of Devon and Cornwall is china clay, and unfortunately the rate on china clay has been increased most abnormally in comparison with any other rate in the port.

Q. Just give the rate.—(A.) The rate on china clay in 1914 was paid at the rate of 8d. per ton day work, which paid the men 1s. 6d. an hour. It is now paid day work 2s. per ton, which pays the men 4s. 6d. an hour, but the 8d. in 1914 included work either night or day. Now from 5 o'clock in the evening until 8 o'clock we have to pay time and a-half or piece and a-half, which is 3s. per ton, equalling 6s. 9d. per hour, and after half-past 8 at night any time during the night it is 4s. per ton, or 9s. per hour.

Q. So that the day rate on china clay has gone up from 1s. 6d. per hour in 1914 to 4s. 6d. per hour at the present moment?—(A.) Yes, for day work.

Q. Is that a serious state of things?—(A.) It is indeed. If I might show you how serious it is, that it would choke off traffic, dealing, as his Lordship did just now with the increases on railway rates, the increased rate on china clay by the railways has been the smallest in the whole list—namely, the increase on china clay, whatever distance it may be carried, is limited to 3s. per ton. The increase on the labour by the men alone is for day work 3s. per hour, so that there is little or nothing left for increased pay to the clerical staff, increased rate of discharging at its other port, or the clerical staff at the other port's office, and then there is nothing for increase to the steamer over pre-war. So it would be impossible to take that traffic away from the railways; and in my opinion it is being wrongly carried by the railways now long distances from Plymouth to Liverpool, Birkenhead, London, and Glasgow, congesting the railways, and using wagoes which could be used on shorter

distances for three or four journeys, and earning four or five times as much money, because china clay is in such a low class that it carries a low rate of traffic on the railway.

Q. It is Class A traffic, is it not?—(A.) It is Class B. traffic.

Q. To deal broadly first and in detail later, against these high rates at Plymouth is there a decrease in output?—(A.) There is. I had the figures taken out. In 1914, the men used to turn out 17 to 18 tons per gang per hour.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the number in a gang?—(A.) Ten men in a gang. This is general cargo, piece-work. The increase in the rail rates has certainly diverted certain traffic to Plymouth, which we did not get for a considerable period. I have taken out within the last fortnight the output. It is about 11 to 12 tons per hour per gang; but to be quite fair, I went through two or three of the manifests, and I am rather of opinion that during those few weeks we had been carrying we have had rather more than the ordinary percentage of empties, because we were turned out of our wharves entirely for a considerable period; it was turned into a naval base. During that period a number of empties accumulated, and I rather think we had a greater percentage of empties, so I should not like to say that the depreciation was really slackness in the work; I would not like to be certain of it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Is there a system in operation at Plymouth by which work is constantly stopped, and kept stopped while claims are made or enforced?—(A.) That is so. We have had a most unfortunate exhibition of it this very week. In the evening paper of yesterday, my Lord, you will find an account of two large Clan Line tea steamers which were held up the whole of yesterday, owing to small trouble.

The CHAIRMAN: Just tell us what it was about.—(A.) It may be known to you that tea is not a commodity which is, as a rule, taken into the port of Plymouth. London is the port of call. I had been at considerable trouble to get a number of steamers diverted from some of these other crowded ports to Plymouth, where we have been now for many many months with anything from 70,000 to 80,000 tons of space absolutely idle. I succeeding in getting two steamers diverted to Plymouth. As we had never had tea before, we had no rate in our agreement between the Employers' Association and the men for tea. On the day of the arrival of these steamers we called the men together, and we gave them the option of three methods of receiving pay: one was the identical terms paid for discharging in London; the other was our present daily rate of pay, 14s. per day; or our Plymouth general cargo rate of 2s. per ton. The men elected to take the 2s. per ton provided that if it did not turn out satisfactory it should be revised. They worked on Thursday and on Friday. Friday's pay on those terms was 19s. 2d. per man. On Saturday morning they told us it was not enough, and that they wished the question reviewed. I called a meeting at 9 o'clock yesterday morning at the Great Western Dock offices of all the parties concerned, and we sat until a quarter past 12 before we could arrive at any decision. The men would not work whilst this meeting was on. Eventually they were prevailed upon to accept new conditions which will nearly double their pay. One set of men at the Great Western Docks commenced work at a quarter to

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two yesterday afternoon. Notwithstanding the fact that they had not worked all the morning, and had only been working one hour and a quarter, they knocked off at a quarter past three for their allowance time. At the other dock, where the "Clan McBride" is, the men did not turn up. Since I came here I have received a telegram that work is proceeding satisfactorily on both steamers to-day. That is the most recent case. I have had four difficulties within the last three weeks, more especially with regard to the working of overtime. The last of all was with regard to a steamer a fortnight last Saturday. At 12 o'clock in the day there was only 20 minutes' work left in her to finish her. The men would not do it unless we paid them double time. Our agreement with the Union is time and a-half. The steamer was kept over until Monday morning, and wasted fifty-three hours for the sake of twenty minutes' work. I had a steamer from the same company only a few weeks ago. She worked six days, that was three one week and Sunday between, and on the seventh day there was 2 hours left at night and they would not do a stroke of work after five o'clock on her, but kept her till the next morning. These are things on which I hear from some of the Continental owners that they will divert their steamers from coming to the English ports and do Continental trades. A week yesterday I had a steamer which came in from the Channel Islands, and the men were asked to work her. "Oh no, not unless it is double time." "Why?" "Because she is a foreigner." But if there was a coasting steamer from Liverpool, London, Dublin, or Cork, they would work her at time and a half. They say she is a foreigner—they must have double time. The same applied to a Dutch steamer which arrived two days afterwards. They would not work her only on the same conditions. The agents of that Dutch steamer have just lately told us that the owners are considering the question of diverting the steamer from English ports.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Is there any possibility of Plymouth making good as a commercial port if this deplorable state of things continues?—(A.) There is no prospect of it.

Q. Not if this deplorable state of things continues?—(A.) Not if this state of things exists, no.

Q. Do you find that the 44-hour week national agreement is observed at Plymouth?—(A.) No, it is not—not that there are 8 complete working hours in the day.

Q. Its provisions that you should have 8 working hours in the day are not observed?—(A.) No.

Q. We will give the exact details later. In point of fact is a very much shorter day than 8 hours in fact in operation?—(A.) Absolutely. In certain classes of work it is not more than 6 hours, and in other cases it is 6½ hours, but as a rule on the general cargo work, which can go direct into the transit sheds, the wastage will be something like 1 hour.

Q. Again, have you found it possible in certain cases to introduce on any sort of efficient basis machinery for unloading?—(A.) Ours are exceedingly efficient and helpful to the men, because they do the carrying for the men, and we have a transporter which takes the goods right into the warehouse—takes the goods 30 or 40 yards into the warehouse, and dumps them down where the men want them. There is no carrying; they have to lift it and stack it. Our steam cranes put it at the door either on the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd floor, on a

platform, and, if it is bags which have to be carried, the height of the man's shoulders, so that they have no lifting to do; it is put on to their backs for them.

Q. So every possible appliance is provided in the way of saving manual labour?—(A.) Yes. The local representatives admit that it is the best port of any port they have seen.

Q. Is there a complete lack of mobility in the movement of labour from one of these four docks to another of these four docks?—(A.) Not complete, but there is mobility now. Time was—say, until 1916—when a regiment of artillery would not have moved the men from one part of the port to another to do any work; and as a consequence, as the port authority, I had to call together on many occasions the Port and Transit Committee and had to bring in khaki labour. I have had as many as 280 soldiers working there when there were dockers idle; but afterwards it was brought to the serious notice of the Dockers' Union, and I believe such pressure was brought to bear upon them that they were punished and penalised unless they did go from one dock to the other.

Q. That mobility should be increased, should it not, from what it is to-day?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. And if that mobility is not increased is it impossible to do away with men being unemployed at one dock while there is work to be done at another dock?—(A.) It is impossible.

Q. To come to the Statement which you have prepared, you have prepared, in the form of what seem to me very full Statements, the details as to pay at Plymouth. (**Documents handed in and marked "H.24."*) On the first page of Statement "H.24" you give the number of men, permanent and casual, employed at the Victoria Wharves and the Cattedown Wharves?—(A.) That is No. "H.G.M.2" on my copy. There are set out the numbers of casual men, and the numbers of weekly men, including the driver of the engine, and the shunter, and so forth.

Q. You will see the number of men is small as compared with the casual men?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you endeavoured to devise means of decasualising the men at Plymouth?—(A.) I have made several attempts to do so with the resident local representatives, and asked for the names of some that I might put the whole of these men on weekly wages.

Q. You tried to employ them permanently on a weekly basis?—(A.) Weekly wages.

Q. What was the difficulty which met you?—(A.) The first application was £10 a week.

Q. I do not understand. Do you mean to say that the men asked for a weekly wage?—(A.) The representative asked for the men a weekly wage of £10 per week.

Q. Do you mean to say as a condition of their agreeing to go on a permanent weekly basis?—(A.) Yes. That was by the present Assistant Secretary. Then later than that the present district secretary suggested a retaining fee of £3 per week, and when there were steamers in they were to be paid on the same piecework rate as the men who worked the ship.

Q. That is to say, as a condition of their going on a weekly permanent basis instead of a casual basis they should be paid a retaining fee of £3 a week, and in addition piecework on the ship on which they happened to be from time to time working?—(A.) Yes, but if they were working on a ship on day time rates the days' pay at the rate of £3 a week would be deducted from their weekly wage.

* See Appendices Nos. 94-97.

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Q. Have you quite failed to effect the decasualisation at Plymouth?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. Just to take the way work is done at Victoria Wharves, your general cargo is discharged there on piecework bases, is it not?—(A.) It is, and always has been; in fact, 90 per cent. of the work of the Port of Plymouth is piecework. There is only one firm that does time work, and that is the Clyde Shipping Co., the Great Western Docks. They insist on piecework. As a matter of fact, I have a demand in hand that my crane drivers, who are on weekly wages, shall be put on piecework with the other men. I have had that within the last seven days.

Q. Does it happen from time to time when you have men discharging a steamer at one dock on piecework, you have to move it to another dock and then go on on the time basis?—(A.) Yes. The same steamer loaded at the same port, part cargo at Victoria Wharves, part cargo at Great Western Dock; the first is discharged on a tonnage basis, and the next on time work.

Q. That is an impossible state of things?—(A.) It is so.

Q. I think, without following that point in detail, because you can go into great detail, you desire to emphasise the extraordinary confusion which that sort of system entails?—(A.) That is so.

Q. It militates, in your view, against the port, against the employers, and against the men?—(A.) It does.

Q. You hope, with the assistance of his Lordship, that things of that sort may be put right?—(A.) We have tried many times to get them on either one or another basis, so that we might have a settlement. We would prefer the piecework all round.

Q. You have prepared a Statement, "H.G.M.3," which gives the hours of labour and the rates of pay in 1914 as compared with 1920?—(A.) Yes, and it shows the respective increases during the period.

Q. Perhaps, while the Statement speaks for itself, you would just put in a few words what is the broad position so far as increases of pay have been made in 1920 as compared with 1914?—(A.) Yes. It has been on day work from 1s. 5½d. per hour to 3s. 4d. per hour, and for the half of the night—that is, up till 8.30—from 1s. 10½d. per hour to 5s. per hour; but on china clay it is infinitely worse than that, because it was day or night, 1s. 6d. per hour; now it is 4s. 6d. per hour by day, 6s. 9d. per hour up to 8.30 at night, after that 9s. per hour.

Q. On "H.G.M.3" you give the warehousemen as well as the other classes of men. Have the warehousemen always claimed to follow the dock labourer as the dock labour rates go up?—(A.) They have. Each award which has been given to the other men has also been given to them; in fact, if it was not given in an award we have had two or three strikes, apart from the Awards, on which they have had increases of pay, and the warehousemen had to have their pay increased at the same time. In our increases of pay we exceeded the speed limit of the Awards of the Court of Production.

Q. You certainly seem to have. His Lordship will get the figures you gave in regard to china clay on your "H.G.M.4," will he not?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, he has made it quite clear.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Just to get a broad

figure, in 1914 the average weekly wages of the dock worker was 32s. a week, was it not?—(A.) It was.

Q. Is it to-day approximately £5 a week?—(A.) No; higher than that—£7 to £8 a week.

Q. 32s. a week in 1914, and to-day you say £7 or £8 a week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. To show the position in some detail, have you prepared statement "H.G.M.5" to show the earnings in 1917?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have taken seven weeks in 1917, beginning or ending on the 14th of June, and beginning or ending on the 26th of July. I do not know whether your week commences or ends at that date?—(A.) Thursday is our week-end; pay on Friday.

Q. Does that show my Lord what the earnings of that long list of men were in fact all those weeks in question? To get it quite clear, those are the full weeks, are they not?—(A.) No, they are not full weeks. At this period we were dealing partly with munitions for the Government, all of which had to be put direct from steamer into railway wagons, and, as there was shunting out of the full and shunting in of the empty, there was always some little delay; they did not get the full hours in. I have one example here, and only one, where the whole of the full hours were put in that they could possibly put in with the best supply of railway wagons that could be obtained, and they earned £11 each in the 5½ days.

Q. £11 per man in 5½ days?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not on the table.—(A.) No, it is not on the table. I said this is the extreme limit where the full 5½ days was worked.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: So the weeks on "H.G.M.5" are not full weeks, but less than the full working week?—(A.) There was time wasted while the railway wagons were being shunted in and shunted out.

Q. Would you turn to your statement "H.G.M.6." That gives the actual earnings for the number of men in 1920 for the five weeks shown in that statement?—(A.) That is so. Those are not all of the men employed, but those are the respective figures. I may say, my Lord, those are the first few weeks immediately following on the increase in the railway rates.

The CHAIRMAN: Just explain why you mention that.—(A.) Because until that period they were earning considerably less. We were not getting any traffic; we could not get the traffic at all.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The wages shown in "H.G.M.6" were not in respect of a full week, but only on the average three days a week?—(A.) Three days' work, and there were 19½ hours overtime worked in those six weeks.

Q. So that there is a very striking comparison if you compare the earnings on "H.G.M.6" on a three-days' basis with the earnings on "H.G.M.5." The earnings are kept up on "H.G.M.6" on the three-days' basis because of the increases of wages in the interval?—(A.) That is so, and these would have been higher if it were not for the exceptional increase of the rates on china clay, because we could have had many parcels of china clay which had to go back.

Q. Then on your next Statement "H.G.M.6a" you give a comparison between the wages in other industries in Plymouth and the rates of pay for dock labour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Would you like to make any observation on that statement before I pass from it?—(A.) It ap-

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pears to me that it would be the means of upsetting the whole of the labour interests in our part of the country. When you find that a skilled engineer is only paid £4 0s. 6d. a week for a full 44-hour week, and an unskilled dock labourer can come in and get £6, £7, or £8 a week, it is bound to cause unrest. As a matter of fact there was a strong run at a period for men to get into the Dockers' Union, and I believe they had to make it a closed club. They will take no more members at present on that account. The carters, for instance, when we come to have applications for increase of wages to our warehousemen, sometimes they will compare him with the docker, and sometimes they will compare him with the carter, whichever happens to be the highest at the time. I have a comparison here of a great number of carters who are only getting 57s. a week for a 48-hour week, and have to turn up on Sundays, whereas our men are paid 57s. for a 44-hour week and no Sunday work; they are paid for all holidays, whereas the carters are not.

Q. That is your permanent men?—(A.) That is the permanent warehousemen. In that connection I may say that the local builders are a fairer comparison with the dock labourer than anything, because their work is interrupted by reason of weather; when it is wet or frosty they many times cannot work, the same as a docker; but you see they only get 65s. 3d. per week, or 1s. 4½d. per hour per man.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not follow that, because apparently labourers in the building trade get 64s. 2d. per week according to this statement.—(A.) I beg your pardon; I was wrong. The engineers' labourers get 65s. 3d., and the builders' labourers are only 64s. 2d. In the same paper which I have given you there you will see that the builders are anticipating an increase which should take place two or three months hence, and they have decided to give them an increase up to 1s. 8d., commencing this month.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: So that you have anticipated that and put that in your table?—(A.) Yes, that is so. They will be getting 1s. 8d. per hour, and our men are getting 1s. 9d. per hour on the 14s. per day basis—4 hours for 7s.

Q. My Lord asked you I think for a figure of 57s. for the warehousemen, and his Lordship will get that at H.G.M.3. I want to get the facts from you. In the past the dock workers at Plymouth have based their demands for wages on the wages paid in other industries?—(A.) Yes, they have.

Q. For example, in the spring of 1919 timber-yard labourers were receiving 45s. per week for 53 hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then was a demand made to you in respect of dock labour for 1s. per hour, or 53s. per week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then while the demand was under discussion was an award made to the saw-milling industry under which labourers would receive 1s. 3d. per hour?—(A.) That is so.

Q. As soon as that award was made did the Dockers' Union drop their demand for 1s. per hour and substitute a demand for dock labour in Plymouth of 1s. 3d. per hour?—(A.) They did.

Q. Did the matter go to arbitration?—(A.) The matter did go to arbitration, and that 12½ per cent. business was involved in it—

Q. We will not go into that.—(A.) Only in so far as this, that the extreme they went to was that this was munitions. We were dealing with railway sleepers, and they said that a railway sleeper is munitions, and they explained it in this way: that the railway sleeper holds a chair

in which is fixed the rail on which runs a railway wagon which is carrying munitions; and the Judge awarded that it was munitions, and they had to have the increase.

Q. Immediately afterwards did the builder's labourers receive an advance to 1s. 5d.?—(A.) They did.

Q. Then did the dockers again come forward for 1s. 5d.?—(A.) They did.

Q. To get the broad point clearly, it has been suggested more than once in this Court that you have got to consider the wages of dockers separate and distinct from any other trade in the same district. At Plymouth that is not the way they have done themselves, is it?—(A.) It is not. There have always been comparisons.

Q. Would it in any way represent what is the true state of things in Plymouth to say that you either could or can deal with dockers' rates of pay separate and distinct from other rates of pay in the district?—(A.) I rather think there is a tendency that way at the present time, with this exception, that we are always comparable with carters, and the carters are members of the Dockers' Union, although the carters' wages are not settled by the Dockers' Union, but are settled by a National Cartage Association.

Q. Let me take you to your statements. You have put in Statement H.G.M. 7, and that gives the terms of the local agreement made on April 22, 1919, in Plymouth, to give effect to the National Agreement in respect of the 44-hour week.—(A.) That is so: "A full day shall be eight actual working hours exclusive of all breaks."

Q. That is meant to represent that: "A full day shall be eight actual working hours, exclusive of all breaks. A half-day shall be four actual working hours. Men to present themselves for work not less than fifteen minutes before the time at which work is to start, and to continue work until the completion of eight actual working hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then is there a clause at the end of the Agreement: "Note: In cases of dispute as to rate of pay, conditions of work, or any other question, no stoppage of work to take place until the question has been submitted to and considered by the Employers' Association and the Dockers' Union"?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Is that Agreement accepted by the men in Plymouth?—(A.) No.

Q. I mean, did they in point of fact systematically disregard the obligation to present themselves for working fifteen minutes before the time at which work commences?—(A.) They did, and they leave the ship just when they like. They do not wait to be called off at 5 o'clock; they are at the gate many a time by 5 o'clock.

Q. I think you have communicated more than once with the Dockers' Union in Plymouth, pointing out the state of things?—(A.) The waste of time. I have given a list of the times they started and the times they went away, showing 6 hours working and 6½ hours working in two different parts of the port.

Q. You have sent those actual particulars to the Dockers' Union and asked them to take action?—(A.) This is a copy of my letter to them.

Q. I only want to get the fact from you that you have communicated with them.—(A.) I have.

Q. As a matter of fact the piece-workers will not work more than 2 hours at a time, will they?—(A.) They will not.

Q. Then a rest is taken of fifteen minutes?—(A.) Yes, which exceeds the time considerably very often.

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Q. You say that it is much longer than fifteen minutes?—(A.) From the time the man gets out of the hold and gets back again to the hold it is nearer half an hour.

Q. The carters do not leave the stables until 8 o'clock, do they?—(A.) They do not.

Q. And they do not arrive at the docks until about a quarter past eight or 8.20?—(A.) Between a quarter and twenty minutes past eight, yes.

Q. So that during all that time the men on the ship are idle?—(A.) That is so, when we are dealing with such things as phosphates and pyrites, which have to be carted away direct from the ship.

Q. Then, again, at 10.45 the dockers again rest from fifteen to twenty minutes, and that makes the carters idle?—(A.) Yes, the carters have to stand idle then.

Q. Then I think that goes on during the day, the dock workers taking a rest at one time thereby bringing the carters to a standstill. That happens again in the afternoon, does it not?—(A.) Yes, it does.

Q. So that the result is, as you said, that the working day is only 6 to 6½ hours?—(A.) That is so. It increases the establishment charges tremendously, because whilst they are standing idle our engine drivers and the crane drivers have to stand idle, and we have to keep up steam; and if you take that week in and week out all the year round, it is a great expense—an establishment expense, I mean. Further, we have to pay the day men, such as the hatchway men and the other men, 14s. per day for the full day, and they are deprived of working 8 hours by reason of those circumstances, but they must have their full 14s. per day.

Q. You have, as you said, installed a lot of valuable machinery operated by electricity for the transport of cargo?—(A.) A transporter. Yes.

Q. Have the men insisted that, notwithstanding the installation of that machinery, there shall be precisely the same number of men in the gang as before the machine was introduced at all?—(A.) That is so; ten men to the gang, exactly. It is a manual labour-saving machine, not a man-saving machine. We did not have much discussion about that. We let them go on with the ten.

Q. But are the ten men necessary?—(A.) They are not necessary in that sense, but that machine, with less manual work to them, can give us a greater output, because we can turn out more with the transporter than we can with the shore crane with less manual labour to the men.

Q. But in your view should there be the same number of men to the gang after the machine as before the machine?—(A.) No, there should not really.

Q. Therefore, if Plymouth is to be developed as a commercial port, that short-sighted view, of course, must come to an end?—(A.) That is so, but you are met then with the objection that your machine is a man-saving machine, not a manual labour-saving machine—that you are doing away with the men, and that is what they will most strongly resist.

Q. The machine increases very substantially the earnings of all the men?—(A.) It does, and we should have more of them if they were only disposed to help us in the proper using of them, because ours is practically a new place and out for extension.

Q. Therefore, as representing the Port of Plymouth, do you ask this Court, in considering the question of what wages the men shall have, to

ensure that the conditions of labour at Plymouth are put into such a condition that a fair day's work is given for a fair day's pay?—(A.) That is so. There should be some discipline—some control—over them. For instance, during the twenty years that I have been in Plymouth they have always, when a steamer came in, jumped on the steamer and taken the hatches off. Now they will not touch a hatch. You must get other men to remove the hatches for them. There are always little things like that cropping up, which cause delays. They will raise a little question at 8 o'clock in the morning, and I will not be able to get hold of the dockers' representative, say, until half-past nine, ten o'clock, or half-past ten, when he comes down, and then we settle matters and the men go on to work, and that two hours which was wasted in the morning runs into the night and they have to be paid overtime for it. That sort of thing frequently happens.

Q. Can you conduct the great shipping industry of this country upon that sort of basis?—(A.) We cannot.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You said in your evidence just now that Plymouth was very seriously handicapped, because the rates were higher than at other ports?—(A.) I did.

Q. If this minimum wage is established and the rates are put the same at all the ports, will not that considerably help Plymouth?—(A.) Not in the slightest.

Q. If there are rates which differ now against Plymouth, and we put you on an equality with other ports, or put other ports up to you, will not that materially assist?—(A.) Not in the slightest. There is no rate alteration in the Kingdom which will enable us to get the China clay, because it is local.

Q. But does your trouble only occur with the China clay? Is that your only difficulty?—(A.) Mainly, because, as I told you, it is 95 per cent. of the cargo which is obtainable in the two counties, to take back again, and, as you know, steamers do not like to come to a port full and go away empty; they go where they can get a return cargo.

The CHAIRMAN: Was I wrong when I took down from your evidence in chief that what you dreaded was diversion of traffic?—(A.) That is the Continental traffic.

Q. Mr. Bevin is asking you about the traffic of Plymouth generally. I gathered from your evidence—but surely I must have been wrong—that the higher rates paid in your opinion diverted traffic which might otherwise come to Plymouth. Is that so?—(A.) With regard to Continental traffic. I mentioned the Dutch steamer and the Norwegian steamer in that connection.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what I wanted Mr. Bevin to explore, if he would.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: The Witness has gone on to his China clay, but you were on the general point.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite so.

The WITNESS: The China clay is coastwise. If you would not mind distinguishing between coastwise and Continental, then I will perhaps get your questions a little better.

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Q. Take your Continental traffic; you said you were afraid of the diversion of traffic if the rates went up?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If the rates are the same for the Continental traffic, will not that help Plymouth?—(A.) I do not follow you.

Q. You have four ports in the South of England: Southampton, Plymouth, Falmouth, and Fowey, all capable of dealing with Continental traffic. You suggest that the rates at Plymouth to-day are higher than at those other ports which are on the South Coast?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If those four ports were put on the same rate, would not that help Plymouth in getting rid of that competition?—(A.) No. If you will read my answer again you will find that I said that those Continental steamers would go from one Continental port to another Continental port rather than come to the English ports.

Q. To get Devonshire China clay?—(A.) The Devonshire China clay does not go to the Continent; the Devonshire China clay goes either to London, Birkenhead, Liverpool, or Glasgow mostly.

Q. For trans-shipment mainly?—(A.) To London for papermaking and other purposes.

Q. But principally for trans-shipment is it not?—(A.) At Liverpool and Birkenhead, yes; but that has no connection with the Continental boats. They do not touch that.

Q. As a matter of fact, when it does go for trans-shipment, taking the coastwise traffic, is it not true that the fact that you can load straight from the coastwise boat into the steamer over-side reduces the cost, and that if you take the terminal charges in conjunction with the railway charges for the double, treble, and quadruple handling on the railways, it makes it near about the same?—(A.) You mean the trans-shipment at the Liverpool or Birkenhead end?

Q. Yes.—(A.) That I do not know anything at all about. I know there are occasions when it can be taken, and I know there are other occasions when it cannot be taken over-side, and the steamers are detained there awaiting a place to put it.

Q. Turn to the question of the very important dock, the Victoria Wharves, with this very up-to-date machinery. The permanent staff there consists of 12 men, does it not?—(A.) Thereabouts, on the quay.

Q. Not a very big staff, is it?—(A.) Little fish become big ones.

Q. Not always; the species sometimes limits it.—(A.) It is a comparatively new dock.

Q. Take these piece-work rates which you are complaining about. I notice at the bottom that in 1914 before the war the rate was 2d. per ton per man.—(A.) That is the Cattedown Wharves that you are speaking of now?

Q. Yes, you are correct. I am on Table H.G.M.3. Take the Cattedown Wharves; the tonnage rate there before the war was 2d. per ton?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Apart from the 44-hour week, the base rate is 4d. per ton now?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that the increase as a result of the war is 100 per cent. ?—(A.) 100 per cent., yes.

Q. Having regard to the cost of living, that is not exorbitant, is it?—(A.) Yes. Everything goes by comparison; because 100 per cent. on the ordinary time rate of 7d. was 7d., but 100 per cent. on the return for 2d. per ton per man was 1s. 8d.

Q. But if the men were earning before the war 1s. 5½d. per hour?—(A.) That 1s. 5½d. has no relation at all to this.

Q. Take 1s. 6d. per hour.—(A.) Nor 1s. 6d.

Q. What were they earning before the war?—(A.) You are referring now to the Victoria Wharves, hourly rates, but you are referring to the Cattedown Wharves piece rates.

Q. I am trying to get the figure which you suggested this morning the men were earning per hour before the war at 2d. per ton per man.—(A.) No, I never said so. My rates per hour are on the Schedule No. 4, on general cargo.

Q. Very well, let us test them. You say that before the war they earned 1s. 5½d. per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And the day-work rate in Plymouth then, I think, was 8d. ?—(A.) It was.

Q. At the rate of 1s. per ton the men were earning 1s. 5½d. per hour before the war?—(A.) At a rate of 10½d. per ton they were getting 1s. 5½d. per hour.

Q. Does not that assume that they were giving double output as compared with the 8d. per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that the men were working at Victoria Wharves at double the speed at which they were working at the other docks?—(A.) I could not say that, but their earnings were double. The machinery helped them.

Q. As a matter of fact at that time were you not rather concerned, when they had got up their speed, to try to put them back on day work?—(A.) No, I have never suggested day work individually.

Q. Did you not suggest it to me on my early visits to Plymouth?—(A.) Individually we have not. We have had many disputes, and we wanted to get the port on one basis, and we were at one time willing to forgo the advantage of the piece-work rate to get a settlement, because we were in a constant state of turmoil.

Q. But when I first came to Plymouth you did want me, did you not, to accept the Mill Bay rates per hour?—(A.) Yes, to get a settled rate for the port, and we have been endeavouring ever since to get a settled rate for the port, and we have not succeeded.

Q. Let me turn to H.G.M.5. You said this morning that this was during a period when they were shipping munitions?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What hours did these men work?—(A.) From 7 until 5.

Q. To earn this first column?—(A.) From 7 to 5 o'clock to earn the first column.

Q. No overtime?—(A.) No overtime. It was not allowed because the military were the tally-men, and they had to make out their documents and consign all the wagons to their various destinations as soon after 5 o'clock as possible.

Q. But it was during a period when every effort was being made by everybody to speed up output for the sake of the soldiers in France, was it not?—(A.) Yes, but that has no effect on this, because, as I told you, they had the waste of the quarter-hours and half-hours during the day whilst full wagons were being shunted out and empty wagons brought in.

The CHAIRMAN: Why do you make general statements so rash as that? Did not the fact that the Government was pressing every man and every woman in the country to assist in the war work speed up the work in Plymouth?—(A.) They did so far as the vehicles would enable them to.

Q. That is what is put to you: that you have in point of fact on those figures in H.G.M.5 what you might call a maximum output. Is not that the case?—(A.) No, my Lord.

Q. Why?—(A.) Because I have produced to you

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a sheet here where the maximum output brought them in £11.

Q. I know that, but you see you must accommodate work to the conveniences of the port and the machinery at the moment; and are you not free to go so far as to admit to Mr. Bevin that sheet No. H.G.M.5 applicable to 1917 cannot form the datum of comparison for any Court of Inquiry like the present?—(A.) Yes, it can, because the present rate obtaining at these wharves is the rate which was obtaining then, 2s. per ton, and at this period all the goods had to go direct from the ship into railway wagons. If we were now working our cargo on the same rate of pay and with no delay waiting for wagons—we have ample transit shed space into which it could go—they could earn the same amount of money or really more, because there would be no breaks in waiting for any vehicle.

Mr. BEVIN: When they were handling these goods it was all munitions; a tremendous proportion of it was war material?—(A.) A good deal of it, yes.

Q. The bulk of it?—(A.) The bulk of it. We had general cargoes mixed in with it in the same dock.

Q. But you did not have the hundred and one fiddling things which you get on a coastal boat when they were handling these munitions?—(A.) There were various sizes and kinds of cases.

Q. This rate of 2s. per ton was ultimately settled with the Admiralty, was it not?—(A.) It was, and they took the traffic away from me at this period because the rate was too high. They sent for me to the Admiralty, and I went with your representative and also with the Great Western Dock representative and interviewed the Admiralty with a view to getting you to reduce the rate. Your representative said that he could not do so, and I have a letter here from Brigadier-General Forbes in which he regrets that you could not see your way to make a reduction. It was so serious that they took the traffic away from me and they built a shed of their own within 600 yards of my place and did the work themselves. They built a shed, they laid a railway line, and they brought men to do the work.

Q. And they paid 2s. per ton?—(A.) Up to this period.

Q. They paid 2s. per ton direct?—(A.) I do not know what they paid there.

The CHAIRMAN: That is very important, is it not?

Mr. BEVIN: That is correct. I will send to the Admiralty if you like and confirm it from Dr. Macnamara, who fixed the rate, I think. I am coming to it in my next question.

Q. Was it not the fact that the Admiralty intervened because the stevedores, on a basis of 2s. per ton for labour, was charging 5s. 3d. per ton to cover his charges, or a profit of 3s. 3d., out of which he was paying workmen's compensation and providing gear?—(A.) I could not say what the rate was, because it was fixed in conjunction with labour. Before the material was brought there at all we were all sent for to go to the Admiralty, and the officer in charge would not fix up the rate until he knew what rate was to be paid to the men; and I believe it was something like 15 per cent. for establishment charges, but I could not say from memory.

Q. Are you aware that it was at my request, as representing the Union, that the Admiralty took the work away from the private trader be-

cause of the exorbitant charges which were being made on the State over and above the labour charges; and, in fact, the Admiralty did the work direct through their own foremen, and engaged our men, and saved on the contract over 2s. per ton?—(A.) I am not aware of that, and your local representative cannot have been aware of it, because when I got this complaint from Brigadier-General Forbes I went and saw Mr. Hillman, and I told him what the Brigadier had told me, and I took him the 600 yards distance from the Victoria Wharves to the place where they proposed to put up the shed, and I told him: "They tell me that unless you can reduce your charge they are going to build up a shed here and do the work themselves." If what you say be correct, Mr. Hillman did not know it. I was doing my utmost to keep the trade there for these men, because they said they were going to do it, and I know they did do some of it with khaki men.

Mr. BEVIN: And I was very anxious to save the State 2s. per ton during a very strenuous period.

The CHAIRMAN: Who says that?

Mr. BEVIN: I say that, my Lord. I was very anxious at the same period, because the Admiralty was complaining to me of the cost, and I asked Dr. Macnamara to table his cost, and I found that 5s. 3d. per ton was being paid to a contractor on a labour charge of 2s. Mr. Warren, who is now deceased, was the stores department man with whom we settled the figure. That can be got from Dr. Macnamara.

The WITNESS: You say "paid to a contractor." Do you mean by that that it was paid to the Victoria Wharves or to the Great Western Railway Company or to Burnard and Algar, Limited, all of whom were dealing with this traffic?

Mr. BEVIN: I do not think it would be right in this Court to mention one contractor's name which was then in dispute.

The WITNESS: They are all alike.

Mr. BEVIN: I am prepared to hand it in.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think if any point is made of it we ought to have all the facts out in open Court.

Mr. BEVIN: The contractor in dispute at that time was a man named Roose, and I understood that he was charging 5s. 3d., which is the same charge as was being made by Burnard and Algar for the same work—I may explain that there is no analogy nor any connection between Mr. Roose and his work and wharfingers.

The CHAIRMAN: What was his work?—(A.) Mr. Roose is a man who does all work afloat. He has no wharf, no quay, no cranes, no nothing. He is a man who was doing Admiralty work afloat. He was not dealing with munitions in any shape or form to correspond with this.

Mr. BEVIN: The rate was 5s. 3d. per ton right through Plymouth.—(A.) I could not say what his rate was.

Q. Was your rate 5s. 3d. per ton?—(A.) I doubt it, but I could not say from memory.

The CHAIRMAN: It is very important to get at that, is it not?

Mr. BEVIN: Can you remember whether you charged the Admiralty for stevedoring work—I

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am not now talking about warehousing charges—5s. 3d. per ton?—(A.) No, I could not say from memory.

Q. Would you mind getting it, so that the Court can have it?—(A.) Undoubtedly; and I presume I shall have to say what it is for—that is to say, the difference, if there is a difference. There is crane hire and hatchway men, and all that sort of thing included, which are excluded in your charge.

Q. I notice that in "H.G.M.6" you have got "Victoria Wharves.—Table of Wages, 1920."—(A.) Yes.

Q. The wages there, compared with "H.G.M.5," are considerably less?—(A.) Yes, because this number 5 was nearly a full week, and you will see that No. 6 is for 3 days only.

Q. Three days and what?—(A.) Three days and 19½ hours' overtime in those 6 weeks.

Q. How many men were employed at Victoria Wharves during the period for which you took this out?—(A.) In 1920?

Q. Yes?—(A.) Three gangs.

Q. How many men would that be?—(A.) Thirty.

Q. Could you only get the wages of six men?—(A.) No, I can give you them all if you wish it, but that is a sample exactly of what they were earning.

Q. Did they all average this money?—(A.) Exactly. The three gangs were working on the same boat.

Q. There is one other question that I want to put to you. You complained about considerable stoppages in Plymouth?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it not the fact that there is no confidence at all between the sides in Plymouth?—(A.) There is no confidence on one side.

Q. Let me put this to you now. I dealt with Plymouth several years ago and I am speaking from experience: Is not the position in Plymouth that, first of all, you have a legal gentleman as secretary?—(A.) That is so, but I do not think that is anything to his detriment or ours.

Q. Let me follow up my question, if you will?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it not the fact that it is almost impossible to get a settlement on any technical matter associated with the dock with him, and that meetings are delayed, and that every effort is made by him to prevent decent relationship?—(A.) No, I do not agree with that. I do say this, that they have a prejudice against him because he is a legal man.

Q. No.—(A.) But we selected him because he is also the secretary of the Mercantile Association, and therefore has a fairly good knowledge of commercialism, and that is what we wanted.

Q. It is also necessary to have a little knowledge of psychology, too, when dealing with men, is it not? Has it not always been difficult to get settlements without stoppages at Plymouth?—(A.) Yes, it has; or pretty nearly, until within the last few weeks.

Q. It was, in fact, difficult from our first inception at Plymouth, was it not, to get a settlement without a strike?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. You yourself had to come with me to Liverpool to meet your own directors to get a settlement on a trifling matter, had you not?—(A.) I did. In explanation of that, I may say that this only arose after we had had an arbitration, and I believe you were junior counsel, if not the K.C. in that matter, when the Judge awarded that you were not entitled to any more money, and the strikes took place because we did not give the money. Judge Grainger ruled that you were

not entitled to more money, and then the trouble began.

Q. I do not remember Judge Grainger.—(A.) You will find, my Lord, that the two first increases which were given there were the results of strikes in opposition to the Arbitrator's award, and that took place during the period when I say that we had exceeded the speed limit, because we were giving them 7½d. per hour more than in 1914 for two years previous to the time when the men were allowed 7d. by the Committee of Production.

Mr. BEVIN: My point is that it has always been difficult, whatever official we have had in Plymouth and however well he may get on in any other part of the country, to get a settlement with the Plymouth employers without a strike, until it has developed now to the point that the men are difficult to control in consequence.

Re-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Only one question: Mr. Bevin has raised the question of some charge by Mr. Roose?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I do not know anything about that, but you apparently appear to know. Is there any relation between the work which was done by Mr. Roose, which you say was done afloat, and the work which was done on the wharves?—(A.) Not comparable at all.

Q. I want to follow that. Will you explain what the dissimilarity is?—(A.) It is not comparable at all, because he has to hire boats and go across Plymouth Sound up the Hamoaze towards the dockyard, and deal with traffic either out at the dockyard into vessels afloat or from one vessel to another afloat; therefore, he has to hire boats and barges, and the men are travelling backwards and forwards with the boats. There is nothing comparable with a steamer inside the dock.

Q. That is what he does?—(A.) That is what he does. He has no wharf, no quay, no warehouse, and no establishment charges the same as we have to meet, unless it be his boat.

Q. You have undertaken to get some particulars for my Lord. You understand—I am sure I do not—exactly what particulars are wanted?—(A.) I understand that Mr. Bevin wants to know what charge was made to the Admiralty for handling these munitions on which 2s. was paid to the men.

Mr. BEVIN: That is right.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Then we will look into that.

The CHAIRMAN: Did I understand you to say that at Plymouth there were four different docks?—(A.) Four different authorities, four different docks, each separately owned, with no cohesion. The Corporation have a wharf of their own, but they are not permitted to use it for commercial purposes—that has been objected to; but for the last 12 or 14 years I have tried to get the Corporation to form one Water Board for the port.

Q. Why have you tried for that?—(A.) Because of these varying rates and dues. If a steamer comes in *here* to discharge part cargo and goes in *there* to discharge part cargo, she has got dues to pay twice over. If she goes to a third port—and they are only 400 or 500 yards apart—she

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has to pay wharfage dues, quay dues, and steamer dues at every little place; whereas you can go to Liverpool along a 7-mile dock where you like.

Q. As you have described it, it would seem quite plain that the lack of hope which you entertain with regard to Plymouth is just on account of the impossibility of getting these people to work together?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Take yourself away from Plymouth, and just consider it for a moment. Do you not think it very ill-advisable, to enable a Court to judge as to a great national question, to bring up the case of one port which is divided without any real reason into four different sections? I am putting it to you now as if you were not a Plymouth man.—(A.) If I were not a Plymouth man, and objection were raised about all these various people, that the rate charged was too high, it would not alter my opinion whatever, because the rates charged in the port are the same.

Q. Then your view of taking an independent line on the subject would be that it would help you to decide a national question to go to a relatively small place which is cut up into four divergent authorities. Is that your view?—(A.) No, it would only be helpful if they were joined with regard to steamer dues. It would not affect the labour.

Q. I am asking you to consider that they were not joined; I am asking your view as an independent man looking for light and guidance with regard to a great national question. Now just consider: would you ever dream of going to a place which was small in itself and divided up into four authorities of a divergent character?—(A.) Hardly, excepting on this ground, that the commercial port of Plymouth has been strangled for many years for the national good and the national requirements—

Q. I am coming to all that in a moment.—(A.) Now those national requirements are not so extreme.

Q. Is it sufficient for my purpose, and for your purpose, for the lengths that we have gone that I take your word "Hardly," that you would hardly go to such a place for general light?—(A.) For general light?

Q. Yes?—(A.) Yes, I would, even in that respect.

Q. You would, even in that respect? Then I think that that would absolve me, almost, from asking you anything else.—(A.) Because a great deal of the cargo is Government cargo.

Q.—However, I will put another point to you. You admit that Plymouth is in a very exceptional position at present; it is in process of being, so to speak, discharged of its munition work, and attempting to develop the embryo of a commercial port. I ask you now again to take an independent attitude: do you think that it is advisable to derive any light, or can anybody derive light, on a general national question applicable to the commercial ports of this country from a situation such as that which you have described in Plymouth?—(A.) Only on this ground—

Q. I am trying to imagine that you are a member with us, and groping for the light. Would you ever choose a place like that to go and get light from?—(A.) Only on this ground; and that is that the port having suffered so long for national purposes, should really receive some little consideration now, so that they may take advantage of their geographical position, which they have been deprived of for the national good; and if these rates are too high, we cannot hope to develop.

Q. On this point of geography which you have

mentioned, according to your version of the Plymouth dock labourer, there seems to be some idea in his mind that Jersey is a foreign port—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is geographical confusion. There seems to be also some political confusion, namely, that you should try to keep out the foreigner, although it strangles your place.—(A.) No, I do not think they took that view of it.

Q. I thought you said that both Jersey, because it was considered a foreign place, and Holland, because it was considered a foreign place, the people would not work for?—(A.) They will work the boats, but this is the distinction which they wish to draw only with regard to overtime, that coasting steamers they will work from 6 to 8 o'clock in the morning, and from 5.30 until 8.30 at night for time and a half—

Q. Yes, I know. I have all that in my mind.—(A.) For Jersey and others it must be double time for the same hours.

Q. I am asking you if you can assign any reason for that in a man's mind, except geographical and political confusion?—(A.) No. I am under the impression that that is what their representative told them—in fact, they said so: that time and a half applied only to coasting traffic.

Q. Of course, you admit that you are in a position of great authority in Plymouth?—(A.) I would not like to say that.

Q. As regards the Victoria Wharf, is not that so?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Have you ever considered, with reference to the paying of the men, the problem of how much a decent man, decently housed, would require to get to enable him to live a decent life?—(A.) I have.

Q. And what is your verdict for Plymouth?—(A.) I have tried to get local people to confer with me, and to help to bring a greater volume of trade. It is more work they want. We have only three or four days' work a week. To do that, I was wanting to point out to them that the war injured some ports, but it helped Plymouth.

Q. I do not think you are understanding at all what I am asking you. The shorthand-writer will read my question again.

(The shorthand-writer read the following question: "Have you ever considered, with reference to the paying of the men, the problem of how much a decent man, decently housed, would require to get to enable him to live a decent life?")

—(A.) I have.

Q. What does it come to?—(A.) £3 10s. per week, with a reasonable amount of pay for overtime—

Q. It is not his pay, it is the amount that he requires to live on. That is what I am after, and that is what I am asking you about. I am asking you the amount he requires to live on?—(A.) £3 15s. per week. That is taking a man and wife and three children.

Q. Even in Plymouth?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I now ask you to look at H.G.M.6. That is a table for three days' work?—(A.) That is three days' work, yes.

Q. Can you now explain to this Court what is your objection to a minimum wage, so far as your finance goes, if in three days the men can earn wages like that?—(A.) I have not raised any objection to a minimum wage. I have not been asked about a minimum wage.

Q. But I am going to ask you. You have no

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objection to it, have you?—(A.) To the present minimum wage, no.

Q. The principle of the minimum wage is one to which you see no objection?—(A.) For the time workers.

Q. Quite so. Therefore it is only a question of amount?—(A.) That is so.

Q. May I ask you whether you think the 14s. per day of Plymouth is too much and should be reduced?—(A.) No, I do not think so.

Q. So that the difference so far as Plymouth is concerned, since you admit the principle of a minimum wage, would simply come to a difference of 2s. per day, would it?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Can you now tell me, with regard to the Victoria Wharf, what is the tonnage of goods in the Victoria Wharf in the year?—(A.) Between 60,000 and 70,000 tons a year in that one little wharf.

Q. I thought it necessary to ask you, because you come to give evidence to us of a port or wharf with 60,000 tons of goods per annum. Now do you not think that Plymouth may learn a lesson from Glasgow with a tonnage of goods of 10,000,000 and a unified authority?—(A.) Mine is only a small part of the port. There is a representative here from the larger dock at Plymouth. I was simply called first—

Q. I would ask you with regard to Plymouth as a whole.—(A.) I do not know the others.

Q. Do you not know the tonnage of Plymouth?—(A.) Not the total tonnage, no.

Q. You do not know the total tonnage of Plymouth?—(A.) I do not.

The CHAIRMAN: I beg your pardon. I shall ask you no more.

(The witness withdrew.)

The CHAIRMAN: The Court, during the retirement, have been anxiously considering the progress of this case. They would like to inform the parties that, so far as the general aspects of the case are concerned, they think they are fairly well instructed on the views of both sides, but they must leave themselves entirely in the hands of Sir Lynden Macassey in presenting his case. Secondly, they wish me to indicate, Sir Lynden, that they fully recognise the difficulty of your position, because you represent a variety of ports in the Kingdom, all of whom naturally desire to have a separate say. If there is anything that this Court could do to strengthen your hands it would be in this direction, that, although ports do not give separate evidence, they will not do so subject to your advice, and that if you, in the exercise of your discretion, with such a large and powerful clientele, think that the lines of your evidence are sufficiently made manifest even by the exclusion of these ports, it might be in the interests of those ports themselves to accept your judgment. They recognise greatly the help that you are giving by endeavouring to condense, but they desire to strengthen your hands in the sense of relieving you of any duty of putting more ports each and all in by representatives to give evidence. Finally, the third point that I am asked to mention on behalf of the Court is this, that we do hope that the evidence in this case may be finished this week, if that is in the power of the parties. Again I say, however, that the parties must be left to their own discretion, but there are various reasons which point to the necessity, if possible, of expediting a conclusion upon the important matter of wages. I hope the parties will not consider that we are unduly pressing, by my

having been asked by the Court to make those intimations.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am much obliged for your Lordship's intimation, and quite frankly my difficulty is this. Up to the present the matter has been dealt with as a broad general question, and I can say this to the Court, from having personally looked into the evidence which has been furnished by a very large number of the ports, that we should be able to put before you evidence showing that a considerable number of ports are in just as exceptional a position as Plymouth.

The CHAIRMAN: Even suppose you did, with your experience, Sir Lynden, you must have seen what was the line of view that the Court was inclining to take with regard to those exceptional circumstances from the observations that I have ventured to address to the last witness. Pray use your discretion, and we have no doubt that you will use it wisely.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am much obliged to your Lordship, but it would relieve me of the obligation of putting a substantial body of evidence before the Court if I could make the point that there is a very substantial number of ports in just as exceptional a position as Plymouth, whose conditions are such that I would submit it would lead the Court to the view that a broad general rule derived on the basis of the conditions of other large ports could not be applied to their case.

The CHAIRMAN: You might perhaps before to-morrow morning communicate with Mr. Bevin, and I have no doubt Mr. Bevin, in the exercise of his discretion, will make you any admission to this effect, that there may be applicable to ports of relatively small size exceptional conditions which would not prevail in large and important ports like Liverpool, Glasgow, and London. If Mr. Bevin did that he would in no way prejudice his case, nor would you yours, in the view of the Court.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, my Lord. If I may put a practical illustration of the difficulty in my mind it is this: Supposing your Lordship, for the purposes of assumption, was inclined to view the case as having established an argument in favour of a uniform national minimum, it would hardly weigh against that view of the Court if they were to see that only one port was in such an exceptional position that that rule could not apply to them, but if, on the other hand, it was not a case of one port, but a very considerable number of ports who were just in the same exceptional position in respect of which the uniform national minimum could not apply, that would lead the Court to somewhat modify their view, I think. That was the position I desired to put before the Court.

The CHAIRMAN: That may be, Sir Lynden. Anyhow the Court on its part has made its contribution towards expediting the inquiry. You were going to mention something when I interrupted you.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I shall probably have later to deal more particularly with the conditions of employment in the ports, because I assume that it is a point the Court are going to deal with later. I think I shall call Mr. Hoppins on that point.

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The CHAIRMAN: On the conditions point?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: So that he does not require to come later?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes. I will be quite candid with the Court and with my friend in saying this, that in some of these ports the conditions are really so deplorable that the Court, in my submission, should not content themselves with merely making a recommendation in respect of increased wages, but should see that things are so regularised in respect of the conditions of work of those ports as to secure that the work is done and the work of the nation is really carried on.

The CHAIRMAN: He will be recalled later unless the parties agree on this subject of conditions later.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I shall merely put to the witness his exhibits giving the rates of pay in the docks.

Mr. DOUGLASS GILES HOPPINS, *Sworn*.

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you the principal working cargo and warehouse clerk at the Great Western Railway Docks in Plymouth?—(A.) I am.

Q. Have you prepared a number of Statements which are called H.25, in which you show the rates of pay and the hours of work at the Great Western Railway Docks?—(A.) I have. (*H.25 handed in.)

Q. Are those statements accurate?—(A.) They are, to the best of my knowledge.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is all at this stage I want you to prove; I shall want you later. Now, my Lord, I want just to call one or two witnesses from Swansea, because they deal with the type of case which ought to come before the Court, and the existence of which ought to be known to the Court.

Mr. HERBERT WILLIAM MORGAN, *Sworn*.

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you Secretary to the General Manager of the Swansea Harbour Trust?—(A.) I am.

Q. And Secretary of the Swansea Labour Employers' Association?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The Swansea Harbour Trust is a public body?—(A.) It is.

Q. I think the Trustees are 26 in number?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Nine of them are appointed by the Corporation, and of those nine four are representatives of labour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In the year 1913, the last pre-war year, were the total exports and imports from and into Swansea 7½ million tons?—(A.) They were.

Q. Are they now down under 4½ million tons?—(A.) That is so.

Q. As a result, are the finances of the Swansea Harbour Trust in a serious position?—(A.) They are in a very serious position. As a matter of fact, we now have a Receiver.

Q. You are in the hands now of a Receiver?—(A.) In the hands of a Receiver since the early part of the year. We pay a 4 per cent. fixed interest on our stock, and we are no longer able to meet our engagements in that regard, and in that case the stockholders have put in a Re-

ceiver to cover them as far as it is possible to do so.

Q. By your Act of 1919 you got increased charging powers?—(A.) Yes, we were empowered to charge a further 50 per cent. upon our statutory minima.

Q. It is not possible, is it, for you to increase your charges by reason of the fact that you are in competition with neighbouring railway-owned ports?—(A.) That is our great difficulty.

The CHAIRMAN: Please name those.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The names of those railway-owned ports with which Swansea is in competition are what?—(A.) Newport, Cardiff, Barry, Penarth, and Port Talbot.

Q. You have prepared a statement, have you not, of the rates of pay at Swansea?—(A.) Yes, I have. I think you will find it attached to the papers.

(*Statement put in and marked "H.26.")

Q. First of all, on that statement do you show the annual cost of the claim in respect of Swansea?—(A.) We have only prepared that statement as far as it relates to the permanent employees. We have not been able to form any estimate of what it would cost in regard to casual men.

Q. But in regard to the permanent men it would cost £31,200 per annum?—(A.) That is the estimate of our cost.

Q. If you added to that the additional cost in respect of the casual men would that substantially increase this figure?—(A.) It would, for the reason that we cannot pass on the increased wages of the permanent men. We should ourselves have to bear that. We cannot pass that on in the form of an additional charge as things are now, with the limitation that I have just made. We are surrounded by these railway-owned ports, and cannot further put up our charges.

Q. Have you also prepared a statement which shows what are the prevailing rates of pay in Swansea?—(A.) Yes, I have that statement.

Q. I must ask you to give me the figures shortly, because I thought it was in a statement, but it does not appear to have been prepared?—(A.) This is a statement showing the wages both of the dock labourers—

Q. Take your dock labourers. There are about 1,000 in all, are there not?—(A.) Yes, 1,000 in all.

Q. They are casual?—(A.) They are all casual men.

Q. Would you tell me what their earnings are per week as the result of actual records which have been taken?—(A.) The first, iron ore gangs—those are preference gangs—earned for 13 weeks taken from October to ending January 20, £6 7s. 6d. per man per week; tinplate discharging gangs—they can be termed casuales, but in fact they are permanent men—earned on an average £6 9s. 8d. per man per week; stowing gangs, £5 0s. 6d. per man per week. In that £5 0s. 6d., however, there is a certain amount of overtime, which I have been unable to separate. General day men £4 2s. 3d. per man per week, crane men £4 18s. 9d. per man per week, and so on through a long list.

Q. In addition to the workers you have just given as dock workers have you also railway men?—(A.) Yes, a large number.

Q. In connection with the docks is there a considerable system of railways?—(A.) A very con-

* See Appendix No. 98.

* See Appendices Nos. 99-104.

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siderable system of railways connecting the four railways; we have junctions with the London and North-Western, the Midland, the Great Western, and the Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railways, and exchange a great deal of their traffic over our railway.

Q. At the present moment are those men paid on a railway basis?—(A.) They are paid now on a transport workers' basis. They were paid on a railway basis, but they have forced us into the position of putting them on a transport workers' basis and giving them the 44-hour week. As a matter of fact, what they actually did was this: They took advantage of the position, and ceased work at noon on Saturdays, and closed the whole of the dock junctions. In doing so they prevented the empties being cleared away, and the roads being dressed, and further coal being brought down, and so upset the position that Monday, which is the best day of the week as a rule for the rapid working of coal, was turned into the very worst, because we could not get going until after one o'clock, having to clear out the mess which was left from the preceding week-end.

Q. So, as a result of the action taken by the men in that respect, you had to change and put them off the railway basis on to the transport workers' basis?—(A.) That is so, on which they now stand.

The CHAIRMAN.—How much do they get?—(A.) The railway men?

Q. Yes. Under the present basis how much do they get?—(A.) Foremen, 78s. to 84s. per week; weighers, 70s. to 74s. per week; crossing-watchmen, 39s. to 72s. per week; points lad, 41s. to 63s. per week.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I save your Lordship the trouble of taking down these figures by handing you this document? We shall have statements made for the Court. (*Document handed to his Lordship and marked H/26A.)

(To the Witness.) Q. The statement which I have handed my Lord gives in detail the rates of wages at Swansea?—(A.) Yes.

Q. For both your permanent and your casual men?—(A.) That is so. It does not give the piece rates of the casual men. You quite understand that piece rates are those spoken of in the tariff. It gives the actual earnings as far as the casual men are concerned.

Q. Does that show that the rates of wages today at Swansea stand at an exceptionally high level?—(A.) We regard them as being exceptionally high, and I think they are correct.

Q. Are they, in fact, exceptionally high, as compared with other adjoining ports?—(A.) They are. They are higher.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not dispute any of these figures prepared by the Swansea Harbour Trust, my Lord.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Notwithstanding the existence of those high rates of pay, are conditions of work at Swansea in an exceedingly disorganised state?—(A.) I would qualify that at the moment. I will put it in this way. As far as the labour leaders are able at Swansea they do give us that assistance which is within their power, but it so happens that amongst some of the gangs they have a number of men who are exceedingly difficult and intractable, and it is these men who usurp the real authority of their leaders, cause a lot of trouble, and bring about the stoppages of which we have reason to complain from time to time. As a matter of fact there is one on at the moment.

* See Appendix No. 101.

Q. I want, with your assistance, to put shortly before my Lord what seems to me to be an exceptionally serious state of things, that is to say in respect of output. Take first of all in regard to the introduction of the 44-hour week; do you in point of fact get an 8-hour working day today?—(A.) Well, we do not as a matter of fact, but as to that Mr. Britton will be better able to prove it.

Q. Perhaps you can give me evidence on that now?—(A.) I prefer Mr. Britton should deal with that, because he actually deals with the men at the dock.

Q. Did you some time ago succeed in arranging with the men an agreement for rates of pay and conditions of employment?—(A.) Yes. I take it the agreement to which you refer is the 1919 tariff, which came into force on July 1 last.

Q. That is right. Did that agreement provide that the tariff rates which were agreed in it and the rates of pay should include consideration for all the grounds upon which extras can possibly be claimed, and represent a definite covenant on the part of the men to abolish extras?—(A.) That is so. There is a distinct clause to that effect.

Q. And is that made clear in a letter which in point of fact was written by the Union to yourself?—(A.) Yes. I think if I were to read Mr. Merrells' letter, where he encloses application for a revision of the tariff, that would be brought out.

Q. Yes, if you will just read that letter.—(A.) This is dated 1st of April, 1919: "I herewith enclose application for revision of tariff, which, as you know, is intended to cover the whole of the general cargo and iron ore work of the dock. It is further intended to be a consolidated rate, and if your Association agree to the enclosed application we, on our part, would undertake not to apply for extras, as is the practice at present."

Q. That is the letter written to you by the local delegate of the Dockers' Union?—(A.) By Mr. Merrells, the district secretary.

Q. Did this agreement also provide "Should any question arise in regard to the interpretation of any item in the tariff list and conditions, it is agreed that work shall proceed without interruption until the question is decided by the properly constituted authority set up for the purpose"?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is that provision systematically disregarded?— I do not say by the Unions, but by the men?—(A.) Not by the Unions but by the men. The Union as a matter of fact have in every case endeavoured to assist us, but it is the case that, notwithstanding all that they do, the men will continue to break away.

Q. I have a long list of instances in which work is constantly and continually stopped in respect of claims for extras above those entered in the tariff, and letters from the Union to yourself repudiating that action; but, notwithstanding that, these continual delays through stoppages of work occur?—(A.) Yes, they persist right through.

After what my Lord has said I do not want to take you into detail, but take, for example, the question of the "Montrose"?—(A.) Yes. That steamer brought in a cargo of scrap steel. The scrap steel rate agreed in the tariff was 2s. 2d. per ton, which was to be inclusive of all extras whatsoever. As a matter of fact these men stopped and held up that ship, and caused it to lose several days. Now they insist upon working scrap steel at a rate of 4s. 3d. per ton, and at no other rate will they work out any scrap. 4s. 3d. has to be paid for scrap, good, bad, or in-different.

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Q. Although the tariff rate is a rate of 2s. 2d.?
—(A.) Yes.

Q. There again you go through a large number of items. There is the question of French pitwood?—(A.) Yes; French pitwood was a source of very considerable trouble to us, more particularly as applying to small sailing vessels. The Union, when they applied for the new revised tariff rates, asked, in their first application, for 1s. 5d. a ton. We accepted that, and then we were promptly told that the 1s. 5d. was never intended to be asked for, and they did not know how it crept in. Then we agreed to a rate of 1s. 7d., but unfortunately the representatives of the men were unable to get that rate agreed to, and they further put the rate up to 1s. 9½d. a ton, to include sailers and steamers and to include extras, whatsoever they might be. Notwithstanding that, and although the Union representatives did their best to induce the men to accept it, they positively, point-blank, refused, and for several weeks they held up a large number of these small sailing vessels to such an extent that the trade was practically all sent to Port Talbot and other neighbouring Welsh ports, and we got stranded. We have had a few in since, and we are now working at a rate of 2s. 3d. a ton, which is a further increase as far as the sailers are concerned; and even with 2s. 3d. there is a case of a little French vessel, the "Autune," which was held up because of the presence of beams in her hold.

Q. You have a great number of similar instances, have you not?—(A.) We have a number of such cases.

Q. I should be all day and all to-morrow if I went into them, but we will take those samples. Therefore, in your view, before wages are increased the conditions of existing agreements should be enforced?—(A.) Most certainly.

Q. And, speaking broadly, is the inability of the Unions to secure compliance by the men with the conditions of the agreement operating most detrimentally to the Port of Swansea?—(A.) Yes, it is doing us a great deal of harm. As a matter of fact, we should like to see them so strengthened that they could positively enforce any agreement that they might make on their men. If that were done we should know exactly who we were dealing with, and we could come to a hard and fast bargain.

Q. In this matter we are not taking up any attitude antagonistic to the Unions, but we should like the hand of the Court to strengthen the hands of the Unions and of the employers to procure compliance by the men in Swansea with these various agreements?—(A.) It would be a good thing if that could be done.

Q. Although wages have increased very substantially during the war, production has very considerably gone down, has it not?—(A.) Yes, that is our general experience. The output is not what it was.

Q. You have a long list of actual cases of the time it has taken to unload ships carrying ore in 1914 and ships carrying ore in 1919, and although the number of men in the gang has been increased the actual output itself is considerably down?—(A.) Yes; the gangs have been strengthened from six men in the hold to eight men in the hold, but the actual output, as you see, is down, although, in some cases, we now use a grab to assist in breaking-down, which saves the men the laborious operation of digging down through a cargo of ore, and hence both accelerates the rate of discharge and enables the concluding

portion of the work to be done more easily than it otherwise would.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you give us the figures of the output?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord. (To the Witness): Will you take some typical cases?—(A.) I think Mr. Britton will be called to prove that. He has the papers.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Very well, we will get the details from Mr. Britton. Is the view of the Swansea Harbour Trust this, that any further increase of wages to the men will most seriously handicap the Trust in recovering its pre-war position; and that before any increase of wage is given conditions of work should be put upon a proper basis?—(A.) That is so. Obviously if we have to pay very much higher wages to a large number of permanent men and have no means of recouping ourselves from the public, then we stand to lose to that exact extent.

Q. You cannot pass it on in your present position, surrounded as you are by other competitive railway ports?—(A.) That is so; we are limited exactly by that.

Cross-examined by MR. BEVIN.

Q. I have only two or three questions to put to you. With regard to output, first, on this point you have been very short of trucks, have you not?—(A.) I think in Swansea we have been better off for trucks than almost any other port in South Wales; for this reason, that we have been sending nightly large numbers of common user wagons away to Liverpool, and some to the assistance of Bristol.

Q. I understand that you have had a South Wales Committee set up, and that they went to see the Prime Minister, and all sorts of things, because you could not ship the stuff from Swansea?—(A.) That was not exactly on the question of the shortage of trucks; the question was the congestion of tinplates loaded in Swansea Docks, where we had 1,500 wagons standing awaiting discharge.

Q. It did affect the output generally at the dock, did it not? How much waiting time have you had to pay? You pay 2s. an hour waiting time, do you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have had to pay considerable sums in waiting time, have you not?—(A.) Not so far as the shortage of trucks is concerned.

Q. Owing to delays of some kind?—(A.) Occasionally we have had some delays:

Q. It has not had that free flow that it had in 1914?—(A.) I would not say it is as good as 1914, but I think it is substantially better than any other port in South Wales.

Q. Every other port will come up with the same story as yourselves?—(A.) No, they could not, because we have a big export trade.

Q. All I want is a fair comparison for the Court. The traffic through Swansea Docks has not had that free flow to and from the works that it serves that it had in 1914?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And that is bound to affect output, is it not? How many items are there in your tariff, can you remember?—(A.) I should not like to recite them all.

Q. I do not want you to recite them, but will you give the number?—(A.) I have not got it.

Q. It is about 200, is it not?—(A.) It would be all that, I think.

Q. A committee sat down after five weeks' lock-

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out—because you locked the men out, you remember, and I came down to help to settle it—after five weeks' lock-out you sat down and tried to revise 200 rates or more, probably 250. Do you ever imagine that you are going through all those rates, some of which were cargoes which had not been visiting the port for some time owing to the war, and that you are going to get an absolutely perfect tariff?—(A.) The differences we have had have not been over cargoes which have not come into the port since the commencement of war, but over common traffics, such as pitwood and scrap steel.

Q. You have not had a lot of those small boats?—(A.) We always had a tremendous number of those small boats with scrap steel.

Q. During the war?—(A.) During the war and before.

Q. Not to the extent that you have on this occasion?—(A.) I would not care to go into the percentage, but we always had a very large number of those small scrap boats.

Q. With regard to the bankruptcy of the Port of Swansea, of course, we are mutual sufferers in that, are we not?—(A.) I think we are.

Q. I think we have some money in it as well.—(A.) I hope you will get it back.

Q. Is not one of the difficulties right through South Wales this at the moment that the unrest is due to so many millionaires being made there during the war?—(A.) I daresay there is a great deal of envy. You know we cannot look upon a lot of people making money without some people wishing it was theirs.

Q. That may be true, but I am talking about the general condition in South Wales during the last six months, with all the Press agitation about the money that has been made out of the war. It is said by a number of people in South Wales that every shipowner is robbing them and robbing the country. That is the general feeling, is it not?—(A.) That may be their feeling, but they are robbing people who are down: they are robbing us, unfortunately, and we cannot afford it.

Q. I did not ask you to admit that they were robbing; I only pointed out what is the opinion of the men; and it is one of the very great difficulties in the way of getting industrial peace.—(A.) I want to show you that that is mistaken.

Q. I think you will agree that in Swansea, though the Trust may be bankrupt, there is a lot of people who are very wealthy who were not wealthy in 1914.—(A.) We cannot get their money to help us in our difficulties.

Q. No, but you will admit that that is the position.—(A.) Lots of people have made money there, as elsewhere.

Q. In proportion to the increase of wages to the men, those middlemen engaged in the shipping business are boasting, are they not, continually of the money that they have made out of the war?—(A.) I cannot help a lot of people boasting: perhaps they have made money in circumstances like that, but they are not peculiar to Swansea; you will see them all over the place. I cannot help it if they are so unfortunate as to display their wealth vulgarly.

Q. It is one of the difficulties in the way of getting any industrial agreement until we have that courageous Chancellor that his Lordship referred to the other day.—(A.) I daresay it hurts you, as it does me, to see people displaying their wealth in that fashion.

Q. I think one of the papers described it as the area of dreadful Knights.—(A.) I saw something of that kind, but I think they were wrong.

Q. Out of all those items that were fixed in that Agreement there is a large number being kept to, is there not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The area of disputes has been minimised, has it not?—(A.) It has been by the new Agreement, considerably.

Q. The new Agreement has only been in operation for about five months, has it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is not very long in which to wipe out all the old difficulty, is it?—(A.) No, but it is a pity that after this hard and fast Agreement, to which you were a party, has been made, there should now be an endeavour to resurrect a lot of these old extras once more. That is the kind of thing that we are both—

Q. I think we are both agreed about that.—(A.) I hope we are.

Q. With regard to the difficulty of the other ports, I think it has been the request of your Harbour Authority every time you have negotiated that other ports shall pay the same as you.—(A.) Because we have always been the highest. Naturally, we wish to see them brought up somewhere near our level, so that our competitive margin may be reduced.

Q. Now we are endeavouring to bring other people up, you will agree with our proposal if it is an effort to raise the bottom to where you are.—(A.) You are not going to stop there, are you?

Q. I am asking you to answer my question.—(A.) If you are going to put them exactly on the same basis as we are on now, and not worsen us by putting us up to that extent again, so maintaining the difference, then so far as the Port Authority is concerned it would certainly be an advantage.

Q. If we establish a minimum and in dealing with those which are over the minimum we undertake to narrow the margin, that is to say the amount above the minimum is not exactly in the same proportion as the minimum, and we stabilise over the minimum, basing it upwards, but not in exactly the same proportion, that would suit your Trust, would it?—(A.) No; I should like to see you go the whole hog and stabilise it to a dead level.

Q. That is to say, to make everybody £1 a day, the same as Swansea?—(A.) Not £1 a day; put it at 14s. 0d. if you like.

Q. Your bankruptcy has been due to the fact that the three docks above are railway docks, which have been covered by the railway subsidy, while you, being a Trust, have not been covered by the subsidy.—(A.) That is exactly it.

Q. It is nothing to do with the men, but purely an operation of the war?—(A.) We did not attribute it to the men; we put it down exactly to that.

Re-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. With regard to the latter question, Swansea is paying considerably higher rates than adjoining ports, is it not?—(A.) Yes, much.

Q. In point of fact the men insist on these higher rates being paid?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Therefore what you are afraid of, having regard to their past insistence, is that if a minimum is established Swansea will again be shoved very much higher above that minimum? (A.) Exactly.

Q. In point of fact, for example, before the pitwood rate was fixed did the men go and inspect other ports and ascertain the rates for the discharge of pitwood?—(A.) They know the rates quite well; they can tell you the rate off-hand for any port in the Channel.

Q. I see, according to the correspondence, that they insisted upon going in a joint deputation to

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inspect the rates in the other ports.—(A.) To Port Talbot.

Q. And they came back and insisted upon establishing a rate so much higher than the rate of Port Talbot in Swansea?—(A.) That is so, for exactly identical work.

Q. Therefore, are you confident that if other ports are put on a flat level, true to the history of the past, Swansea will be shoved so much higher?—(A.) Our men are always the first exponents of a forward policy, so I do not imagine that they will resign that position; they will not.

Q. With regard to the agreement, your point, as I understand it, on that is this: An agreement was definitely accepted in the letter written by the Union to you to cover all extras.—(A.) Everything, any extra whatsoever. I thought it was one of those cases that no one could escape from, but they have—they have escaped all right.

Q. In point of fact it is not accepted in that way?—(A.) It is not.

Q. If there is any item, as Mr. Bevin indicated, not exactly in the Agreement for which a price has to be fixed, you object to work being stopped until the price is fixed?—(A.) Yes, for the reason that if you look at the General Conditions there is a clause to the effect that goods of the like character must be the gauge for any rate to be fixed for which we have not a rate.

Q. And the Agreement provides that in that case the rates shall be fixed without stoppage of work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is not observed, is it?—(A.) It is not.

Q. You did originally have a Joint Committee consisting of representatives of the men and of the employers to fix rates?—(A.) Yes. We had a Disputes Board, which was set up in June, 1916, which we regarded really as a very valuable adjunct. It helped in smoothing out a large number of difficulties that cropped up just at that period when the men were coming forward in every boat and in every hold with claims for extras of some sort or another. We had this little Disputes Board with four representatives of the men and four representatives of employers, and cases used to be brought before this little Board; and we found it very useful indeed in settling amicably any differences which arose. Unfortunately, however, in the succeeding year, to all intents and purposes, that Board was disbanded and the old dockside settlements were reverted to; and obviously, in the heated atmosphere alongside of the boat, where a dispute is waging, you cannot get a settlement which is going to be a fair and equitable one. That was our position exactly.

Q. Therefore, if the Court can assist in establishing that Joint Labour Committee, it will be useful?—(A.) Yes, and we shall be very happy to assist them.

Q. It will be a great step forward for your already progressive port, will it not?—(A.) I think so.

The CHAIRMAN: When did that Disputes Board cease to exist?—(A.) I think it was in July, 1917.

The CHAIRMAN: Why did it cease to exist?—(A.) For this reason, that the docks people came to us and complained that they did not get the exact amount or as large a proportion of their claims as they would like to have, and they thought that those claims could be better assessed immediately alongside the ship at the time when the dispute arose by the men concerned or a representative of the men and a representative of the employers.

Q. That has proved quite a disastrous mistake?—(A.) It has proved to be a great mistake.

Q. Was that the only thing you had in the shape of a Joint Committee in Swansea?—(A.) That was the only thing.

Q. I understand that you do state as a matter of your experience that you have found the Trade Union, so far as their leading men are concerned, anxious to have agreements kept?—(A.) I have no complaint at all to make about the Trade Union leaders in that regard. After they have once entered into a bargain I think they will endeavour to carry it out, but they cannot control their men.

Q. I know that is the difficulty that you have pointed out. On the other hand, you would desire, would you not, to see the creation of such a Disputes Board or Joint Committee, whichever you call it, at as early a period as possible?—(A.) We are anxious, as far as we can, to eliminate all our disputes and to try to get on with one another a little bit peaceably.

Q. I am sure you are. Now let me put this hope to you and see whether you share it. Have you any hope to see Joint Committees established as the result of a general national arrangement with the dock labourers of the country as a whole and the dock authorities and employers as a whole?—(A.) That would give it great authority.

Q. I am not asking for your certificate in advance, but do you not think that would be an advantage?—(A.) I am sure it would.

Q. That would be of assistance, you think?—(A.) Yes, I think so.

Q. You know that part of the problem before us is as to a minimum. So far as I can see from the Schedules of Wages you have put in, the establishment of this minimum would not hit you one way or another much?—(A.) That is so.

Q. An advance of wages would add to the strain on your authority?—(A.) It would add, so far as I can ascertain, some £31,000 to our strain, which would be a further load upon us; and £31,000 is a low estimate.

Q. What is your present time wage per day?—(A.) We do very little time work, if you refer to transport work. What is done is done in the sheds and the warehouses at 15s. 6d. a day. When general cargo is worked at a day wage in lieu of a piece rate £1 a day is paid to the men aboard the ship, ashore in the warehouses, and on the quay.

Q. That is where my difficulty arises. I am not so expert in your figures. If you actually pay a time wage of 15s. 6d. in one case and £1 in another, what is the harm of a minimum of 16s.?—(A.) So far as we are concerned, the harm would be limited to the 6d. on the 15s. 6d. wage, and no more, which is not much; but that is not what I complain of. That we could pass on. That is only the casual dockers; but when it comes to men on the permanent staff, that is a charge that we could not pass on, as we stand just now, without lifting our rates generally; and if we did that we should suffer from the competition.

Q. Tell me about the opposition to Swansea. I gather from you that it is pretty fierce?—(A.) It is.

Q. At Newport, Cardiff, and what other ports?—(A.) Port Talbot and Barry.

Q. Those are all railway ports, are they not?—(A.) They are all railway-owned ports.

Q. Do you find the opposition of the railway-owned ports pretty stiff?—(A.) It is especially so.

Q. Of course, a railway running up to a port has a very great leverage?—(A.) Yes, it can get

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Mr. BRITTON, Sworn.

something out of the rate to go towards the dock or vice versa.

Q. It shoves the traffic towards its own ports, very naturally, if it can?—(A.) Naturally.

Q. In your circumstances the surprising thing is that your minimum rate seems to be bigger than these other rates?—(A.) I take it that that is due to Mr. Bevin and his friends, who have been very helpful in making Swansea what they regard as the best organised port in South Wales from the trade union standpoint.

Q. You give that as a typical case where merely from the workmen's point of view it may be right enough, but with the result of extinguishing or crippling the trade?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I did not quite understand your point (it may be right, but I did not understand it) about the other ports: we will assume for the purpose of my question that your 14s. rate that you paid was raised to 15s., and assume all those other ports were raised to 15s. minimum; is your view with this rise that Swansea is going to climb higher?—(A.) Yes, I am afraid so.

Q. That is just the point I am anxious about.—(A.) Yes, we are paying 20s. now, and what I want to know, if Mr. Bevin is going to get a lift up in a number of other places, is whether he is going to make a common standard rate through the piece.

Q. This Court is approached by the dockers through Mr. Bevin upon the footing that the dockers in all the ports make common cause with regard to the minimum.—(A.) Should not it be extended therefore right through the piece?

Q. That is not a point that is before us; the only point which is before us as to the minimum amount is this: do you not see that the competition of these other ports against you which is so fierce would be levelled up?—(A.) To some extent.

Q. To that extent. There may be consequential results from that, but so far as the minimum itself went there would be a levelling up in the Swansea scale?—(A.) Yes.

Q. When those things were done that you complain of, very naturally and properly, of the men standing out against their own bargain and raising the scrap steel rates from 2s. 2d. to 4s. 3d., was there any Joint Committee in existence at that time?—(A.) No.

Q. Do you not think it would have been an enormous advantage to have had one?—(A.) Yes, I agree, but unfortunately it was not at our instigation that the whole of the Disputes and Conciliation Boards were done away with. Virtually the men themselves refused to come any more; but for that we might have been able to effect a more equitable arrangement.

The CHAIRMAN: With those two things, a Joint Committee established and the continuance of the honourable efforts of the trade union leaders to have agreements respected, you would view much more hopefully the future than you do at present?—(A.) Yes.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am going to prove in a few minutes some figures on output. Mr. Bevin is good enough to say he will agree them.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well.

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you superintendent stevedore for the Swansea Harbour Trustees?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Does your experience of dock work extend over 44 years?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I only want to obtain your evidence on one or two points. Have you prepared statements showing the reduction in the rate of discharge of iron ore and pig iron in 1919, as compared with 1914?—(A.) Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship has this statement in front of you.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that H.26?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord. (To the Witness): To make that quite clear, in 1917 there was an 8-hour day, whereas in 1913 there was a 10-hour day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That has been adjusted, I think, by your having eight men in a gang in 1919 as compared with only six men in a gang in 1913?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Those figures show very substantial reductions in the average tonnage discharged per gang per day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have taken out particulars to show the serious extent to which the working day is curtailed by odd stoppages?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have worked out the case of the s.s. "Ariadne"?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That was bringing a part cargo of maize of about 1,200 tons?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Maize is not one of your biggest cargoes into Swansea, is it?—(A.) Not at the moment: it has been years ago, but we do not get much now.

Q. Taking the actual time which was worked, it shows that only 6 hours and 35 minutes were in fact worked, as against the working day of 8 hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. For example, the actual time of working commenced at 7.25, stopped for breakfast at 8.15, commenced again at 9.10, stopped for dinner at 12.45, commenced again at 2.10, and stopped for tea at 4.20?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Which made the total time worked 6 hours, 35 minutes, instead of 8 hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Does that in your experience represent an ordinary state of affairs in Swansea?—(A.) That is the general state of affairs in Swansea to-day.

Q. There is another matter about which I want to ask you. Under the tariff agreement of July, 1919, provision was made for the increasing of the number of men in the gangs discharging iron ore?—(A.) Yes, and other gangs.

Q. Very commonly gangs are not increased?—(A.) That is so.

Q. But do the men insist upon the same rate of payment as if the gangs had been increased?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that the smaller gang gets the additional payment for the extra men who should be added, but who are not in fact added?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you think that is business? But perhaps it is not fair to ask you that.—(A.) I cannot stop it.

Q. I just want to get one point. Mr. Bevin referred to the case of Joseph Scratchley, who is said to have been injured, and to have died in consequence of the injury received in connection with taking off hatches. You personally are acquainted with that case, are you not?—(A.) Yes, I knew the man very well, and I remember the injury, and I know he lived many years after the

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injury as a foreman for Charles Hill's representative in Swansea, by the name of Burgess and Company.

Q. Probably Mr. Bevin was misinformed when he said that the man died as the result of an injury through taking off the hatches. He died many years after, but not in consequence of the injury?—(A.) That I am not in a position to say, but I know he lived for years after the accident.

Q. How long did he live?—(A.) He followed a foreman with Burgesses of the name of Applin, just about the time when he had this accident. He was given a position as foreman for Burgess

and Company, and I should say that it was three years before he died, to the best of my knowledge.

Q. With regard to the taking off of hatches, what is the position in Swansea?—(A.) They are never taken off by the dock men, but always by the crew or the riggers.

Q. Used they to be taken off by the dock men?—(A.) Many years ago.

Q. But not now?—(A.) No, and have not been, I should think, for 15 years.

Adjourned to to-morrow morning at 10.30 o'clock.

FOURTEENTH DAY.

Wednesday, March 3rd, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I propose to proceed now with the case of London, and to call Lord Devonport.

LORD DEVONPORT, *Sworn.*

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you Chairman of the Port of London Authority?—(A.) I am.

Q. Have you occupied that position since the establishment of the Port Authority in 1909?—(A.) I have.

Q. I think you were Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade in 1908, when the Bill to constitute the Port Authority was passed?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And you actively assisted Mr. Lloyd George, then President of the Board of Trade, in preparing and carrying through that Bill?—(A.) I did.

Q. I think there are 29 members of the Authority, are there not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. They consist of the Chairman, who was appointed by the Port Authority; then 17 members elected by payers of dues, wharfingers, and owners of river craft; one member elected by wharfingers; one appointed by the Admiralty; two appointed by the Board of Trade; two appointed by the London County Council, being members of the Council, and two others appointed by the Council who are not members of the Council; one appointed by the Corporation of the City of London who was a member of the Corporation, and one appointed by the Corporation of the City of London not a member of the Corporation; and one appointed by Trinity House?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then by Sub-section (7) of Section 1 of the Port of London Act it is provided, is it not, as follows—

The CHAIRMAN: How is the Act intitled?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The title of the Act is the Port of London Act, 1908, and it is 8 Edward VII. Cap. 68, and is a public Statute. Section 1, Sub-section (1) says: "An authority (in this Act referred to as the Port Authority) shall be established for the purpose of administering, preserving, and improving the port of London and otherwise for the purposes of this Act." Then by Sub-section (7) of the same Section it is provided as follows: "With a view to providing for the representation of labour on the Port Authority, one of the members of the Port Authority appointed by the Board of Trade shall be appointed by the Board after consultation with such organisations representative of labour as the Board think best qualified to advise them upon the matter, and one of the members of the Port Authority appointed by the London County Council shall be appointed by the Council after consultation with such organisations representative of labour as the Council think best qualified to advise them upon the matter."

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bruce Thomas, would you mind getting me another copy of that Act?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We will hand your Lordship a single copy of the Act. (**The same was handed in.*)

Q. I think from the first it was considered right by the President of the Board of Trade and yourself that labour should be given special representation on the Port of London Authority?—(A.) That was so.

Q. And in accordance with that view Sub-

section (7) of Section 1 of the Act which I have just read was passed?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then is there another important Section in the Port of London Act, Section 28, dealing with casual labour, and does that run in these words: "The Port Authority shall take into consideration the existing methods and conditions of engagement of workmen employed in dock, riverside, and warehouse labour in connection with the Port of London, and shall, either by themselves or in co-operation with other bodies or persons, by establishing or maintaining or assisting in the establishment or maintenance of offices, waiting-rooms, and employment registers, and by the collection and communication of information and otherwise, take such steps as they think best calculated to diminish the evils of casual employment, and to promote the more convenient and regular engagement of such workmen or any class thereof?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That was the provision inserted in the Act in the direction of decasualising labour?—(A.) That was the object.

Q. Prior to the war did the Port Authority employ on the average 6,500 men per day?—(A.) Yes, that is the number.

Q. But during the war employment increased, did it not, owing to increased work and other causes?—(A.) That is so.

Q. But did the submarine operations in the Channel occasion great irregularity in the arrival of vessels?—(A.) Yes, great irregularity.

Q. And consequent irregularity in the number of men from day to day required?—(A.) It fluctuated largely.

Q. I think since the Armistice the demands of Port have increased to such an extent that the total number of men employed per day is now upwards of 11,000?—(A.) That is so.

Q. In pursuance of the obligation put upon you by the section of the Act which I have just read, have the Port Authority devised a scheme for the employment of labour, dividing labour into three classes: Permanent men; B men who are preferential men, and C men who are extra men or casual?—(A.) That was initiated by the dock companies following the strike in 1889. We inherited the system.

Q. And you have carried it on and improved it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Before the war the proportion of permanent men in your employ was about 47 per cent., and of casual men about 40 per cent.?—(A.) Yes. Those are the figures.

Q. Do you regard your system of permanent men, B men, and C men as a serious attempt to grapple with the evils of casual employment?—(A.) Yes. I might say on that, that prior to the war the percentage of casual labour had become almost negligible. I think a witness will speak upon that and give figures.

Q. Two per cent. was it not?—(A.) But, of course, since the war, for reasons which you have indicated, the number of casual men, that is to say men who do not come within the category of permanent or B men, largely increased, but when things get normal we shall go on with our policy of decasualisation up to the utmost limit possible.

Q. You are thoroughly in accord with the decasualisation of labour to the utmost practicable extent?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. As, of course, the record of the Port of London Authority up to date shows. As regards the rest of the labour in the Port of London not in the employment of the Port of London Authority, has the Authority co-operated with all the other interests represented on Mr. Justice Roche's Com-

* Not printed.

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mittee?—(A.) Yes. We have signified our co-operation with the idea set forth in Mr. Justice Roche's Committee's recommendations.

Q. And again the Port Authority view with very strong approval the carrying into effect of the recommendations of that Committee?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. During the war the Port of London Authority has followed the practice generally of other public bodies of meeting the increased cost of living by the ordinary war advances?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But one exception from that general rule has already been referred to in this Court, and you desire to put the circumstances of that before the Court?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Mr. Bevin has referred to the circumstances under which he says the Port of London was proclaimed, and you desire to put the full circumstances of that case before the Court?—(A.) Yes. I have a print here, not prepared for this particular inquiry, but already in print, giving a full recital of the subject matter and the correspondence incidental thereto, which passed first of all between ourselves and the Ministry of Labour—I do not know about "first of all," but anyway it passed between ourselves and the Ministry of Labour—and also here is the originating correspondence which came from the Transport Workers when they invited us to take a certain course. The course which they invited us to take was one to which we did not accede, but which was backed up by Government support, and this correspondence will explain quite clearly what our point of view was.

Q. We will put that in, and then his Lordship in the Chair will have a complete statement in writing from the institution of the claim to the end of the proceedings on that claim?—(A.) That is so. (**The document was handed in and marked H.27.*)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: They will speak for themselves, my Lord, and are contemporaneous letters. I am going to summarise the correspondence in a moment. We found that we were somewhat short of copies of this, being an old print, but such copies as we have we will put before the Court. I regret that there is not a copy for every member of the Court.

Q. Just to summarise the ground on which the Port of London Authority took their stand, was the first reason for their position this—

The CHAIRMAN: Will you tell us the claim to begin with? What was the claim?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The claim is set out in a letter of February 11, 1918, the first letter in that print.

Q. Was this the claim: "That a national movement for a war wage advance to general cargo workers be instituted through the National Transport Workers' Federation; that a national demand for a war wage advance of 8d. per hour for all workers handling general cargo aboard or on shore be submitted through the Federation; overtime to be increased pro rata with proportionate increases for day rates and piece workers"?

The CHAIRMAN: Will you interpret that as you go along? What did that bring the wage up to?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I just read the next paragraph before doing that. "The foregoing policy, as you will realise," Mr. Robert Williams who signs the letter says, "is a departure from the usual practice of the Unions

affiliated to the above Federation. It is in consequence of the universal desire on the part of the affiliated Unions and the members thereof that the war advances in wages shall be standardised, as far as possible, upon a national basis. This policy, as you are doubtless aware, has been in operation for some time regarding a large and increasing section of the workers, such as those employed in the engineering, ship-building and allied trades, in the chemical trades, and coal mining, on the railway service and in the mercantile marine; and my Executive Council are therefore desirous to have the practice extended to the dockers and waterside employees throughout the United Kingdom."

Q. Up to that date the practice had been for the Unions to negotiate wage advances with the employing authorities?—(A.) That is so. We were in negotiation on that point as recently as December, 1917. This letter came in February—February 11, 1918—and in December, 1917, we had just completed negotiations with the Unions and had conceded an additional war advance to them of 6s. per week two months before.

Q. But for the first time the Unions were embarking on this contrary practice of putting forward a claim for a standardisation of war advances through a Government Department? (A.) That is so. If I may say so, you have omitted to read the part of the letter where it was intimated to us that they were co-operating with the Government or that the Government was co-operating with them.

Q. You are quite right; I was just going to read that after I had put the question to you. That is made clear by the final paragraph in Mr. Robert Williams's letter of February 11, which says: "I am sending a copy of this letter to the Chief Industrial Commissioner and the Ministry of Labour asking for their co-operation in convening a conference of various employers and employers' associations throughout Great Britain in order to meet and consider the foregoing application with the representatives of all the Unions involved, and of the National Transport Workers' Federation, and it is to be hoped that the employers generally will help us to arrive at a national and co-ordinated agreement likely to lead to greater stability regarding general cargo work throughout the country." Shortly before that had the Select Committee on National Expenditure been considering the whole question of wage advances and made a report?—(A.) They had.

Q. And did you set out that report so far as was relevant in the letter of April 25, 1918, on page 3?—(A.) Yes. It is contained in the first paragraph.

Q. That is the typewritten document appended to the print.

The CHAIRMAN: Was this letter of April 25 a letter in answer to Mr. Williams's letter printed as on February 11?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It was after this correspondence. It was a letter to the Ministry of Labour setting out in full the whole position—

The WITNESS: No. to the Chairman of the Committee on Production.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I beg your pardon; it was a letter to the Chairman of the Committee on Production, setting out in full the position taken up by the Port of London Authority. Perhaps now that we have read the claim I might just read this letter. This is a letter which was

* See Appendix No. 105

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written by the Port Authority to vindicate the standpoint they had taken up:—"To the Chairman of the Committee on Production. Sir,—The Port of London Authority were informed by a letter of the 23rd instant from the Ministry of Labour that the claim made by the National Transport Workers' Federation on behalf of general cargo workers for an advance of 8d. per hour over pre-war rates has been referred to the Committee on Production for decision, and requesting the Authority's representatives to attend the hearing of the case on Friday next, the 26th instant. Whilst disclaiming any intention of discourtesy to the Committee on Production, we desire to submit for their information the reasons which induce this Authority to abstain from being parties to a procedure for which in their judgment there is no justification whatsoever, but which notwithstanding has been forced against them by the Ministry of Labour, in spite of the Authority's emphatic protest. The Ministry of Labour asserted in their letter of 27th March 'that a difference exists, or is apprehended in the Port of London' in regard to the claim above referred to. At that moment and since, there has not been the slightest indication of any such situation. The men have made no application to the Authority, nor have the two labour representatives (Mr. H. Gosling and Mr. W. Devenay), who are members of the Authority representing Labour, invited us to consider any grievance affecting the wages of this class of their employees. The practice of the Authority has always been to receive the men at any time to discuss all matters in relation to the conditions of their employment, and this has been repeatedly taken advantage of by the men and their representatives, and the course now adopted by the Government therefore appears to us to be unwarranted. With regard to the claim for standardisation, I would remark that the men and their unions have consistently refused to agree to this principle, on the ground that a flat rate would act with unfairness to those men who do not secure the regular employment such as is enjoyed by the Authority's men, and the employers in the Port have therefore always acquiesced in the differentiation. To strain the law as the Ministry of Labour are doing in order to compel parties to arbitrate upon a question where there has never been conflict is to create in London the very conditions of unrest which the Ministry are professing to endeavour to abate. For this reason alone the Authority feel it incumbent upon them to abstain from attending the arbitration. But there are other considerations which impel us to this course. On four separate occasions in order to meet the enhanced cost of living the Authority have granted war bonuses amounting in all to 18s. per week. This notwithstanding, we are now confronted with the demand from the Transport Workers' Federation the effect of which, if granted, would be to raise the 18s. per week to 32s. per week. If such a demand were made on the ground of the enhanced cost of living the Authority would have gladly investigated the claim as hitherto. This reason is, however, not put forward—indeed, the proposal of the Transport Workers' Federation is advocated on the ground that the men are entitled to exploit the economic position in this critical stage of the nation's fortunes. The grave dangers to the State of compliance with such demands are set forth and emphasised in the recently issued report of the Select Committee on National Expenditure, of which Mr. Herbert Samuel is the Chairman, and two of whose members are prominent Labour

leaders. The Committee point out that the succession of fresh cycles of wages advances are vastly increasing the cost of the war, and that if the process continues the result can hardly fail to be disastrous to all classes of the nation, and recommend: first, 'that the strongest case should be required to be established before any advance of wages is conceded on any ground other than the rise in the cost of living,' and, second, 'that an inquiry should be set on foot to ascertain what has been the actual increase in the cost of living to the working classes.' " That, of course, was Lord Sumner's Committee, appointed subsequently to this Report. "The Government have now appointed such a Committee as is suggested to inquire specifically into the cost of living, and the Authority feel justified in taking the stand that until this Committee has reported they are unable to give any countenance or be parties to any proceedings which deal with applications such as that now before you. In dealing with this question two most important further considerations have to be borne in mind, viz., the effect on the Authority's finances and on the post-war position of the port in relation to the competition of the near continental and enemy ports. As regards finance, to enable the authority to pay the war bonuses already granted it has been necessary to obtain an Order in Council authorising us to extend our statutory powers to raise the dock charges by 50 per cent. If the application now made is acceded to a further yearly expenditure of hundreds of thousands of pounds will have to be met by further increases in charges, probably bringing them up to 100 per cent. above pre-war level. The Authority regard with much misgiving the effect of such a tax upon the industry of the port after the war, especially in view of the weapons of cheap labour and unlimited State aid which will be available to the enemy ports. Our most valuable trade is the Entrepot trade, and as the incidence of charges is the ruling factor in its maintenance and development the port will be crippled if the Authority is compelled to levy high charges in order to pay for the enormous additional expenditure with which they are threatened. London stands in quite a different category from any other United Kingdom port in this respect. These are some of the reasons why, as trustees for the mercantile and shipping interests of the port and for stockholders representing £30,000,000 of Port of London stock, the Authority desire to protest strongly against the proposal upon which you are asked to adjudicate.—Yours faithfully, Devonport, Chairman." That letter states fully the ground for the stand which the Port of London Authority took in respect of this novel wage claim?—(A.) Yes. We objected to the interference of the Government, inasmuch as no application had been made to us; we had no knowledge that any such claim was contemplated or pending: our labour representatives never gave us the faintest indication, and hitherto we had negotiated together, and we considered it a matter of high principle that employers and employed should negotiate direct and not act through the intervention of the Government. We objected to that then, and we shall object to it at any other time. If after we had met together we were not able to compose our differences, then, of course, the Government had a right to endeavour to compose those differences and to interfere.

Q. While wages advances or wages claims were being put forward in other industries through the organisations of employers in the first instance, you saw no reason why that course, which had been the course up to that date, should be sud-

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denly altered and claims sent round through the intermedium of a Government Department?—(A.) We strongly objected, not only ourselves, the Port Authority, but the whole of the port interests. I went myself with others representing the port interests to the Ministry of Labour; Lord Inchcape accompanied me, and he was speaking on behalf of the shipowning interests. We made the strongest possible protest against the Government intervening in a matter of this kind before it had even been brought before us, and if you look at the dates of the correspondence you will see that Mr. Williams's letter to the Government was dated two days prior to his letter to us. His letter to us is dated February 11, in which he states that he is in communication with the Government; but later on it is apparent from the print that he had already been in touch with the Government on February 9.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is quite true; I had overlooked that point. Your Lordship will see that, on page 3 of the print, in the letter at the bottom. Mr. Robert Williams, writing to the Chief Industrial Commissioner, says: "Dear Sir George,—Further to my letter of February 9, dealing with the claims submitted to the various employers and associations of employers in Great Britain—"

The CHAIRMAN: What does it all come to? Is not the letter of February 11 from Mr. Williams submitting an application to the Port of London Authority? To whom is that letter of February 11 addressed?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is addressed to the Port of London Authority, he having in the first instance put in the claim to the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: But what does it all come to? What I want to know is this: Mr. Williams seems to have addressed the Port of London Authority on February 11?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, and the Government on February 9.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it seriously submitted to this Court that Mr. Williams's letter should not be attended to or treated as a direct approach because he had two days before sent the same thing to the Government?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is a much bigger point of principle and point of substance than that. It is this: that claims for increased wages of any kind should, as is the ordinary custom, be put forward in the first instance to the employers and negotiated with the employers.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a difference of 48 hours.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is a difference of principle.

The CHAIRMAN: If the principle can be expressed in 48 hours, so much the better for the principle. I want to know where it lies.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I can put the principle in three minutes. The principle is this: in all the trades of the country it had been the custom for these wage advances to be constitutionally negotiated between the Unions on the one side and the employers on the other, in the

first instance, and then referring it to arbitration if necessary.

The CHAIRMAN: I know.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: But that procedure is entirely inverted.

The CHAIRMAN: I quite understand. I just want to see where we stand. That is your point, and that is, as I understand it, Lord Devonport's point up to now—namely, that whatever he might have done on the first approach of February 11, he would not do it because the Government was approached two days before. Is that right?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It was an entire inversion of the constitutional proceedings.

The CHAIRMAN: I know you may put large words applicable to it; I am putting it as simply as I can. Ask Lord Devonport that, or, if not, I will. Suppose Mr. Williams had started this negotiation, Lord Devonport, without going to the Government, and had written you the letter of February 11, 1918, you would have treated with him, would you?—(A.) On the basis of his letter of February 11 our objection was this: that they had already taken the Government into co-operation with them.

Q. I know; I quite understand that.—(A.) The letter of February 9 is not very material; I only mentioned it incidentally. We laid no particular stress on that. The point we took objection to was this: that the Government were interfering with the negotiations that had hitherto taken place between the employers and the workmen; we had always conducted our negotiations that way, but we were given to understand on this occasion that the Government were, as it were, behind it. That is one of the grounds of our objection.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your second point, Lord Devonport, was that a department of the Government was dealing with this claim in this way, while the Select Committee of the House of Commons on National Expenditure made a quite different recommendation?—(A.) Yes, the Select Committee laid it down in the pretty clear and precise terms which you have read, as set out in our letter to the Chairman of the Committee on Production: that advances in wages should only be given to cover the enhanced cost of living; and we took that stand, too.

Q. This was a claim not for that, but for standardisation of war advances?—(A.) Which is quite a different thing.

Q. I think the Port of London Authority have dealt sympathetically with all the staff during the war—all the staff who were called up during the war were guaranteed re-employment, were they not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And have the Authority also paid to their wives their pay from the Authority, less pay and allowances from the Army and Navy?—(A.) Yes: they were in receipt of full pay, inasmuch as we made up the difference between the Army pay and allowances and what they were drawing before they were called up.

Q. In the case of dependents of single men, your Authority contributed a proportion to the upkeep of the home?—(A.) We did.

Q. To put that all into a round figure, has the cost to the Authority of doing so. up to December 31, 1919, been £73,475?—(A.) Yes, that is the figure.

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The CHAIRMAN: What does that mean?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is the total amount of the expenditure of the Port of London Authority in contributions to the maintenance of the homes of those who were called up during the war.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that the permanent staff?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That would be the permanent staff, I take it.—(A.) Yes, that would be the permanent staff.

Q. I think the Port of London Authority also contemplate assuming responsibility for all arrangements for supplying food and meals at the docks?—(A.) Yes, that is being developed. That may be said to have sprung up during the war, and from our present experience of it we think it is a thing to be encouraged. We have already installed two large canteens, at a cost of £10,000, and we are satisfied already, from the working of these, that it would be advantageous to extend them, and that is our intention.

Q. I think, in addition to the staff engaged upon dock working, you have a very large staff engaged on maintenance and construction work?—(A.) Yes, consisting of tradesmen.

Q. About 5,800 men?—(A.) It varies. That is the present number at work. In fact, it is larger just at the moment.

Q. It is larger than that, is it?—(A.) Yes, it is larger now.

Q. I think in regard to those men you have always followed, and do follow, the ordinary Trade Union awards and settlements?—(A.) When the Port of London Authority came into existence in 1909 we inherited the situation as we found it, and the custom of the old dock companies was to make their own arrangements with the men. We found that in the main they were generally somewhat lower than what I would call the Trade Union basis, so we resolved very early in our career that we would go in for Trade Union rates of pay, and that we would follow any trade award. That would prevent any possibility of friction which might perhaps arise because the pay of a particular tradesman was slightly below that standard. The matter you are referring to was covered by a resolution or a recommendation of the Staff Committee in 1911 adopted by the Port Authority on August 3 of that year, and it says this: "The Committee considered the report of the Chief Engineer with regard to the Labour employed in the engineering department"—I may mention that all these tradesmen are working under the Engineering Department—"and after consideration the Committee recommend that the following amended proposal be adopted, namely, that the Port Authority adopt Trade Union rates of pay as the basis of future arrangements." This course has been generally adopted by large firms of engineering and building contractors, as well as large public bodies, and to ensure the Port Authority in the future obtaining the best class of labour in all engineering trades, we have worked from that day on that basis.

Q. I only want to get the fact from you that the Port of London as far back as 1911 resolved to adopt and apply ordinary Trade Union rates of pay to all their maintenance and construction staff?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. In regard to the relationship of the Port of London Authority with the Trade Unions, are Trade Unions recognised, and are they always received by the Port Authority?—(A.) Invariably. For my own curiosity, I have taken out

a list of the deputations from the Trade Unions that have been received by us since 1911. It is rather a long list, which shows the various occasions upon which they have been received in order to state their views. It is an open door.

Q. That is the point.—(A.) Yes, it is an open door; we have no hesitation about dealing direct with Trade Unions; we find it works all right.

Q. That is what I want to get; it is an open door, and the door is not shut, as I rather gather it has been suggested in the course of these proceedings.

Mr. BEVIN: It is open to go out as well as come in.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I want to come to another thing now. Mr. Bevin made this statement on page 7 of the first day in regard to a strike in the year 1911. He said about half-way down the right-hand column: "To obtain just an advance of 1d. per hour meant, even at that time"—he was speaking of 1911—"that the whole Port of London had to be held up in order to obtain it. There were the same old arguments, the same old disputes, the same old inability to pay, the same old ruination of the empire which we found in 1889 and every other time when we have ever negotiated." Now what are the facts in regard to that settlement in 1911, because it is most desirable the facts should be accurately stated?—(A.) Of course, in making that statement Mr. Bevin, I presume, has fallen into error. It is inaccurate in every form.

Q. We will take it as rhetorical for the moment. Let us just get the date of the application. Was there an application made on the 29th June, 1911, for a wage increase?—(A.) That is so.

Q. On the 10th July, 1911, was the first meeting held between the Transport Workers' Federation and the Port of London Authority and the other members?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. I think you had charge of those proceedings?—(A.) Right. The point, as I take it, that you are establishing is that immediately the application came in we took steps to meet the men straightaway; we invited them to come into conference, and they were in conference with us on the 10th July following the date of the application, the 29th June, and they remained in conference with us till the 27th July, when a settlement was arrived at.

Q. That is the settlement which is called the Devonport Agreement?—(A.) Yes, it bore my name, and it has always been referred to in that way.

Q. To represent the views of those gentlemen who were negotiating with the Port employers, on behalf of the men was a resolution of thanks actually moved?—(A.) Oh, yes; the whole of the negotiations were most amicable and friendly, and we adjusted on a basis that was very acceptable to the men, and they were kind enough on the final day to move a vote of thanks to me in the chair. It was moved by Mr. Gosling, and seconded by Mr. Philip. I have just looked up the notes of the form of the vote of thanks as it was accorded to me, and here is what Mr. Gosling said.

Q. I want you to put what Mr. Gosling said against what Mr. Bevin has said.—(A.) Mr. Gosling said this at the end of the negotiations, when the Devonport Agreement was signed, bearing the signatures of the various Labour representatives and Port Authority representatives: "Mr. Chairman, I have been asked by my colleagues—and I am sure everyone in the room will agree to it—to offer to you our very best thanks for the way you have presided over the meeting, keeping us

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together, and bringing about what I believe is going to be a good settlement. I want to assure the other side that if they will meet us when occasion requires to save bothers outside we shall always do our best to bring the thing to a proper settlement, and I want to say now that we have something like a definite settlement, it is our wish that the Port of London Authority will prosper, that we shall always have the advantage of it, and we hope that whenever we meet together again we shall be as friendly as we are now." Then he was kind enough to say that if all employers were like myself there would be no labour troubles.

Q. What has to be done is to put down on one side of a sheet of paper what Mr. Bevin said and on the other side of the same sheet of paper what was said by Mr. Gosling and taken down in shorthand at these proceedings.

Mr. GOSLING: Those statements are not at the same time; there has been a good deal of water flow under the bridges since then.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: One's memory gets a little dulled after the lapse of five or six years.

The CHAIRMAN: What you are referring to is Mr. Bevin's statement in particular that to obtain an advance of 1d. per hour meant even at that time that the whole Port of London had to be held up.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that so; had the whole Port of London to be held up in order to get 1d. ?—(A.) There was no hold up at all. That is exactly what did not happen—we had friendly negotiation the very moment this demand came forward. It was the first demand we had had since we had been the Port Authority—I had always made up my mind when any labour differences arose to meet the men, and we communicated with the men and their representatives to come into conference.

The CHAIRMAN: You can explain all that, but my question is a very simple one: Was the Port of London held up in order to get that?—(A.) No; I said it was not held up at all.

Q. Did the work go on?—(A.) The work went on till they struck. We have not got to that point yet. Four days afterwards, if I may go on, this agreement was repudiated. It was signed on Thursday evening about 8 o'clock at night.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The agreement which gave the 1d. was repudiated?—(A.) It was repudiated the following Monday, and then they came out on strike and they kept out on strike for about ten days or a fortnight, and then went back and re-endorsed the agreement by signing it again, if I may use the term—they agreed to abide by it.

Q. Was the agreement which was signed after the strike the same agreement which had been made before the strike?—(A.) Oh, yes, on the 18th August a further agreement confirming the Devonport agreement was signed by the Labour representatives who undertook not to raise any further question.

Q. Do you regard it as a matter of public interest that the true facts of the position should be put forward?—(A.) I think it must be helpful to have the true version.

Q. In another passage, Mr. Bevin, referring to the 1912 strike, said that people were driven to

starvation and suicide in London particularly, and to prevent such a prolonged struggle taking place again the Triple Alliance programme was drawn up in 1913. I want to get from you what was the cause of the strike of 1912?—(A.) The strike of 1912 originated in the refusal of the members of the Amalgamated Society of Watermen to work with a lighterman foreman who was not a member of their Society. This man, I forget his name—I think it was Wilson, but I am not sure—was working for a firm of master lightermen, and he was called upon by the Union and told that he was not a member of their Union; he had got to go. But the man said: I am a member of a Union—I am a member of the Foremen's Union. Then he was told, what is quite true, that he was no longer a foreman, and he would have to join the Union. He declined to join the Union, and his employers were informed that if they continued to employ this man the men would be drawn out. Well, they did continue to employ this man, and the men were drawn out, and then it spread through that trade and soon it was all over the port, and as regards the Port Authority, they became involved in the strike. There was no question of rates of pay raised against us, no question of hours of employment, no question of conditions of employment, we were simply engulfed in this strike following the action of drawing the men out on the river.

Q. So that if it is true that people were, as Mr. Bevin said, driven to starvation and suicide in London it was because of the strike being called against employers who continued to employ a man not a member of the Dockers' Union, but a member of the Foremen's Union? (A.) Yes; in short, it was an endeavour to force what is called the ticket upon all workmen.

Q. So long as we know what the facts are. There is just one other point; when the application was made for a 44-hour week in 1919 the Port of London nominal working week was 48 hours.—(A.) Yes, 48 to 50 hours. The nominal working week was 48 hours, I think, but taking such overtime as was worked it might be said to be 50. You will have definite information on that point from Mr. Matthews.

Q. I will put those figures to him. Now I want to come to another matter, and that is the question of the evidence which you gave before the Coal Commission, which has been referred to in the course of these proceedings. I want you just to turn to page 28 of the proceedings of the fifth day. My Lord put a question to Sir Alfred Booth, founded on a statement made by Mr. Bevin in the course of opening the proceedings. His Lordship said: "I want to ask you this question; so far as size is concerned London is the biggest proposition, and we were distressed to hear in the opening speech of Mr. Bevin the reference to the Chairman of the Port of London Authority. Lord Devonport's view was that he would not act on such a Board if there was increased labour representation. He seems to put it as a matter of principle, and you have sworn that it is not a matter of principle, and I think that is quite right. (A.) You are quoting something that I do not know." (Q.) I want you to turn now to what you did really say at the Coal Commission. You were asked, I think, by Sir Arthur Duckham at question 26,089, at the bottom of page 1,116: "Have you seen the Bill for the Nationalisation of Coal Mines drafted by the Miners' Federation? (A.) No. (Q.) In that Bill it is provided that there should be a Mining Council with a Minister as Chairman responsible to

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Parliament and also responsible to the Mining Council, and with half the members of the Mining Council (10) elected by the Miners' Federation. In your Port of London Authority what would be your position if half the members of your Council were members of the Dock Labourers' Union?" Then you said: "I should think it would be very difficult to carry on the undertaking under those circumstances. I should think the persistent tendency of the Labour representatives would be in the direction of increasing wages, and consequently making things dear. I do not think we should have a state of happy accord. Q. You would not view it with equanimity? (A.) I do not know about viewing it with equanimity; I should not be there, and I should not be a participator in that sort of management." So the question put to you at the Coal Commission was as to your acting as Chairman of a body of which one half were members of the Dock Labourers' Union and the other half in other interests?—(A.) That was the question put to me.

Q. The question which my Lord put to Sir Alfred Booth on the statement made by Mr. Bevin to the Court was that you would not act upon a Board if there was increased Labour representation?—(A.) That question was never put to me.

Q. That question was never put to you at the Coal Commission?—(A.) No.

Q. You took the view it would be impossible for you to carry on the responsible duties of Chairman if one half of the Port of London Authority were represented by the Dock Labourers' Union, and the other half by other interests?—(A.) I replied to a hypothetical question, and I gave my view on it.

Q. And your views to-day are the same as they were then?—(A.) In response to the hypothetical question.

Q. It has been suggested that the evidence you gave before the Coal Commission reflected upon certain persons who are members of the Port of London Authority and also whom we have the good fortune to have as members of this Court; and you desire that what you said at the Coal Commission should be read in its entirety?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. One may start, I think, at question 26099 at page 1116, because one gets it there. Sir Leo Money asked you this: "You said, as I understand it, that there were two Labour representatives on your Board, and they were nominated, as I understood it, by the Board of Trade? (A.) No, one by the Board of Trade and one by the London County Council. (Q.) Are they directors? (A.) No, they are members of the Board. (Q.) In spite of that nomination you have had labour troubles? (A.) Yes. (Q.) May I ask your opinion on this point: Is it not probable that your labour troubles might have been less if these two labour men had been nominated, not by the Government, but by the Trade Unions, so that the Trade Unions and their members could feel that they had actually on the Board of Management men who could represent their point of view directly? (A.) But it so happens that one of our representatives is a past-President of the Trades Union Congress only as recently as three years ago, and he is one of the most active and efficient members of those three great organisations."—(A.) That is so.

Q. That was your tribute to Mr. Gosling?—(A.) Yes.

Q. "I am not denying that. I am only suggesting that direct representation of the Unions might give greater confidence to the men than mere nomination by Government Departments,

however able the persons may be. It is a question of representation and the feeling of confidence in election. I only suggest it to you? (A.) I follow your point, and I can only say as regards the Labour members that we have on the Board and who have been on the Board—two of them have died, and therefore they had to be supplemented by two new members—they undoubtedly possessed the full confidence of the Trade Union Organisations. If you put it to me whether it would make the slightest difference to us whether those men were nominated by the Trade Unions or the Government Departments, I think it would not make the slightest difference; we should not mind in the least." That was your answer on the question of direct nomination as compared with selection by Government?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then: "Do these two nominated representatives take an actual part in the direction of the work of the whole authority? Are they in a managing capacity? (A.) They are members of the Board. (Q.) They are not restricted to labour questions? (A.) Oh dear no; they are on important Committees, and we always take care that they are on the Staff Committee when labour questions are discussed and decided. (Q.) At any rate you have there established the principle that you have two labour men who are directly associated with the management of the whole undertaking in the real sense? (A.) If you ask me if I have established the principle—the Government has established the principle. (Q.) It has established it and it works? (A.) Well, it has to work. (Q.) It does work and in practice it is found useful? (A.) Yes. I think labour representation has not been detrimental to us. It has its advantages. I do not know whether I shall offend anyone if I say they are always looking out for themselves and the interests they represent. (Q.) But you go so far as to say it has not been detrimental? (A.) No, I do not think it has been detrimental." That was the evidence you gave?—(A.) True.

Q. Are you surprised that it should be suggested that you conveyed or desired to convey personal reflection on anybody?—(A.) I fail to understand why it should be insinuated or suggested.

Q. And you very much regret it?—(A.) I do, indeed. It has been very much commented on in my absence; and I am sorry that that has happened.

Q. I want to pass now to another point: considerable question has been raised about the existence of congestion in the Port of London. I think that is a matter on which you may be able to assist the Court. Would you perhaps tell the Court in your own words what are the present causes of the existing congestion?—(A.) The absolute cause of the congestion proceeds in the practice of the Government in arranging or permitting the arrival of goods in what I may call huge gluts. The leading commodities have been coming along for the last six or eight months with a total disregard to the storage accommodation available, and they have come in such super-abundance that every inch of storage accommodation, not only under the control of the Port of London Authority, but throughout the whole of the Port of London, is full to repletion, and consequently the whole capacity having been kept full it is perfectly impossible to take in the huge remainder that has been waiting outside and is continuing to arrive. If it would be of interest I would give a few figures bearing on some of these commodities.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I think it is quite right

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that you should just state that quite plainly.—(A.) First of all, let me take meat: There are in store in the United Kingdom to-day 150,000 tons of meat. That is sufficient at the present rate of consumption, with the home-killed meat, to supply the country for over three months, but in addition to that there are 106,000 tons in steamers waiting to discharge at the ports of the United Kingdom, or afloat; that is to say, visible supplies. When that quantity is dealt with, or considering that quantity has to be dealt with, there is sufficient with the home-killed to supply the country for a further period of over two months. The first figure I gave represents a further two months' supply, and here is a third figure: in Australasia, from whence we draw these supplies, mainly not entirely, New Zealand and Australia, already waiting shipment there is a further 95,700 tons. When that arrives that will give the country, taking in the home supply as well, a further two months. Now we have had three months', an additional two months' supply, and a further two months' supply—that is seven. Now we go on to the fourth figure. Australasia is now killing this season's sheep. The killing season begins just about now. It is estimated that at the end there will be available 148,900 tons of further supplies, sufficient with the home-killed for another three months' supply; so that that is ten. Add to that the supplies available in other portions of the world, South America chiefly, which represents two months' supply, at the present moment there are twelve months' supply of meat available; and I may tell you that all these figures were visible six months ago. Six months ago the Government were proclaiming and warning people that there was going to be a serious meat shortage. The result of all this is very, very serious on transport and the circulation of products. During the last three months in London alone there has been an average of eight vessels with meat detained for an average of about six weeks. I am told that some of the shipowners will be able to verify this.

Sir JOSEPH BROODBANK: What quantity would that represent?—(A.) The quantity on board—I am sorry I have not that here.

The CHAIRMAN: What would be the average tonnage?—(A.) I have not the figure by me, but I think there is somebody in court who could very soon afford that information.

Q. It is suggested by one of my colleagues that the average cargo of meat would be 3,000 tons, or thereabouts?—(A.) Yes; I am sorry I have not the figures. I have had them through my hands, but I have not them on my note. We can get it for you easily.

Q. That is, 24,000 tons of meat held up for six weeks always?—(A.) As I tell you, I have not the figure of the quantities, and if you will allow me, I would rather not pledge myself to it till I have verified it.

The CHAIRMAN: Quite right.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I have asked the people who are instructing me who know, and they say there would be on the average 100,000 carcasses of sheep in each ship.—(A.) The point I was coming to was as to the serious effect of these ships being held up. Each ship loses £500 per day in demurrage and other charges. Of course, all that has to be paid for through these various stages until it gets to the consumer, whereas if this meat had been distributed, or could be distributed now, instead of these high prices that have been prevailing for the last six months being maintained, the market would have been well supplied, and the

workers and other people would be able to buy their mutton at about 6d. a lb.

The CHAIRMAN: Instead of —(A.) It is down now to about 10½d. or 10¾d., and we are warned it is going to be reduced shortly to 9d.; but it has been as high as 1s. 6d. in the last few months, and 1s. 2d. and 1s., and so on, and all the time the Government had been predicting a shortage, and those who follow the trade (I am not one of them) have seen clearly what is going to happen. That is only with regard to the meat.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You could take other commodities in addition to meat, and the tale would be the same?—(A.) I am going to tell you, if you will allow me, if it is of any interest.

The CHAIRMAN: I think not only of interest to us, but it is of interest to the nation to know that, Lord Devonport, and we would value your telling it.—(A.) Thank you. I think it is of the greatest importance, especially as affecting wages.

Q. We are going to ask you some questions about that, and as affecting the congestion in the port also.—(A.) Quite so.

Q. Just go on, please?—(A.) I come to wool. Wool has been one of the prime causes of congestion. In 1919 there were 2,000,000 bales of wool shipped to London for sale or allocation, against about 800,000 bales pre-war. The stock on hand at the end of June last year (1919)—that was the high-water mark of congestion—was nearly 600,000 bales, and that represented 250,000 bales more than we had agreed with the Government to accommodate. I may say this, and this is put in no disparagement, but it is a fact that the Government write and ask us what quantity we can take, and we strain our possible accommodation to the utmost point, and tell them such and such a quantity. That has no effect when the time comes for bundling the stuff in. They totally disregard what we have said as regards quantity, they hurl this or that at the docks, and the congestion ensues. That happened with regard to wool. At the time of the high-water mark of wool congestion it was a wonderful sight to see this wool distributed and spread about all over the dock in improvised accommodation. Aeroplane hangars were brought in, and it was wool everywhere, you could hardly move a step for wool. Of course, that complicates the situation to an extraordinary extent. Then, at the other end, there is a total inability on the part of the railways to take the stuff away—an enormous shortage of trucks. We have had as big a shortage—in fact, I think it is almost the situation at this moment—that we are standing still for about 3,000 trucks, and I suppose we get about 30 per cent. only of our requirements. Now, as to tea—

The CHAIRMAN: Before you go away from that, Lord Devonport, I am rather anxious that you should expound this. Suppose you had had your 3,000 trucks, within what period could you have cleared the Port of London to what you might call a non-congested state?—(A.) I want you to have good information; I prefer you to get that from some of our experts who deal with traffic all the time. Of course, I can give you a general reply. If we had all proper landing facilities, and if they had not killed the coast-wise trade—I do not know if you are familiar with that point?

Q. Yes.—(A.) The congestion would not have been serious, if at all. Let me say this in support of that. Prior to the war the trade was very much bigger than it is now, although the trade

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appears to be in the minds of the untutored stupidous. The trade is nowhere near what it was before the war, and yet we never had congestion before the war, we never heard of such a thing; in the whole experience of dock-land we never heard of congestion. This congestion arises entirely from a well-thought-out plan of dealing with goods coming in over which the Government has had control. Even now they have not that kind of control of goods, but they have control over the movements of shipping.

Q. Forgive me interrupting Sir Lynden, Lord Devonport. Take to-day please. Could you tell me how much the Port of London stands congested on account of what you call a short-sighted and stupid policy on the part of the Government in respect to wool?—(A.) The wool congestion has passed away, my Lord, but it will recur presently when the season comes round.

Q. When the cycle comes round?—(A.) When the wool season comes round. We get into a terrible predicament by this policy.

Q. What season does that congestion occur in?—(A.) Wool?

Q. Yes.—(A.) I have got a statement here somewhere of what they are offering us.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am told it commences in May.

The CHAIRMAN: In about a couple of months' time?—(A.) Yes. You will remember I mentioned just now that the high-water period of congestion last year was June.

Q. The end of June you said?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Assume it begins with the month of May; then it becomes serious?—(A.) If they pile in these enormous quantities.

Q. For how long does that serious congestion last?—(A.) Till the Government and its customers—they controlling the thing—clear the goods away. I should think, judging from last year, we should be congested seriously with wool for four months.

Q. As Chairman of the Port of London Authority, do you find such congestion seriously embarrassing to the general trade of the port?—(A.) Of course it demoralises everything. It holds the whole thing up; it prevents the proper movement. The way to keep a port going is to keep a free flow of commodities.

Q. So that now you have given us two items, meat and wool?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You now want to speak of tea?—(A.) Yes, the most serious thing of the whole category. It differs from wool. It is here at this moment—a most serious congestion. Tea until last June was controlled by the Government, but in June last it was decontrolled. In spite of decontrol the Government still had control of the movements of the ships, and the merchants of Colombo, Calcutta, and other tea-shipping points were unable to get ships from the Shipping Controller in steady sequence. However, in October last the Government placed a whole flotilla at the disposal of these shippers in India and Ceylon, with the result that six months' average supplies were crowded into three months, pitchforked into London, which, of course, is the great tea port. The result was that the bonded stores were filled to repletion. I mark again the point that London is the great tea port; practically the whole tea of the United Kingdom is stored in London, with an insignificant exception. The bonded accommodation for tea in London is equal to 85,000 tons, and that, of course, is quite

adequate to keep the normal flow of the trade of the country going. On February 28—that is, last week, in spite of the bonded stores being full, there were 50,000 tons, representing one million chests of tea, waiting bonding accommodation or immediately due to arrive; they were either alongside or in the dock or in the river, waiting to be taken in, or practically in sight, known to be arriving. I say the same about this as I said about wool. There was a meeting of all the interests—

Q. Before you go on to that just tell me how and where do you store that 50,000 tons which you cannot put in bond in the meantime?—(A.) We do not store it.

Q. What happens?—(A.) It remains in the ships or on the quay-side.

Q. Does that interfere with your berthing accommodation?—(A.) We allow other ships to come alongside, but we take good care we do not have many alongside unless we are going to deal with them. They have to wait in the river.

Q. All that are in or expected to soon arrive in the river?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. And you are unable to get clearance of them?—(A.) Yes. We cannot put in until we let out. The contents capacity is so much.

Q. I do not know whether you know, but I do not suppose you would be within the letter of the law if you attempted to land any of these goods except in bond?—(A.) We could not touch them. The Customs have their hand over the whole situation; they are bonded goods.

Q. That is what I thought?—(A.) I was going first of all to tell you about the warning that had been given to the Government as to what would happen. There was a great meeting of all the trade interests called, not by the trade, but by the Government, to consult with them—I am not quite certain whether the trade went to the Government or whether the Government called the meeting; perhaps I am on safer ground if I say the trade made its representation. It warned the Government what would happen if tea was allowed to continue to arrive in this form. There it is. Last week there was an important departure made to endeavour to relieve this congestion, and it has relieved it, but rather more to the eye than to the actual relief of congestion. This is what has happened. Last week they diverted eight vessels from the London river, containing 16,400 tons of tea, to out-ports such as Plymouth, Leith, Glasgow, and Greenock. I say that is to the eye. I am quite certain that 75 per cent. of the tea will have to come back to London, or it will come back by rail.

Q. It will probably come back by rail?—(A.) It will come back by rail. It is owned in London; it will be sold in the Mincing Lane commercial sales; it will be manipulated and blended in London, and re-distributed in London. So to the eye you have got rid of eight vessels out of the Port of London. You go along and say "That is better." It is worse. You have not got rid of the tea, and with all the shortage of trucks by this distribution to out-ports, whereas we want the trucks to go away to relieve the congestion, we shall have all this tea coming back. We still have 6 vessels with 160,000 packages waiting discharge in spite of the clearing away of these others, and there will be plenty more arriving. I think. Now, my Lord, that is as regards the present. If you will allow me to give you a figure as to what is to happen, we are in a constant state of congestion; as fast as we get rid of one congestion the Government makes quite sure we shall have another, and never leave us free of congestion. If we unshackle ourselves they tie

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us up again at the earliest opportunity. Let me tell you what is going to happen.

Q. Before you come on to that, Lord Devonport, permit me to ask you this. What is the effect with regard to those vessels; is there demurrage charged on them?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. Because you mentioned a large figure of £500 a day for one of them?—(A.) Yes. I said I was informed as to that, but the shipowner would be able to give you the accurate information. The gentleman is sitting very near to you, and will answer that in a sentence.

Q. We are supposed to know nothing but what we are told. There is something greater than the demurrage; it is the loss of the carrying power, the loss of bottom?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. That is an absolutely dead loss to the country?—(A.) Certainly. It keeps freights up. The way to get freights down is to have a superabundance of shipping. If you discount the mobility of the ship, well, of course, there is a scarcity of tonnage, and the rates are maintained.

Q. That affects the docks?—(A.) That affects the docks, and it affects the price of commodities. I was only going to say on this point that they will never let us get free, and if we get free we will be tied up again.

Q. I forgot to ask you this. Is it a seasonal trade in the same way as wool?—(A.) Yes. It varies. The Colombo season is not quite the same season as the Calcutta season; in fact, the Ceylon season goes on more or less all the year round. The Calcutta pickings go on for a certain period of the year, and then they nearly stop. We have had a letter just the other day from the Ministry of Food, I think it is. We are asked to kindly accommodate 50,000 tons of sugar next month, and at a moment, I was going to say, when we have not room to swing a cat with regard to accommodation. Perhaps that is not the best way to put it. We are asked that when we are full—50,000 tons of sugar next month. Now we fail to see why this sugar should not be distributed month by month, so that it can be dealt with. If they attempt to put 50,000 tons into London I think we shall have to lock and bar the doors of the port: it will be impossible to carry on. Generally, in support of that, I may say this. The Port Authority to-day are storing over 800,000 tons of goods against the pre-war normal stock of 450,000 tons. That is the Port of London Authority. In addition to that probably, in the port, the wharfingers would be holding 500,000 tons more. The reason that we are able to meet this extraordinary increase of tonnage is only because the Port Authority has increased its storage accommodation during the war period by 350,000 tons. We have created 350,000 tons of increased storage accommodation during the war. I hope I may re-emphasise that point about the meat. It probably applies to the other things. One of the surest ways to relieve congestion is to increase consumption. The goods, instead of being held up for high prices, should be put on the market, and let the Government face the loss. They have made a huge profit out of meat all the way through, and at the present moment they should throw the meat on the market and let it fetch what it would. They would even then get their money back, because all this is bought on contracts established on a very low basis at the beginning of the war.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You have given illustrations of the difficulty of the Port of London to-day. Is London almost unique as compared with other ports in respect of it being a warehouse port?—(A.) Yes, it is the storage port. It is the great entrepot port of the world.

Q. So London stands apart from the other ports of the country in being a storage port and the great centre of the entrepot trade?—(A.) Certainly. It is not merely a collecting port for distribution throughout the United Kingdom, but it is essentially an entrepot port for redistribution throughout Europe and America. Any amount of things come to London that go back to America and all other parts of the world. I have a figure here on the entrepot trade which may interest you, my Lord.

Q. I would like you to explain very shortly what the nature of the entrepot trade is, and then give my Lord a figure to represent its magnitude in London?—(A.) The nature of the entrepot trade is simply this, that goods are consigned to London from all the ends of the earth for sale, which are bought, in addition to the home demand, by outside people. Take wool. In pre-war days, when the wool sales were held in London, there would be buyers from America, buyers from Germany, and all parts of the Continent, and in the end all the wool would be redistributed from London to those various outside countries. That applies to tea. It applies not so largely to coffee, because the Continental people have the better share of the coffee trade, but to a multiplicity of things.

Q. Is London in sharp competition, so far as that trade is concerned, with Continental ports?—(A.) Of course, before the war we were engaged in a daily struggle with those Continental ports like Hamburg, Antwerp and Rotterdam for the entrepot trade. Those were the three chief ports competing with us for the entrepot trade.

Q. Is it very vital, Lord Devonport, that nothing should be done to prejudice the entrepot trade of London, and so assist in its diversion to those Continental ports?—(A.) If we cannot hold our own in competition, owing to what I think you are suggesting—wages, conditions, or something of that kind—we should lose this valuable entrepot trade, and it is a very, very big thing. In pre-war days our entrepot trade was worth nearly £130,000,000 a year. That was based on values. In the immediate future, owing to increase in value, I estimate that our entrepot trade will be £300,000,000 to £400,000,000 a year. That comes from the enhanced value. At any rate take the pre-war figure. The entrepot trade represented 30 per cent. of the total import and export trade of the Port of London.

Q. A suggestion was made by Mr. Bevin that the congestion which exists should be remedied by inland storage. That suggestion has been put forward many times, has it not?—(A.) I have heard of it being put forward by Mr. Bevin during this inquiry. I hope, in face of what I have said about this inland distribution, that he will reconsider his position in relation to it. I am perfectly certain, if it is intended as regards the Port of London to transmit the things, instead of coming into London, to interior points, that it will first of all be disastrous, assuming that it would be permitted—I mean permitted by the traders interested in the goods. They are the governing factors: it cannot be the mere will of a Government Department saying: Do this and do that. The trader will not let you do that. Not only that, but the finance is in London. That is why London is the great magnet for all these goods. You can finance goods from the other end of the earth—I was almost going to say in the wilderness—on London. You can hypothecate your documents and get your money as soon as you have got your bill of lading for the goods to go on the ship. That is on London. In addition to that, when your goods get to London under normal circumstances you can be quite sure there is storage accommodation; you can be

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quite certain that there are experts to deal with the goods. It does not matter what it is—ivory, any of those funny commodities that those of us who know the docks learn the names of—always experts in London for all those things. Now to distribute this thing promiscuously—I will not say promiscuously, but to adopt Mr. Bevin's suggestion, my goodness, there would be chaos! My point is that the trader will not let you do it. He is the owner of the goods. You cannot do what you like with the trader. If you take his goods to another port, if you set up that autocracy, you will not see the goods at all: Hamburg and Antwerp will have them. It would be impossible.

Q. I think the Port of London Authority welcome the opportunity of this Court of Inquiry to put all these matters you have been speaking of before the Court and, through the Court, to the public?—(A.) Oh, yes. We have confidence in our justice and in our treatment of labour, and we thought the best way would be to support this inquiry, so that each side could make its case, and we shall see at the end of it where we stand. We have not avoided this inquiry; we welcome it.

Q. For the first time in the history of the dock industry all these matters are being brought forward to the light of day?—(A.) So it appears.

Q. And you welcome that process?—(A.) I have no disinclination against it.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. Lord Devonport, the first point I want to put to you is the statement made in the early part of your evidence regarding your willingness to deal with the Trade Unions and to negotiate. I think my first association with the Port of London Authority, you will remember, was in 1915, when the first war bonus was asked for. Did you at that time write us a letter offering 3s. per week, which was a similar bonus to that granted to the railway men?—(A.) I daresay we did. Do you mean myself personally? The secretary might.

Q. I mean the Port of London Authority?—(A.) It is quite likely.

Q. Do you remember that the Union regarded that advance as inadequate?—(A.) I think that is quite likely.

Q. Did we offer to submit the matter to arbitration?—(A.) I daresay you did.

Q. And did the Port of London refuse, and say they had nothing further to add?—(A.) I think it is quite likely.

Q. The whole *correspondence is here, which I am willing to hand in to his Lordship after you have looked at it, Sir Lynden. If in the middle, or at least in the tense period, of the war, and after a Government request for all of us who were leaders of labour to avoid disputes, we offer arbitration when we think and the men think that the amount you have offered is not adequate, do you think that the refusal to arbitrate under these conditions is conducive to creating an opinion that you are friendly towards labour?—(A.) I have not the details in front of me to which you are referring, although I have a general recollection of many of the interviews that took place between us on this question of bonus. I presume at that time we thought that 3s. advance was sufficient to cover the enhancement in the cost of living. The negotiations were on that basis, were they not?

Q. Yes, but at that time, Lord Devonport, I want to call your attention to the "Board of Trade Gazette" showing an advance of 23 per cent. You replied to us, giving us 9.52 per cent., or 6d. a day, and when we called your attention to this, and offered arbitration, you declined

arbitration as the Port of London Authority?—(A.) You are referring to 1915, are you?

Q. February, 1915?—(A.) Yes, I think that was the first time you came about war bonus, was not it?

Q. That is so?—(A.) We declined arbitration, I understand you to say?

Q. That is so?—(A.) Well, we did.

Q. I want to ask you whether you think it is conducive to creating a feeling in the workpeople that their case was being fairly dealt with when an authority makes themselves the sole arbiter of what shall be given?—(A.) I am afraid it is a difficult thing to lay down as a principle that every variation of opinion shall be referred to somebody else. We generally manage to work it out among ourselves, the employers on the one hand and the workmen on the other.

Q. In view of that, we did under the 44-hour week, I admit, work it in the manner you suggested; but supposing we were in that position where, with the best will in the world, we could not agree, and both of us were convinced that a strike, as it would have been in 1915, would have been a menace to the country, if one side was willing to go to arbitration, do not you think it would, under the circumstances, have got rid of a good deal of feeling in London if consent to arbitration had been given?—(A.) I daresay it might, looking back to 1915.

Q. I want to lead you on to Mr. Williams' application. You say when we get to the period of the 11th of February, 1918, your objection was that we brought the Government in?—(A.) That was one of my objections, yes.

Q. Will you read the letter of the 11th of February, and see what we asked the Government to do? This is the letter sent by Mr. Robert Williams to Sir George Askwith, now Lord Askwith, who was then Chief Industrial Commissioner:—"Dear Sir George,—I am sending a copy of a letter which I am addressing to all the employers dealing with general cargo work in Great Britain. I shall forward you later a list of such employers, and shall be glad to have the co-operation of your department in calling a conference of the employers and the unions concerned, with a view to arriving at a national agreement to cover this class of work." Now, Lord Devonport, was it not a fact that the Government had appealed to the Trade Unions over and over again to resort to such methods as would deal with war advances on a general basis to avoid sporadic outbursts?—(A.) I am not aware of that. What I am aware of is this, that the Government had laid it down time and again that in the case of any matter between employer and employed the first thing was to get the parties together on their own basis of negotiation, not for the Government to intervene.

Q. But is not that what Mr. Robert Williams asked the Government to do, to be the mere Post Office, as it were, for calling the parties together, in order to get a basis of negotiation?—(A.) Oh, yes, that is what we took the strongest exception to. We take the strongest exception to the Government interfering with labour matters in the initial stage prior to negotiations being carried out between the parties. If the parties disagree, then by all manner of means let the Government come in, through its department, its Ministry of Labour, and endeavour to harmonise or adjust matters.

Q. But, Lord Devonport, you have just admitted that our experience in 1915 was unfortunate in that direction?—(A.) No, I have not admitted that.

Q. Did not you say that when the Union offered arbitration you refused?—(A.) Quite.

* Not printed.

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Q. Would it be encouraging to the Unions to have again gone to you and suggested some method of arbitration at a period when we had once been refused, we thought, on principle?—(A.) We refused you on what we deemed to be the facts of the case. You came again later on, and you got an additional bonus, and you came again later on and you got a further bonus; and you came again and you got a further bonus.

Q. And now we are after another?—(A.) We had hardly got into the stride of these bonuses in 1915. We got quite used to them as time progressed.

Q. But we could not get used to them as fast as the prices were advancing?—(A.) That is the point of difference between us. We say, yes, that you were fast enough. You say no. We had our figures and facts and you had yours. We thought yours were rather elaborated; we thought ours were very authentic, and we preferred ours to yours.

Q. But, in view of the fact that we took the Board of Trade figures, they were not my facts, were they? I think you used to be Parliamentary Secretary to that Department?—(A.) I think I remember a wonderful budget which you produced in those days which was not a Board of Trade budget.

Q. And it was not a Professor Bowley one?—(A.) No, it was not.

Q. You quite realise that all the Federation did was to try and get these negotiators together; the only point of Government intervention was the calling of the conference?—(A.) Well, yes, that was it. This is the view we take of it. You had first of all got the Government behind you.

Q. No.—(A.) This is the view we take of it. You had got the Government behind you. You go to the Government and sweeten them in your interests. That is what we felt. Mr. Robert Williams' letter of Feb. 11 laid it down that he was going to approach the Government. I really conclude, from what subsequently transpired, that he had already got the Government in hand before he let himself in for this. That is what we objected to and shall always object to. We tell the Government to leave us to settle our disputes, and if we fail then bring whatever machinery they like into play. We are not going to have the Government running our labour affairs; we are going to resist it vehemently at all times.

Q. This resistance, when two people take different views, is likely to lead to considerable misunderstanding, is not it?—(A.) It has never led to very much misunderstanding. Your people, if I may say so, are too clever to allow misunderstandings on fine issues to spring up. You always get to us, and we are always very pleased to see you.

Q. Coming to the 1911 period. In the statement that I made I said there had to be a strike in 1911 to get 1d. an hour. Is not that correct—that there had to be a strike to get a very large proportion of employers (I was dealing with the Port of London, not the P.L.A.; I did not mention the P.L.A. in that paragraph) to pay 1d. an hour, to be paid by the shipowners, wharfingers, and other people in the Port of London at that period?—(A.) No.

Q. Was not the agreement dated after the strike? What was the strike for?—(A.) Are you referring to the 1911 strike?

Q. Yes.—(A.) There was no strike prior to the signing of the agreement.

Q. But there was a strike prior to signing the

agreement with the shipowners, was not there?—(A.) No.

Q. Let us just see. What do you say the date of the strike was?—(A.) 27th of July, 1911, was the date of the Devonport agreement.

Q. What was the date of the strike in 1911?—(A.) Four days afterwards, the 31st.

Q. It gives it the reverse way here in my authority, anyhow?

The CHAIRMAN: One cannot be always right.

Mr. BEVIN: I have quoted from the authority who ran the strike.

The CHAIRMAN: After all, it is not of very vital importance.

Mr. BEVIN: No. (*To the Witness.*) With regard to the point of the Coal Commission, the quotation that I made in the Court was where you gave an answer with regard to the appointment of half the members appointed by the Transport Workers, and the other half appointed by the employers. You said, I think, "I should not be a participator in that sort of management."—(A.) Yes.

Q. Now I want to put it to you; in the constitution of the Port of London Authority do these trading interests appoint their representatives on your Authority direct?—(A.) No, they are elected, save and except the wharfingers.

Q. That is elected by the traders?—(A.) They are elected on a general register, which is based on the payment of £10 worth of dues.

Q. But the franchise is limited to the trading interest that is appointing the person or electing the person?—(A.) Certainly. If you mean that those entitled to be on the register only get there by paying dues, I say yes, you are right.

Q. Is it your opinion that the investment of capital or the trading interest is greater than what one would describe as the human investment in a great port like London?—(A.) We carry on a great national enterprise. It is based upon some capital. If there were not the capital there would be no docks, there would be no dredging of the river, there would be no warehouses, cranes, equipment and facilities. We are bound to carry on that undertaking with some regard, at all events, to the interests represented by that capital, but, beyond that, the interests of the community at large, all of whom are interested in the goods which pass to and from our port and in the method by which they are handled, stored and distributed, and so on.

Q. Is not that great human interest invested in the docks of people who have to get their living, at least equal to all the sunk capital?—(A.) Of course, I know what you mean by the human interest, and I have the greatest sympathy, I hope, with it even from your point of view. You are referring, of course, to the labour and those dependent upon it. They are closely associated in the interests and welfare of the port; nobody denies that.

Q. Do you think that they should at least have equal representation with the others?—(A.) Now you have come deliberately to the question of representation.

Q. Yes.—(A.) I will meet you on that. When you talk about equal representation of that human element, you mean that 50 per cent. of the representation should be labour. That is what you mean.

Q. Fifty per cent. of the representation.

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should directly represent labour; that is to say, if the other 50 per cent. directly represents capital.—(A.) I quite understand that. That was the hypothetical question put to me before the Coal Commission. It is no question of the representation of the Port of London. That was not raised. That is fixed by statute, and if it is going to be altered, it will be altered by the same body which passed the statute, that is Parliament. That was not put to me at all. The hypothetical question was put to me as to whether I had read the Bill of the Miners' Federation (I think) for the nationalisation of the mines, and I said no. Then I was told what the Bill contained: Half miners' representatives—half the Miners' Federation representatives—and the other half the coal owners with a Minister of the Crown as Chairman responsible to Parliament. That was the fanciful hypothesis submitted to me for consideration and criticism. What did I say?

Q. You said you would not be there.—(A.) I do not think I should be there. Why should I be there?

Q. I think we are both agreed.—(A.) There would not be room for me in that organisation, I assure you.

Q. I would like to follow that up. Let me apply it to the Port of London Authority. You do not assume, do you, that representatives of labour would be inferior in capacity for management to, say, these representatives of capital?—(A.) It depends. I am not going to suggest for a single moment that among the great vast community that we call labour there are not brains of superior and supreme quality; of course there are; and I am not going to assume, and never have assumed, that among what you call the capital class there is a high grade of quality of brains below which none of it falls. I am not so stupid as to suggest that. But if you ask me to subscribe to the doctrine that if you get labour representation running these things they will run them much better than the present representatives, I say that it depends upon the class of man; but I take the liberty of doubting it. I have an experience of labour representation on the Port Authority. We have had four labour representatives, if I may say so, through our hands. I do not want to say anything that appears to be fulsome. We all know Mr. Gosling; we have had Mr. Anderson, and we have had Mr. Orbell, both dead, and we have got the Mayor of Poplar, Mr. Devenay.

Q. You must be careful; it is West Ham.—(A.) If you press me on the point, if you ask me whether or not three of those men out of the four would make splendid managers of the Port Authority's interests, I join issue with you and say that I do not agree. Among the mercantile class, among the capital class on our representation—and this is only my opinion; you have given me yours, and I am giving you mine—among the trading or the capital representation on our Authority, I think man for man I would pick three better men than your labour representatives.

Q. That is just an opinion.—(A.) Quite an opinion.

Q. I am equally of opinion that I think I could pick a much better chairman than the P.L.A. has got.—(A.) I doubt it.

Mr. BEVIN: It is purely a matter of opinion, mark you.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, the noble witness

and yourself are now, I think, just about quits; we may rise for lunch.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Mr. BEVIN: There was another answer given at the Coal Commission which I was coming to before the adjournment, in which these words appear: "I think labour representation has not been detrimental to us: it has its advantages. I do not know whether I shall offend anyone if I say they are always looking out for themselves and the interest they represent, though I do not think it has been detrimental." Now must we take it from you that the representatives of labour with whom you have been associated on the Port of London Authority have had an absolute disregard for the public interest and the development of the port, and have been looking out purely for themselves and the workmen whom they represent?—(A.) No. What I conveyed, I thought, quite clearly, was that the main activities of the labour representation on the Port Authority were in the direction of looking after labour interests; and that is true. The main part of their activities are devoted to the interests of labour.

Q. But you suggest that they are looking after themselves?—(A.) I suggest in that paragraph that they are looking after labour.

Q. I suggest to you, reading it as it there appears in your answer, that assuming it were not your answer but somebody else's answer, and you were looking at that reply, it would appear that the labour representatives had been mainly concerned with themselves and just the people they represent. Is not that the natural inference to draw from your reply?—(A.) If I may refer to it, and address myself for the moment to the Chairman, Lord Shaw would appear to take that view of my answer.

The CHAIRMAN: I am going to explain that when it comes to my turn?—(A.) You referred in rather strong terms to my answer.

Q. Yes, I referred to it as the head of this Court, knowing that you would be here; and your remark that it was in your absence is entirely uncalled for. You acknowledge that it was entirely uncalled for?—(A.) My remark?

Q. Your remark that it was made in your absence. I made it as the head of the Court at an appropriate time, knowing that you would be here, and I ask you now to say that you did not mean anything derogatory to this Court?—(A.) That is what I have an opportunity of saying.

Q. I shall ask you at the proper time, and in my own way, the one question, and one alone, which remains upon that unhappy incident; but in the meantime you are answering Mr. Bevin?—(A.) Quite so.

Mr. BEVIN (to the Witness): Now I have finished with the Coal Commission Report, and I want to come to the clause in the Act dealing with casual labour, to which your attention was called by Counsel: You became an authority in power in 1909, and Mr. Justice Roche's Committee was set up in 1919. That is so, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So between the time when the Port of London Authority came into being with that express direction of Parliament and powers to deal with it, was there any real step taken to grapple with casual labour between 1909 and the setting up of Mr. Justice Roche's Committee in 1919?—(A.) Indeed there was.

Q. Would you mind telling me what they were?

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—(A.) Yes, I will. You had evidence put before you in detail, backed up by figures, to show that between 1909 and the strike era which began in 1911 and extended into 1912, prior to that era casual labour had been reduced in the port down to 2 per cent., and that the growth of it proceeded from the breaching of contracts on the part of numerous men in the Port Authority employment who, in consequence of breaching the contract by striking, lost their position as permanent men and became casual; and then a large growth, of course, proceeded from the war. At the present time we have 11,000 men: I do not know at this moment what percentage of those 11,000 men are casual, but it is probably large. In reply specifically to the question as to whether we took any steps, I say we took steps that were most successful: we very nearly reduced the casual labour to zero.

Q. That was in the Port of London employ?—
(A.) That was in the Port of London employ.

Q. But the Act expressly says that you may associate with other employers. I am dealing with the whole area of London. Mr. Justice Roche's Committee dealt with the whole area of London, and not with the Port of London Authority as such: he limited it. I am asking whether there was any real attempt by the whole employers of London, in co-operation, to grapple with this problem between 1909 and Mr. Justice Roche's Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you answer that I think it right to call Mr. Bevin's attention to the language of the Statute under which you alone were acting, because it may have slipped your mind, but it is a very important fact to which my attention has just been called, and it is my duty, as the head of the Court, to call attention to it. You will forgive me, Mr. Bevin, but I think the Witness is entitled to have me interpose about this. (*To the Witness.*) In Section 28, Sub-section (1), the Port Authority, of which you are the Chairman, was empowered to take into consideration existing methods and conditions of engagement, and so on; but there is a proviso to that to the following effect: "Provided that nothing in this Section shall deprive any person of any legal right which he would otherwise possess with regard to the engagement of labour." That, as it were, divorces in law the other employers from your statutory supervision or interposition. I think it is right to bring that out.—(A.) Yes. I may say this: that is so, and we always appreciated that point; but it has never prevented us from being in close touch and accord with the whole of the employers of the port. They have always looked to us, the Port Authority; as—I do not quite know how to express it, but I will say—the heavy father of the port, and have always come to us. Whatever there was going in the way of question or dispute, they have foregathered and asked us to call them together.

Q. Excuse my intervening: it was only to avoid any unnecessary friction between you.—(A.) I am much obliged to you, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: During that period is it not a fact that the Union on several occasions did make an effort to try to get employers to agree to central call places with a view of effecting improvements in the engagement of labour in the Port of London?—(A.) My reply to that does not support your contention. What your interests tried to do for many years was to establish calling-on places outside the docks, and that was resisted; and I think in 1911 the shipowners, under pressure I take it—nothing to do with us—conceded partially that point of calling-on. But at the end of the 1912 strike we were so impressed with the necessity of

having those calling-on places within our own jurisdiction that we insisted on what happened in 1911 being cancelled, and reverting to the former and ancient practice.

Q. Why?—(A.) It was no attempt on your part to provide what you describe as improved places; it was quite the contrary. It was an attempt on the part of the labour interest to set up calling-on places outside our jurisdiction, and we resisted it.

Q. Why?—(A.) Because we thought it was beneficial to the working of our undertaking that we should not submit to your desire to have those calling-on places without our jurisdiction.

Q. For the purpose of trying to keep the Union from achieving that strength of organisation that they would get, I presume, if the calling-on places were at central spots.—(A.) I should put it the other way, that it was your endeavour; that is what you were trying to do, and we resisted it.

Q. Then you have tried to resist the strengthening of the organisation of the Union?—(A.) I have never admitted that that would be a strengthening of the organisation. I deny it.

Q. If you insisted in 1912 on having the calling-on places within your jurisdiction and where you thought by their regulations the Union would have little or no influence, or could not approach the men owing to other regulations and powers, is it not a natural inference to draw that that imposition was made to keep the Union weak?—(A.) No, we had never interfered with the Union at all; we have had nothing whatever to do with any interference with the Union. What we resisted was the Union attempting to impose upon us calling-on places without our jurisdiction. The thing began and ended there. You had plenty of influence within: you had whatever you liked: you had free play with your Union within, and you never raised the slightest objection. The only thing we did stop was your attempt to impose your unionism in the form of a ticket on every man employed. We said we would not have that. We never troubled to find out whether a man was a unionist or not: we did not care: it was outside our purview altogether. But when you attempted, as you did in 1912, to impose on the men that every man should be a unionist, we resisted it.

Q. I think that is a correct answer; and by that it was intended that the Union should not achieve the economic strength which it would otherwise get.—(A.) Here, again, we have a difference of view: you assert that, and I assert the contrary.

Q. Do you suggest, as a business man, that that is not a policy that you have adopted all through your career in your own business?—(A.) What policy?

Q. The policy of resisting trade unionism.—
(A.) I could not tell you.

Q. You are connected with the International Tea Stores, are you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I believe you possess something like 185,000 shares.—(A.) Many more.

Q. 285,000 shares?—(A.) Yes, more than that perhaps.

Q. There was an attempt to organise the employees of that undertaking of Kearley and Tonge in 1918?—(A.) I could not tell you. I have not been near that business since 1905.

Q. But the same policy which was followed in 1905 by yourself is apparently being carried on now?—(A.) I could not tell you.

Q. During that period, in the whole history of that firm there has been a resistance to trade unionism?—(A.) I could not tell you.

Q. Was not the reason of the men's endeavour to get control by means of the Union ticket, to

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secure the stopping of the great influx of strangers to the dock to be taken on at will?—(A.) I dare say that might have been your object.

Q. Not mine, the men's. If that were so, was it not a voluntary attempt on the part of the men to protect their employment against extreme casualty?—(A.) As to the percentage of men who were unionists in the Port Authority, as far as I knew from the figures and data that we had available, I think you only had about 30 per cent. of the Union men in the whole of the dock employment at that time.

Q. Your figures and ours do not tally. If there is a registration scheme for London will there not have to be, for working, proper call places arranged?—(A.) I should think so.

Q. And centralised to a very great extent?—(A.) Yes, properly organised and distributed.

Q. You suggest that the Union officials have free access to the docks and complete liberty to do our Union work?—(A.) I think so, yes.

Q. Are you aware that in 1913 and 1914 it was a common occurrence for your dock policemen to order our paid delegates off the dock?—(A.) No, I am not aware of that.

Q. I want to come to the question of the application. You have said that the available supplies of foods and wool for clothing in the country are enormous?—(A.) I have given the benefit of certain statistical information which I thought might be of advantage to the Court.

Q. Professor Bowley, whom you have read about, drew up a Budget which gave to the men in London, on a mere basis of subsistence, £3 17s. per week. You have seen that budget, I presume?—(A.) I do not think I have studied it.

Q. He said in his evidence that if the men had more money or more purchasing power the food or the materials were not available to purchase at this juncture. You would not agree with that conclusion, would you?—(A.) I do not know. He was speaking from information which he possessed. I am not going to dispute what he said.

Q. But my point is this, that if the prices went down or the wages went up and so increased consumption, there are in the country at this juncture available food supplies to satisfy that consumption, in your opinion, from the figures which you gave this morning?—(A.) With regard to the commodities to which I have referred, certainly. As to meat, there is a superabundance of meat, enough to give you all the meat you want to eat at about 6d. a lb. retail.

Q. But Professor Bowley called our attention to the fact that he had allowed for a heavy meat budget, and did not allow more meat because the meat apparently, in his opinion, was not available. I am just calling attention to the fact that the two opinions conflict.—(A.) Yes.

Q. Having regard to the prices at the moment, do you think that the wages of £4 8s. per week are too high as a standard?—(A.) I think the wages that are at present current should, if necessary, be adjusted to the food situation; as they have been adjusted from time to time during the war.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a perfectly fair answer.—(A.) That is my answer.

Mr. BEVIN: The wages of 6d. per hour in London were fixed in 1889?—(A.) I take it from you.

Q. By the Mansion House agreement?—(A.) Yes, I think that is common knowledge.

Q. Seven pence per hour was fixed as a base wage in 1911?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you think, having regard to the progress of civilisation and the result of education and the growing aspirations of the people, that it would

be right to limit the fixing of wages purely on the food situation at this juncture?—(A.) Probably not. I have never asserted it.

Q. I am only asking your opinion; I am not suggesting that you asserted it. I am trying to get your view.—(A.) Now you have my view.

Q. Then in the considerations before the Court it is necessary not only to take into consideration the altered food situation, but what I have described as the cultural development?—(A.) I assume that in the most recent negotiation and agreement which has taken place between the State and the railway workers those were the very considerations which were impressed upon the Government and were considered in the agreement which was arrived at. I think that is a fair basis. It was established quite recently, and I wish for nothing better than that, and nothing worse.

Q. I am glad you wish for nothing worse, because I think that is about as bad as it can be.—(A.) I do not know.

Q. But in arriving at agreements, if one side or the other is met with force, can those agreements be regarded afterwards as satisfactory?—(A.) Met by force?

Q. Yes.—(A.) You are speaking from the point of view—

Q. General policy.—(A.) I think as between individuals—as between the transport workers and the Port Authority—of course we have been met by force.

Q. You can take that as an illustration.—(A.) That is the only case I am familiar with. We have been met by force repeatedly. You brought about strikes without any justification, as events have proved. You brought about the 1911 strike, and your case broke down; you brought about the 1912 strike, and again your case broke down. If there is any question of force, that is between your side and our side, I say you have imposed the force on us; we have never imposed it on you.

Q. Did our case break down because of the equity of the case, or because of the wearing out of physical endurance?—(A.) I cannot tell you. If you appeal to force you must stand by the results that force renders. You win at times and you lose at times, of course.

Q. But in the railway settlement with the State which you have referred to as the ideal settlement; is it within your knowledge that it was stated by the men's leaders that it was a choice between accepting that in the final issue and another national strike?—(A.) That, of course, I do not know. I only know they struck, and then you got into negotiations, and everybody was very pleased that you arrived at an accommodation; and I naturally concluded that it would be a fair standard upon which to settle wages. I give you this point, as I mentioned just now: that wages should be adjusted to the cost of living, certainly. I believe that is provided for in the railway agreement, up and down according to circumstances, with a fixed minimum.

Q. That is known as the sliding scale?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you think it right and moral as a settlement that one class in the community should be segregated from all the other classes, and their life regulated by a sliding scale purely on food?—(A.) I take it that the Government having adjusted that basis as one of settlement with the railway Unions, first of all, it appears to the Government to be equitable; and, secondly, it appears to the railway Unions to be acceptable. I think after the arrangement was arrived at Mr. Thomas and other railway leaders proclaimed their satisfaction with it and thought it was a fair adjustment.

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Q. Was it not accepted under protest by the delegates?—(A.) I could not tell you. You know that better than I.

Q. Is it your opinion that what the Government does is always right?—(A.) Subject to variations.

Q. There is one other point I want to put to you, and it is this: Assuming the wages are fixed and the £4 8s. is the settlement, we have not reached the end of organisation and development, have we?—(A.) No.

Q. Then it would be possible, I presume, to pay the wages and then for industry to concentrate on its organisation to give effect to them, and not reduce the standard afterwards?—(A.) You put that to me in a rather complicated way. I would like it to be clearer and more definite.

Q. I do not intend to put it in an involved way, I assure you. Assuming wages were fixed at the £4 8s. for which we are asking, and that food went down—that costs went down—then, not having reached the end of organisation and production—development—it would be possible, having regard to future developments, to pay those wages, and then by that means automatically, if I may put it in that way, increase the standard of life?—(A.) Let me translate that into my own language to see whether I follow you. What you put to me is this: That, having established the new standard of wages—we will say what you are asking for, 88s. per week—in the event of the price of commodities falling you ask me whether, notwithstanding the fall, and notwithstanding the consequences of the increase in purchasing power and money, it would not be sound policy for your wages to stand firm. Is that what you put to me?

Q. That is so.—(A.) I say no.

Q. For what reason?—(A.) For reasons that are obvious.

Q. Not to my dull mind, if you are going to have development. Having regard to the development which you admit will go on in organisation, and improvements and so on, it does not appear to my dull mind to be obvious that wages cannot be paid on a higher standard, having regard to that improvement which development will bring?—(A.) Of course, the whole thing, I take it, is dependent upon the economic situation. You ask me in general terms whether I would like to see a happy state existing in the future of labour being better remunerated so that it could have a better share in, I do not say the good things of this life, but the things which make life tolerable. I say certainly it should; that would be my great desire; but unfortunately—and this may not be palatable to you, but it is the fact—you have got to adjust your wages according to the economic situation. For instance, supposing you were to establish a range of wages in England which prevented England competing in your world trade, I suppose you would contend that they should be maintained. The economic situation would not allow the thing to be maintained. I know that in saying this I am submitting myself to the retort that I am arguing that it does not matter what wages are, never mind whether they go down till they will not buy what is necessary to keep life alive; that is necessary to be submitted to, to meet the economic situation. I am not arguing that; but wages in the past have been adjusted, in the present are adjusted, and in the future will have to be adjusted to the economic situation; but they will always have to be a living wage and something beyond that; and that is where we have got to now, and I am very glad that we have.

Q. Do you suggest, having regard to the existing situation, that the wage in London at the moment is a living wage?—(A.) I should think so, subject to the adjustment which I mentioned; perhaps I will qualify it; because it is perfectly obvious to all of us that there has been an enhancement of the cost of living lately, mainly for reasons to which I have referred—the bad handling of commodities; and that must be met and adjusted. As between employer and workman that has got to be adjusted.

Q. I want to turn now to the minimum wage. We have suggested a 16s. minimum; leave the figure out for the moment; it does not matter what the figure is. At present the Port of London rate and the Liverpool rate on the minimum is the same; I think we are agreed about that?—(A.) I think it is so, yes.

Q. Is there any reason why those two rates should not be the same in the future, whatever figure they are put up to?—(A.) I see what you are coming to; you are coming to a standardisation throughout all the ports. That is what you are after.

Q. Yes.—(A.) And you would like my answer to that?

Q. I certainly want it?—(A.) You approach me subtly. That is the question before this Commission. You want a national standard rate to apply to every port uniformly?

Q. A national standard minimum?—(A.) Well, a national standard minimum; that is right. I stand corrected, and properly so. We object to it, but still we have views as to how the matter can be accommodated. We say that there should be a grouping of these ports—you are familiar with this; it has been stated to you over and over again—and that a rate should be established per group. As to what it will be and as to what the variation will be between the Port of London and the Port of Plymouth remains to be seen. My reply to your dexterous question, indirectly put, is that we are against your uniform minimum standard to be of a uniform value and denomination in each and every port of the kingdom.

Q. I have had no grouping of ports submitted to me other than by inference. What ports do you suggest should be grouped?—(A.) They should be grouped more or less geographically. Perhaps I ought not to go into such detail, but I will go on to this extent—

Q. I think the Court wants light. I have heard his Lordship say so. It may help.—(A.) I will give you the benefit, for instance, of an example: The Bristol Channel Ports seem a group; those ports round about Southampton seem another. I do not know what you would amalgamate with London; it stands more or less alone.

Q. And having regard to its position and importance, would probably be prepared to pay higher than other poor groups.—(A.) The circumstances would prove that. It would be subject to negotiation with you gentlemen.

Q. Really with regard to docks the traffic is largely mobile, is it not?—(A.) The labour?

Q. No; the ship becomes a factory, really?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And it is mobile?—(A.) It is mobile, certainly.

Q. You get the same class of ship into London that you do into Liverpool, Glasgow or Hull in some form or another?—(A.) No, you certainly do not. You get a different ship in different ports. For instance, Liverpool at the moment takes in ships which we could not take in although we are

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getting very nearly to that point; but some other ports cannot look at ships of the average size that come to London and Liverpool; they cannot look at them at all. That is just where we differ from you. You want to impose on the Port of Fowey, in Cornwall, the same minimum rate that you impose in London. You get a broken-down sort of ancient barque going to Fowey occasionally as against a magnificent passenger liner in Liverpool; and you want the same rate of pay.

Q. That just brings me to my point. At the moment Fowey is paying higher than London, and that is my trouble.—(A.) Well, what a mistake they are making! They cannot afford it.

Q. My trouble is that the little ports are paying higher than you big people; and I do not want to push them up so much as I want to push you up.—(A.) I see. I follow it.

Q. That is the point: I want to bring the big ports up to their proper status to pay. Sharpness, for instance, is paying a higher wage than the Port of London Authority.—(A.) What port is that?

Q. Sharpness in Gloucester.—(A.) I do not know where it is. I have never heard of it.

Q. The manager feels flattered that you have never heard of it. At any rate, you have heard of Plymouth.—(A.) Yes. I have heard of Plymouth.

Q. And Devonport. Therefore, you agree that these big ports ought to be at least equal with the little ports, or higher?—(A.) No, I said nothing of the kind.

Q. What were we to understand from your answer when you said that we want to make a little port like Fowey pay the same as London?—(A.) My point was this, that there should be a grouping of these ports according to their capacity, and so on. You tell me that Fowey is paying more than London. Very well; I take it from you. It is not my argument that we should all be based on Fowey. Fowey may be employing half-a-dozen workmen, perhaps, for a couple of months in the whole twelve months. Are we to be measured upon that standard if it turns out unhappily—it would be so for us, at all events—that they are paying much higher than we are paying in London? It is ridiculous.

Q. We are talking about the minimum.—(A.) We are.

Q. And we are talking about the minimum upon which a man has got to base his living. I want to put this to you. You have had great experience of multiple shops, have you not?—(A.) Some, yes.

Q. Is it not a fact that with the operation of the multiple shop, coupled in addition with food control and trustification of distribution, the standard of life is almost standardised now all over the country?—(A.) Very much to the benefit of the interests of the consumer.

Q. I am asking you whether it is a fact that that is so?—(A.) I should think so.

Q. If I have to pay the same for my commodities owing to that standardisation, which makes me pay the same in Plymouth, Liverpool, Glasgow, Hull, or London, why should not the minimum standard of subsistence be the same in each place?—(A.) It is for you to prove that it should be.

Q. You have just admitted that standardisation in food prices of commodities has gone on?—(A.) I have not admitted it.

Q. And is almost accomplished?—(A.) I have not admitted that. I do not think it is so. I do not think the prices are uniform in every place in the United Kingdom.

Q. Butter is higher at the farmhouse than it is in London; that is all.—(A.) I really could not tell you. I have no knowledge.

Q. I want to mention to you inland storage, which apparently you said would be ridiculous. Do you agree that inland storage provided for inland consumption, which would serve as a relief for the Docks, would be a good thing in the big areas?—(A.) I pointed out to you that prior to these exceptional circumstances arising out of mis-control and misdirection on the part of the authorities there never was such a thing as congestion in any of these ports. This is—what shall I say?—a disease created at the hands of the Government. If you get proper distribution of goods coming inwards and proper transport accommodation for distribution there will be no congestion. You are assuming that congestion is a chronic state. It is not a chronic state.

Q. But you have been Food Controller, have you not?—(A.) Yes, I had that honour.

Q. And there were difficulties then, were there not?—(A.) In what relation? There was no difficulty as regards congestion.

Q. But there were difficulties as to supplies of food in the great inland centres at one period?—(A.) Not during my period; but I am not claiming that that is attributable to me. The submarine intensification had not approached its climax, well, it had while I was Food Controller, but the full effect of it had not become felt until some time afterwards. We had no food difficulties at all.

The CHAIRMAN: How long did you hold that office?—(A.) Six months.

Q. What were the six months?—(A.) December, 1916, to June, 1917.

Mr. BEVIN: During that period, and subsequent periods, is it not a fact that the great inland centres were almost within an ace of exhaustion from the point of view of bulk supplies of food?—(A.) No, I do not think it was the fact. I think there were a few isolated cases. In fact, I could cite one case in my own experience, and that was in connection with the distribution of flour, or wheat. I think it was Leeds, and I am not sure that it was not Glasgow, too. There was a danger, or there was a threat that they were going to be short; but it was more in the nature of an alarm than an actuality, and we probed the situation immediately and took quick action just to adjust matters. Of course, afterwards, later on, when the food conditions became more difficult there was no doubt that upon occasion there were shortages at particular points, but it was not chronic. It was not chronic at all.

Q. Returning to London, sometimes the Port of London discharge ships, do they not?—(A.) Sometimes the Port of London discharge ships?

Q. Yes, the Port of London Authority?—(A.) Yes, I presume we do all the time, certainly.

Q. If the shipowner discharges a ship in London, the rate of pay is either 13s. 9d. or 14s. a day at the moment, if done by the shipowner or contractor?—(A.) Yes, there is a difference: there always has been, I think, since after the strike of 1889; the difference was established some little time after, and that has continued all the way through.

Q. Up to 1911, the difference was 1d. an hour, I believe, between the two sets of men?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

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Q. That difference by the operation of the different amounts given in war bonuses is now a difference between 11s. 8d. and 14s., I think?—(A.) 13s. 9d., I think, is the actual figure.

Q. The difference now is the difference between the rate of 11s. 8d. and 13s. 9d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Which, before the war, was approximately 1d. an hour?—(A.) Yes; well, I think it was 5s. 3d. as against 6s. 8d.

Q. 1s. 5d. a day; that has grown now to 3s. 1d. a day, has it not?—(A.) 2s. 1d.

Q. Do not you think it would make for mobility of labour and assist in decasualisation if those rates of pay on the lower grade were made level? Take the short sea, which is 12s. 8d. a day, I think, now ashore, and 11s. 8d. in the Port of London and the 13s. 4d.; if those rates could be grouped and made one rate, do not you think with regard to your sea classes and the casual labour it would materially assist in the mobility of labour?—(A.) I do not think it would assist that situation at all. I think these small differentials, as I think you have described them, and as they have been referred to in this Court, might very easily disappear, but as to whether the shipowners' rate and our rate could be deemed to be a small differential you must not take me to be admitting that. In all the negotiations which have taken place between yourself and ourselves we threshed out one by one these varying rates, and you have always agreed to them; so that at the moment these varying rates are the result of agreement. The Port Authority rate has been agreed with Mr. Bevin and his colleagues, the short sea traders have been agreed between Mr. Bevin and themselves, and the shipowners' rate has been agreed between the shipowners and your organisation.

Q. But when we hammered out those rates last April our terms of reference were limited to the effect of the shorter working day, and the shorter working day producing the same income as the longer working day, was not it?—(A.) Well, no, not strictly, but you really never confine yourself to terms of reference; you do not even confine yourself in this Court to the Terms of Reference. You have raised questions here which we agreed not to raise. I am delighted you have raised them. When you come to us you are not governed by terms of reference; you have a free riot over the whole situation. We try to adjust matters with you on a friendly basis.

Q. I wish I had.—(A.) You always have.

Q. I think you would soon have told me if I had. As a matter of fact, was not the Federation's view that the hours which were paid for at the day time rates, which in the case of the Port of London would have been 60 per week, should become the basis of the new wages for the 44 hours?—(A.) The hours were never 60.

Q. But you had the right to work the men 60 hours before you paid overtime prior to that settlement?—(A.) I cannot say; you must ask some of our experts about that. I really could not say.

Q. And we compromised it, I think, ultimately, on 52?—(A.) That is quite possible; anyway, we came to an agreement, and a very, very friendly and amicable agreement.

Q. Quite; and now we are trying to put these lower rates (I am not talking about the stevedores' rates)—we are trying to group these lower rates below the 13s. 4d. into one rate of 16s., and so wipe out those differentials. Do you think there will be any serious difficulty in that?—(A.) You are trying to put the lower rates on the standard of the higher rate; that is what you are trying for.

Q. I am trying to bring the 11s. 8d. (I am not trying to hide anything), the 12s. 8d., and the 13s. 4d. to 16s.—(A.) I know.

Q. And the 13s. 9d. and 14s. rate to be above the 16s.—(A.) Quite so.

Q. That is what I am trying to do.—(A.) That is what you are trying to do.

Q. Do not you think it would be a good thing?—(A.) We are threshing it out here. We are trying to get some atmosphere into the situation.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite a fair answer, Lord Devonport. We want the thing thoroughly threshed out on both sides.—(A.) That is what we are here for.

Q. And if you get a square deal, that is all you want?—(A.) It depends on the nature of the square deal.

Q. I am very simple about those things; I thought a square deal was the just thing?—(A.) Quite so, I agree; and it would be a square deal if it were just.

Q. By your answer, that it depends on the nature of the square deal, you mean that it depends on whether in your view it was a just thing or not?—(A.) I do not say yes to that; I do not respond to that.

Q. I understand that all those who are so powerfully represented and consolidated together have asked for this Inquiry in the hope of getting a square deal, without any comment as to its nature?—(A.) Without any comment as to its nature?

Q. Yes; you may be satisfied or you may not be satisfied, but it is justice you are out for, and not justice as in your own sight, but in the sight of the Court of Inquiry? (A.) It depends on whether the Court of Inquiry can come to a unanimous decision.

Q. And you would not be bound by the Court of Inquiry unless it was unanimous?—(A.) I did not say that.

Q. I am asking you?—(A.) I never suggested such a thing at all.

Q. I am asking you?—(A.) I say I do not suggest anything of the kind.

Q. What is it you suggest?—(A.) I suggest nothing at all.

Q. I am now going to ask you: if a just result, if a result based upon justice, is reached by this Court, do you feel, as representing the Port of London, that you are able to accept that, although your own view might be different?—(A.) My own view would not come into the equation at all.

Q. Then you would accept it?—(A.) I must wait and see what the thing is; I am not going to commit myself in advance to accept anything.

Q. That is to say, there you are, and there are we, labouring to get a square deal and a just result, and you tell us beforehand that you will wait and see before you even accept it?—(A.) I tell you nothing of the kind, my Lord.

Q. Is that what you mean?—(A.) I tell you nothing of the kind. I have said nothing approaching that. You ask me whether I am out for justice, and what you call a square deal.

Q. Yes.—(A.) "Square deal" is your word, it is not my word.

Q. I know.—(A.) I say, certainly.

Q. You did not say that; you said it depended on what it was?—(A.) Certainly, and of course it does.

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Q. It is not very encouraging to us.—(A.) Well, that is a matter of opinion.

Mr. ABADY: My Lord, may I ask some questions?

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Lynden Macassey has the right to re-examine.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My learned friend Mr. Abady wanted to ask your Lordship's permission, I understand, to put a question; I do not know what the question is.

Re-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. I want to put to you one or two questions about what you have been asked. First of all with regard to the permanent application of the principle of a minimum wage, the proposal is to fix a minimum wage based on the conditions as they exist to-day?—(A.) I assume that to be so.

Q. The conditions as they exist to-day are abnormal conditions?—(A.) That is so.

Q. So that the proposal is to fix a permanent minimum wage for the future on conditions which are admittedly abnormal to-day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If those conditions become less abnormal, objection is made to any reduction of wage on that account?—(A.) I understand that to be so.

Q. So that when the reason on which the increased wage is asked, namely, amongst other things, the present high cost of commodities, disappears, it is said that wages are still to continue at the rate fixed to-day?—(A.) That I understand to be Mr. Bevin's case.

Q. I understand that is a proposal which does not commend itself to the Port of London Authority?—(A.) Not only the Port of London Authority, but it does not commend itself to any of the interests associated with us. We are perfectly prepared to follow the lines of the most recent settlement as between the State and the railway workers; that is, whatever minimum you arrive at, and we are not averse to arriving at a minimum, should be adjustable according to the rise or fall in the price of commodities.

Q. If it is right that wages should vary with the cost of living, in your view it is unfair that they should merely vary when the cost of living goes up, but should not vary if the cost of living goes down?—(A.) Certainly, at this moment, because, as you have already said to me, the circumstances are abnormal—very abnormal, and the possibilities of a heavy fall in prices, if not immediately, in the future, must be evident to all of us.

Q. And, as a standard of wages to-day, you have referred to the railway settlement?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Under that railway settlement there is the sliding scale?—(A.) I believe that to be so.

Q. Which recognises, if the increase in the cost of living is a reason for wages going up, then wages shall go down when that special reason has diminished in intensity?—(A.) To a certain point, and then the fall should not be further operative.

Q. But there is a minimum fixed under the railway settlement below which under no circumstances are wages to fall?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And that principle commends itself to you?—(A.) Considerably. I think with that precedent established quite recently by the State you could not possibly disregard it.

Q. In your view a decision of this Court fixing a minimum wage of 16s. would at once react on all the other trades in the Port of London?—(A.) Not only in the Port of London, but throughout the whole of the kingdom. Take the Port of London. I referred this morning to the fact that we employed a large number of men under the chief engineer who are mechanics, tradesmen, I suppose I ought to call them. At the present moment there is that differentiation between the rates of pay of the skilled and unskilled labour, whatever you may claim to be, the docker and these various trades. It follows almost consequentially that, if you put up the weekly wage of the docker to this figure, the artisan will insist upon the margin that exists to-day being preserved. Otherwise, if that were not so, you would have the docker receiving actually more money than some of the mechanics working in our employment. I suggest that that is bound to happen, and it will apply throughout the whole length and breadth of the land. I do not believe your railway man will abide by his agreement of 57s. a week, I do not think he would be satisfied to have that if we put the docker up to £4 8s.—I do not think so. That is my personal view, of course.

Q. The Commission which investigated on behalf of the Government industrial unrest during the war found, did they not, that a great deal of the industrial unrest was due to the alteration in the relationship between the semi-skilled and the skilled trades?—(A.) Yes, and generally I should say that that is so. We had experience of that as a Port Authority, because anything that resulted from Government action on wages instantly reflected itself with us among our mechanics. Take the 12½ per cent. which I believe was given to certain classes of mechanics—engineers, I think—it spread to our lamplighters and our road sweepers finally; it percolated through every grade in our employment, and I remember having before our Staff Committee a request from the lamplighters in the Docks and from the road-menders to get this 12½ per cent., and they got it.

The CHAIRMAN: That was the Churchill increase, was not it?—(A.) Yes, I think it was.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Just one other matter. Mr. Bevin has referred to a letter, or some letters, written about February, 1915, when he said you refused to go to arbitration. That was when you gave the first war advance of 3s.?—(A.) That is the date.

Q. I notice from the way the matter was left, it might have been thought that that finished the business, so far as the matter refers to the Port of London Authority. That 3s. advance was the first advance?—(A.) It was the very first.

Q. I notice on the 31st July, 1916, a further 3s. was given; on the 26th April, 1917, a further 6s. was given; and on the 20th December, 1917, a further 6s.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And without any intervention of any Government Department?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then the next war advance of 2d. per hour was given in May, 1918, under the circumstances which we have had described this morning, by an

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Arbitration which you took the view you ought not to attend?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. Then, later, on the 21st October, 1918, the last award was given, namely the 1½d. ?—(A.) Yes; and the total of all those advances comes to £1,537,000—the advances only.

Q. Has that meant a very large increase in the rates of the Port Authority?—(A.) Yes; we have raised the rates. We began at 7½ per cent. in the early days, we went then to 15 per cent., then to 30 per cent., then to 50 per cent., then to 65 per cent., and finally to 85 per cent., where we are to-day.

Q. Where will you be if this claim is made effective?—(A.) We have already roughly figured that out, and nothing under 140 per cent. will cover it. That is our computation, 140 per cent.

Q. Will that handicap you in competition with Antwerp and these foreign ports?—(A.) The position as regards wages in these Continental ports will be put before you by some of our investigators whom we sent there recently to inquire into the wage situation. I do not pretend to give that evidence, but our investigators who went there will give that evidence.

The CHAIRMAN: I am glad of that. Would you mind giving instructions to those that are coming to-morrow that they would also assist us with the relative charges of London to other ports in the United Kingdom on the same class of goods. Could that be done, do you think?—(A.) Yes, I think so. I understand we have it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship remembers, one of the tables I put in through Mr. Spencer, of Glasgow, gave that information

The CHAIRMAN: That is the table I want.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think we ought to have more copies made. I am afraid there is only one copy in existence?

The CHAIRMAN: You see what I mean?—(A.) I follow the point thoroughly, and I think I can say—I do not want to be too definite—but I really believe for purposes of our own we have collected that information. I think so. If it should be, as I hope, available there are persons here in our employ who will see that you get it.

Q. It is because we are endeavouring so far as we can to compare like with like?—(A.) We have been endeavouring to do the same and have got that material by us.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: With regard to congestion I understand your view is that if the congestion of the Port of London is cleared away goods could be got through and put upon the market?—(A.) I believe the surest way of relieving congestion is to have a free flow and not hold up commodities—give them a free flow, put them on the market.

Q. And one of the effects of eliminating the congestion would be to put goods upon the market in much greater abundance than to-day and so bring down prices?—(A.) Yes. What has been the effect of these high prices? Let us take meat, that is a Government-controlled commodity. Owing to these high prices—or, rather, maintenance of these high prices—the consumption of the country has diminished 30 per cent. If the general community were eating the old quantities

that 30 per cent. in itself would have prevented the congestion arising, nearly.

Q. So one of the first effects of eliminating congestion would be at once to improve the purchasing power of money, so far as commodities are concerned?—(A.) Yes; behave fairly to the people and give them the goods at their natural and normal value, and not hold them up as the Government has been doing in the case of meat, to their detriment. With regard to their wages, it means higher wages, and, in addition, it is detrimental to the conduct of the ports.

Q. Again, I understand the congestion which exists to-day is another abnormal circumstance which did not exist before the war?—(A.) No; and it never could exist if we got away from this irrational method of piling ships into us without any relation to the accommodation that is waiting them.

Q. You said—perfectly fairly, as his Lordship noted—that wages should at the present time be adjusted in relation to the cost of living?—(A.) Certainly, I am strongly in favour of that.

Q. But you do not subscribe to the principle of fixing wages on a permanent basis, having regard to the special abnormal circumstances which exist at the moment?—(A.) No, I could not subscribe to that.

Q. Do you think that would be fair to the community as a whole. Do you think it would be fair to the community as a whole if the wages of one section of industry—namely, workers at the docks, through which all commodities go—are to be fixed on that abnormal basis to-day?—(A.) No, I do not think it would be fair. I do not think so for a moment.

Councillor HINKLEY: Will the Court permit me to put a question to Lord Devonport. You will remember at the first sitting of this Court I made an application on behalf of the Port of London Dock Pilots and Watermen's Union. Lord Devonport is a most important witness so far as our interests are concerned, and with the permission of the Court I should like to put one or two questions to him. I am quite content to abide by the ruling of the Court.

The CHAIRMAN: You are Mr. Hinkley; are you?

Councillor HINKLEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you given Mr. Bevin a chance of putting these questions?

Councillor HINKLEY: No, not yet, because we are not affiliated to the Transport Workers' Federation.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin is a very friendly man and a very competent man to put the questions.

Councillor HINKLEY: I quite appreciate that remark, my Lord, but at the moment, not being affiliated with him, I have not. Probably being a practical man I should be able to put the questions in a practical way to Lord Devonport.

The CHAIRMAN: I tell you frankly we do not like it, but I suppose it is very few questions you have to put?

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Councillor HINKLEY: Only one or two.

The CHAIRMAN: We might be as short a time hearing your questions as determining the rights and wrongs of it; go ahead.

Councillor HINKLEY: Thank you very much. I would like to ask Lord Devonport, in connection with his position as the Chairman of the Port of London Authority, whether he has had any fault to find with the handling of ships, such as transporting them into and out of docks, and the necessary boat work of handling those ships, for instance, during the period of war time, because the reason I ask this question is—

The CHAIRMAN: Do not mind the reason, you ask your question.

Councillor HINKLEY: I am asking Lord Devonport. The reason I am asking this question is because we are asking for increased rates in connection with this particular work; that is, transporting ships into and out of docks and the necessary boat work connected with them. We are asking the shipowners for 100 per cent. increase, considering the material and labour at its present price and the cost of commodities of life. I ask you, Lord Devonport, whether that is a reasonable request to make—100 per cent. rise?—(A.) Oh, I think most reasonable—on the evidence you have tendered, at all events.

Q. Thank you very much. There is one other question I should like to put to you: seeing I am a free waterman of the River Thames, in addition to holding the Trinity House licence and a member of the Gravesend Borough Council, I should like to ask you, as you are the licensing authority of these men, the licensed watermen who transport the ships' men into and out of docks, which our friend Mr. Bevin has never taken over—I do not know whether he cares anything about them—

The CHAIRMAN: What is your question, please?

Councillor HINKLEY: Seeing that Lord Devonport is the Chairman of the Port of London Authority, and they are the licensing authority, and that is to say when a lad has served five or seven years' apprenticeship on the River Thames from Gravesend to London, he goes to the Watermen's Company, which was taken over by the Port of London Authority under the 1908 Act, and they are the licensing authority to grant the freedom to those of us who carry on this particular trade—I should like to ask whether Lord Devonport considers that that lad, after serving five or seven years' apprenticeship on the River Thames learning every nook, crook, and corner of the river itself and the docks, is a skilled artisan when he is granted his freedom by the Port of London Authority?—(A.) I should think so. I should think he was very skilled.

Q. Then you quite agree that the 100 per cent. which we are asking the shipowners for is quite reasonable?—(A.) You must put your own construction on my admission.

Q. I place a lot of value on it?—(A.) Well, I wish you good luck, then.

Q. The Court will hear us by and by, and we will try to establish our case?—(A.) There is nothing like trying.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you want to say anything, Mr. Abady?

Mr. ABADY: I was wishful to put a question or two to Lord Devonport about the entrepôt trade, but Sir Lynden Macassey, in his re-examination, put something to Lord Devonport, and he indicated that he had not the full information, so I will no longer persist in my request.

The CHAIRMAN: I have the list which was put in by one of the witnesses comparing the rates of goods levied at Glasgow on the principle articles along with those levied at thirteen other ports, and these are all tabulated; they include Glasgow, Liverpool, London, Manchester, and so on. If it is not in your department please say so at once, but I would like some general explanation if you can give it. I will take for the purpose of convenience some main goods as between the two main ports of Glasgow and London. There are bricks. The rate in Glasgow is 4d. and 3d. There is no in-trade in that into London, but there is a trade out of London, and I see that the rate is 3s. 0½d. ?—(A.) I am not familiar with the matter at all.

Q. Then coke out from Glasgow is 9d., out from London it is 2s. 1½d. to 3s. 9d. Then corn, beans, and peas, out of Glasgow it is 1s., out of London it is 3s. to 5s. 1½d. Is there any explanation which occurs to you with regard to that?—(A.) I could only say generally; you asked me if it was in my department, but I do not pretend that it is; but I can say generally this: we have been entering on an investigation of our own with regard to relative charges in ports, and we found, we were confronted with it by some of our members, that some of these charges appeared to be widely varying as between London and other ports. When it came to be investigated we found you were not comparing like with like; there were any amount of things included in our rate that were charged separately in other people's rates, notably in Liverpool. When you added on those things that were included in our rate on to the apparently cheap charge of Liverpool the result was it was much higher. But there will be people here who can speak with the very greatest certitude on that, but I have given that as the general result of our recent investigation.

Q. Without some explanation of that sort the court, except those who are very expert, might be apt to be misled?—(A.) I quite agree, and I have been very much misled and concerned about it myself. It seemed a terrible thing to face.

Q. Look at billets, blues, and slabs. I will not trouble you with any other illustration. It is a really startling case. In Glasgow, in and out, it is 1s. 1½d.; in London it is 6s. 7½d. to 8s. 8½d. in, and 3s. 1½d. out?—(A.) I cannot throw any daylight on that, but I should suggest there are very few billets and blues enter the Port of London. I think the difference is more apparent than real.

Q. There may be some explanation, and those who are listening to you and me will take stock of that, because that is what we want explained.—(A.) I think they will be able to explain all this to you.

Q. It is still more startling with reference to billets in Liverpool: as compared with your 6s. 7½d. they are only 9d., but there must be some radical reason for it?—(A.) There must be some.

Mr. SCRUTTON: One has labour in it, and the other is a port rate.

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Lynden, you have heard

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what Lord Davenport has said, and perhaps you will be able to clear that up. I myself think there must be some explanation on the lines that have been mentioned.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I can undertake straightaway to give you any information you want on that point. A special investigation has been made into that very question by the Port of London Authority, and I can call some persons who can tell your Lordship shortly what it is.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Q. This is a big thing and a troublesome thing we are in, and you know my anxiety and all our anxiety is not to have any trouble with little personal things?—(A.) I am sure of that.

Q. Very well. This is the kind of thing that hits the like of me hard. You do not mind my telling you?—(A.) Not at all. I should like to have the opportunity of dealing with it.

Q. You are my friend?—(A.) There will be no difference between us on the point.

Q. This is what hit me hard. I have to read your evidence as my duty, as a whole, and you have made your point—quite clear that what you were referring to was that you were concerned with what you thought to be the extraordinary demands on the part of the Miners' Federation. Agreeing with all that, and your point is quite clear, I will tell you what troubles me, if you do not mind my telling you, and it is this. Question 26108 is this, after speaking about the labour representation in London, that is to say, you were referring to our friends Mr. Gosling and Mr. Phillip?—(A.) No, Mr. Phillip is not on the Port of London Authority. The other member is Mr. Devenay.

Q. It is Mr. Gosling we were thinking of, because he is sitting here, and it naturally affected his position when it was brought up. You said: "I do not know whether I shall offend anyone if I say that they are always looking out for themselves and the interests they represent"?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I will be quite frank with you. Of course, there are rights and wrongs in everything, and on every question; but when you say that about a man, that he is always looking out for himself, that means whether it is right or wrong?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It is upon that construction?—(A.) I quite follow; I read what you said about it.

Q. From that point of view I think it would have been better if you had not used that expression, but said that they were tempted to look at it.—(A.) Do you mind my putting my counter view to that?

Q. No.—(A.) I hope I will not offend you by putting it.

Q. But I want you to answer me first, if you will be so kind?—(A.) You asked me whether it would not be better to do that.

Q. I withdraw that, and now I ask you if you think it is right to say of one of our number that he is always looking out for himself and the interest he represents?—(A.) I did not say it.

Q. In answer to Mr. Bevin, I think you were going to make an explanation which I am desirous of getting?—(A.) I will make it if you will allow me.

Q. The answer you made to him was that Mr. Gosling's and his colleagues' main activities were so-and-so. That is not what you said. You said

they were all looking out for themselves?—(A.) I did not say Mr. Gosling and Mr. Devenay: I did not give the personal application. I referred to them as representatives of their labour. If you would allow me to tell you that is what was in my mind; nothing else was in my mind. This is what I said: "I do not know whether I should offend anyone if I say they are always looking out for themselves." I meant looking out for labour. I do not suggest that I should impugn the good faith or the integrity of these two representatives; it is absurd. I have as great an appreciation for Mr. Gosling as any member of the Port Authority, which has endured for ten years, in spite of our combats from time to time. We have always had an excellent understanding and been good friends.

Q. Then you certainly did not mean to say that either Mr. Gosling or anybody else———(A.) Did anybody think I did?

Q. You certainly did not mean to say by the words, "They are always looking out for themselves," that they were doing something disreputable?—(A.) Always looking out for labour.

Q. You good friends of mine will now shake hands, I am sure?—(A.) Yes. I was going to say a word, but I am afraid I will offend you if I say it.

Q. Oh, no.—(A.) If you do not mind my saying so, I think it would have been better if I had been interrogated, as I am now. This thing dissipates like a summer fog; but it has been imputed against me that I had committed some enormity. They were so satisfied with my evidence that the High Court Judge, Mr. Justice Sankey, upon my retirement, thanked me. There was a strong representation of labour, not of the least aggressive type—Mr. Smillie and others; I think they were all very pleased with me.

Q. You recognise now, Lord Devonport, that that is a closed chapter?—(A.) I am very glad to hear it is a closed chapter.

Q. I want to ask you about something on which I really want great help from you?—(A.) You shall have it.

Q. You have given us what, in the judgment of the Court—I think I am interpreting it rightly—is most valuable evidence with regard to the congestion. We have been extremely anxious to get that on some high authority. Now answer me this: what is the Department of Government that is responsible for that congestion?—(A.) I should say mainly, my Lord, at the moment, the Shipping. The thing that causes congestion with us is the arrival of this great batch of ships in no ordered sequence; it throws itself at our gates, and there you are. That is bound to bring about congestion.

Q. Who is the Minister of that?—(A.) Sir Joseph Maclay. Allow me to say this. I am not imputing these departments. You asked me a question, and I give you my view. I may be quite wrong. I am not going to impute that these departments are responsible for the chaos. I give you my view for what it is worth.

Q. We want to get at it equally with you, because—you do not mind my putting this into your mouth—it is disgraceful, in the present state of the public necessity, that that state of matters should be allowed to continue.—(A.) I do not want to be keel-hauled in some future inquiry.

Q. You do not see any reason to differ from myself?—(A.) I always like to agree with the Chair.

Q. What about the Food Control Department?—(A.) No, I do not think so as regards meat. I think the Board of Trade runs the meat. I know

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that is so, because when I was Food Controller the first question which was put to me was: "What do you expect to be done with this meat?" The Government contracted for meat in 1914. The Food Control did not come into existence until 1916. Sir Albert Stanley communicated with me immediately I was appointed Food Controller, and he explained the situation as regards meat. The Government had made contracts, very excellent contracts they were, entered into, I think, almost in the month of August when the war began. He said: "What do you wish done with this." I said: "You had better carry on." They carried on, and I think they carried on at all times. If I had liked, I could have said: "Transfer that to me," but it seemed an easy proposition. You asked me whether it was the Ministry of Food. I say, as regards meat, it is not: it is the Board of Trade.

Q. Then is there any other Department, as, for instance, with regard to wool?—(A.) Oh, well, there is the great Council on wool.

Q. Is there a Director of Raw Material?—(A.) Yes, I think so. The sugar is the Royal Commission; but I know now that the Royal Commission on Sugar Supplies is under the Ministry of Food.

Q. Do you think that has covered all the Departments? I will tell you what I mean to do, Lord Devonport. We have been considering this and the value of your evidence. We mean to communicate your evidence, whether you agree to it or not, to all the Departments concerned, and say to them that we will be open to receive upon oath any explanation that they care to give of the national position that you have sketched out. Those are the Departments you mentioned.—(A.) I was asked why meat is not being sold at 7d. a lb. retail.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship has not got wool: I am told the Ministry of Munitions is responsible for wool, the Director of Raw Material of the Ministry of Munitions.

The WITNESS: Yes. I did not attempt to indicate the department controlling wool. I said there was a great Council; I really do not understand the working of it.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not know that anybody else does. There was a thing you mentioned about canteens, Lord Devonport, will you help me about that? Do not you think it might be advisable to have some working arrangement with representatives of the men about a thing like that?—(A.) I do not think it would be a bad idea. I do not think we should raise any objection to that. I think there is something of the sort, is not there?

Q. I am told that you actually made an offer in that direction, but it was not accepted.—(A.) I really could not say.

Q. Then, again coming back to the meat question, is the Government in the position of being the importers themselves of that meat?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. And standing out in this country for its price?—(A.) Well, of course, they have been standing out for what is considered by those competent to express an opinion to be a very high price. Please understand I am not a meat expert; there are plenty on the Port Authority that are, but I hear these things, and gather my knowledge in that direction.

Q. I wanted to get it quite clear that the Government bought upon terms which, according to the best information available to you, are terms under which they could sell without a loss by throwing it into commerce?—(A.) Most certainly, but they have made a gigantic blunder—during the progress of the distribution under their control—a terrific blunder.

Q. Let me ask you of that as a sample. Assuming that the Government were to throw it, as the lawyers say, into commerce, they would first supply the wants of the people, which are very great, as you know; they would, secondly, relieve this extraordinary congestion at the ports; and, thirdly, would they not be in the position of assisting a settlement even as between labour and employer when that abnormal situation is taken away, so as to let the free flow of industry?—(A.) Yes. The result of releasing congestion in that one particular would be to give a better value to wages.

Q. I do not know how it is about this, but tell me, please. Is that congestion at this moment embarrassing in this sense, that it drives a good many men into the casual list and the under-employed list?—(A.) Yes. Of course, it must have that tendency, because we have got a great rush and glut of work, which drives us distracted how to deal with it; and we have to take in additional labour, to try and cope with it, whereas if we were running smoothly and reasonably, normally, we could adjust our labour properly to the situation. That is self-evident and must be so.

Q. I think it must be so. Then about this minimum that has been spoken of: we had a witness, a Professor Bowley, a very learned and skilful man, and he gave us a differential rate, that is to say, he gave a docker's budget of £3 17s. for London, and £3 13s. 6d. for elsewhere. That is what he said?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then we had another witness yesterday from Plymouth, and he gave us the docker's budget in Plymouth as £3 15s. Looking to the light of that, do you think that, so far as the human needs of the workmen are concerned, there is pretty much an average standard nowadays all over?—(A.) Well, of course, to-day most things that would come into the budget, not only food but clothing, are in an abnormal condition. You cannot take it as a standard. You cannot take a pair of boots at £2 as a standard.

Q. I think we are at cross-purposes. It is the comparison between the one place and the other that I am referring to.—(A.) I know. I grasped the point, but I was going to demonstrate to you that the bulk of these things are controlled, and the price established by Controllers universally.

Q. I see. So that the present moment that rather assists the universal?—(A.) Yes. I am not submitting that everything is controlled, but that is the trend. The price of meat is universal throughout the Kingdom; it is controlled. Therefore, the play of localities where a man has the garden and a potato patch and that sort of thing does not come into the proposition at all at this moment.

Q. Then, Lord Devonport, I have a notion in my mind, but perhaps it is wrong, that nowadays even such a little thing as the Parcel Post has had the effect—you will speak from your commercial experience—of equalising prices all over the country, has it not?—(A.) I do not think I can answer that; I have no knowledge of it. No, I do not think so. I do not know if this will assist you. In

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normal times there is not a unified price prevailing everywhere. Take, for instance, a part of the country I used to know very well, Devonshire. In the summer in Devonshire in normal times you could get as much butter as you wanted for 6d. or 7d. per lb. The price through multiple shops that has been referred to, which Mr. Bevin is so fond of referring to, would never be probably less than 1s. to 1s. 2d. That would apply to many other commodities, cream, milk, eggs. That is in pre-war days.

Mr. BEVIN: Did you say butter in pre-war days in Devonshire at 6d. and 7d. a lb?—(A.) 7d. a lb.—any amount of it.

Mr. BEVIN: You must have been treated preferentially. I lived there.

The CHAIRMAN: The question about the entrepôt trade we are anxious about—the fixing of reasonable conditions by the light of this. I will not go back upon anything you or I have said, but if there is a high-figure fixed, too high, it may turn out that it is more than the trade could stand. Is that your point?—(A.) That is the whole point.

Q. Then that, of course, is subject to this, that no trade could ultimately be right—or would you go so far as to say that no trade could ultimately be right if it did not pay the human element, namely, the labour, what you might call a fair reasonable standard of life?—(A.) Certainly it ought to pay it. We had got legislation passed long before the war to bring that about, dealing with what we were pleased to call sweated industries.

Q. Was I right in taking the entrepôt rivals, so to speak, as Hamburg, Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and Antwerp?—(A.) I do not know about Amsterdam; I suppose it does count. The great ports in pre-war days were Hamburg, Antwerp, Rotterdam. You will be told here by those who have recently been on the spot, that Antwerp is getting ready to come into action at the earliest possible moment. As to Hamburg I do not know what will happen there. Rotterdam is very important.

Q. The entrepôt trade very largely depends upon this seaport being under the Free Trade system, or a free port?—(A.) Under best trade conditions; suppose I say that.

Q. Hamburg is a free port, of course?—(A.) It is in part a free port. The whole port is not free.

Q. Then Rotterdam and Antwerp, I think, are practically in the same position?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What I want to get from you is that these are real rivals?—(A.) Absolutely, and they will steal our entrepôt trade if circumstances are built up here. I am not saying what the circumstances may be, but if circumstances are built up here to the detriment of London we will absolutely lose it.

Q. Going back, I have just this question: You agree, I suppose, that there is a great deal of what you might call avoidable loss of time?—(A.) I think there is a very great deal of avoidable loss of time.

Q. And that, of course, is a most serious interference with business?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. In addition to being unjustifiable under the contracts that the men have entered into?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. Supposing you have an arrangement—I just want you to try and suppose it, so as to get some light on the subject—which would be honoured

by the men, and the loss, which has been put at no less than one hour per man per day, were avoided, that would be a very substantial help to all the ports in which that occurred, would it not?—(A.) Yes. I have heard it said over and over again: "We would not mind high wages if we got the work." I am not imputing anything, but that has been said at every street corner in the kingdom: "We would not mind high wages if we can only get the work." They mean by that the output.

Q. The increased output would be a factor towards lowering prices to all and sundry, would it not?—(A.) Of course.

Q. The ordinary citizen then would get the benefit of that?—(A.) Of course he would.

Q. Why should the workman himself who has assisted to produce it not get the benefit of it?—(A.) Why should he not get the benefit of the increased output?

Q. Of the lower prices.—(A.) Of course, he would get the advantage. His money wages would be better.

Q. Yes, but I understood your idea was that the money wages should slide down. Do you follow?—(A.) I was anticipating, and I am anticipating still, that things are on an extremely abnormal basis. That cannot be denied by anybody; no one denies it. What is submitted to us is this: "You agree, we want you to agree, we will make you agree, perhaps, to the establishment of a high minimum, and once having established it there it remains immutable for all time." If what appears to be certain happens, in course of time—I do not say this next month or this next year—there must be a very large fall in commodities; it is impossible for it to be otherwise. One of the reasons of the maintenance of this high range of prices is that half the world is out of business in the way of producing—no sugar from Russia, no sugar from Germany, no wheat from Russia, and all that sort of thing. It will all come into action again when you get the world once again fully at work, as it was on the pre-war basis. Prices are bound to fall tremendously. Look at ships.

Q. I think we understand the argument. With the increase of shipping there are more bottoms to carry goods, and therefore freights will go down?—(A.) I should think so.

Q. All these likelihoods of trade are the kind of thing which we ought to consider as factors in making up our mind as to what would be—I hope you are not offended by the phrase—a square deal?—(A.) No, I am delighted with that phrase. I think it expresses exactly what we have between us in common. We want a square deal.

Q. Do you think that when we are trying to settle a thing to be presumably, as we hope and expect and earnestly wish, a settlement for years, we ought to consider the probabilities of a restoration of normal conditions such as you have sketched out?—(A.) I think it ought to come into the consideration, certainly.

Q. I gather you are not very sure of lifting the 11s. 8d. man and the 13s. 4d. man up a little above that figure?—(A.) I do not think I said that. Do you mind my saying what I think I said? Mr. Bevin was rather hunting me on these differentials. He was suggesting they were very minor matters, and so insignificant that we might produce them all on a dead level. I know perfectly well that if you put up to-morrow our 11s. 8d. men to 13s. 9d., that is, the shipowners' level, their men will go up exactly the differential.

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Q. I was taking the three that had been mentioned. The two in which we are most interested, I may tell you, are the 11s. 8d. men and the 12s. 8d. men.—(A.) The short sea trade?

Q. Yes.—(A.) That is 1s. Level it up to-day, my Lord, and it will unlevel itself to-morrow.

Q. Although there be a common cause?—(A.) Yes. I have read all that Mr. Bevin has said. He has said, "No, they will not; we have got pledges from all these men; they never will." They will not stay up a month.

Q. That is your view of it?—(A.) That is my view. I am only being asked my view. Mr. Bevin has emphatically put his view, and I have read it.

Q. We are being approached on the principle that we are addressed as if by people who have made up their minds to present, with solidarity and in honour, a claim for that. Your experience inclines you to doubt that?—(A.) My Lord, I am simply giving it from my experience. I have been eleven years cheek-by-jowl with these problems, and I know the idiosyncrasies of labour. There they are.

Q. Of course, you know that this is the first effort at standardisation on a national scale so far as wages are concerned?—(A.) Yes, I do; I know it is the first.

Q. Was the 44 hours on a national scale?—(A.) We agreed to 44 hours.

Q. That was the first effort on a national scale with regard to hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Just before you go I am asked to put this question to you. It is in view of the very natural fear that you have expressed, which has been in our minds all along, about the rivalry of foreign ports. Of course, there is an economic and geographical advantage in London, is not there, very considerably outweighing the Continental ports' advantages?—(A.) I do not know that I would attribute the advantage to the geographical situa-

tion without there was an explanation to me as to what was meant. No doubt London possesses great value. I am leaving out geographical. The port is established at a supremely fine point in the country. All great ports are. Trace the world over, and you will find that there is a very, very good reason why a port is where it is. In lots of cases they have endeavoured to establish ports on the seaboard, and they have never got on with them. The great advantage of London is, of course, this: first of all, finance; secondly, being an old port and dealing with big trade, it has got big facilities available. Take meat. We have got the biggest cold store in the world: we take more meat than any other port in the world. That means that if there is meat going it is sure to come to London, a large proportion of it. Then we have got the public sales. You can sell, or there is being sold almost every hour in the week at the Commercial Sale Rooms and other sale rooms in London on the market all sorts of marvellous things that you would hardly conceive could be sold in that way unless you knew about it; ostrich feathers, and metals, and so on. As I mentioned in my evidence this morning, associated with all these trades you have got experts. A man the other end of the world, without knowing a blessed soul in London, can send his stuff along through the cover of his bank, and he will be sure to get fair treatment, treatment at the hands of people who understand the commodity that he has consigned, and so on. That is present more strongly in London than in any other port that I know of.

Q. And then, of course, we have to remember that, after all, coming into the Thames you are coming into a valley populated by ten million of people.—(A.) Yes, quite that.

(The Witness withdrew.)

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning at half-past ten.)

FIFTEENTH DAY.

Thursday, March 4th, 1920.

Present :

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair)

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON } Secretaries.
Mr. G. H. INCE }

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Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, shortly before the rising of the Court yesterday your Lordship referred to a table which had been put in by the Witness on behalf of the Clyde; it was put in by Mr. Spencer.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It was prepared by Mr. Macfarlane, the Collector of the Clyde Navigation Trustees, and a question arose as to whether it was a comparison of like with like. Mr. Macfarlane has returned specially to London on the point, and he can tell your Lordship exactly what the position is in half a dozen words.

The CHAIRMAN: He is a man who can do it in half a dozen words? We are glad to see him.

Mr. JAMES MACFARLANE *re-called*.

The CHAIRMAN: You are still a Witness, Mr. Macfarlane, and you are still on oath.—(A.) Very good, my Lord.

Q. Just explain in your own words, and in your own brief style, about that table. (A.) If I may just explain in a word, I am not the Mr. Macfarlane whose signature is to this statement which has been put in, but I can speak with regard to the statement. He is the Collector; I am the Treasurer. This statement was made up for the purposes of the Trustees in 1917. At that date we tried to compare the rates on goods of the various leading ports of the country so as to ascertain as accurately as possible how Glasgow stood with regard to those various rates. The table as put in shows those various rates for 13 different ports, and except in the case of London it compares like with like; that is, the same services in each case. In the case of London, as you will observe from the note at the foot—there is an asterisk to London, and a qualifying note at the foot—inward rates include landing, and outward rates include portage. That was the best information we could obtain at the time. It is an inclusive rate, so that as comparing London with the other ports they are not comparable. There are certain services given by London which are not included in the other cases.

Q. So far as the evidence given yesterday was concerned that statement is of no value?—(A.) So far as London is concerned.

Q. The other thing is this. There is a very great difference between Liverpool. We shall not detain you except to ask you about that.—(A.) Yes. There are varying rates, as you will observe, in each port for the same article. For instance, your last one I think was billets. Glasgow is 1s. 1½d. in and 1s. 1½d. out; Aberdeen is 9d. and 9d., and so on.

Q. Do not bother about the other ports; give us Liverpool.—(A.) The Liverpool rate for billets is 9d. and 6d., as against 1s. 1½d. each way in Glasgow.

Q. For curiosity's sake, what is London?—(A.) London here is 6s. 7½d. and 8s. 8½d., which is qualified by the note at the foot.

Q. London includes, in fact, the labour services and the storage?—(A.) That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a pity that it was put into that list. However, there you are.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The note to that effect is on it.

The CHAIRMAN: I know.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: A London witness will later give the figures which will enable your Lordship to compare all those ports in respect of exactly the same thing. I am much obliged to you, Mr. Macfarlane.

The CHAIRMAN: You have looked over that, have you, Mr. Macfarlane?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There is just one question I want to ask: Is there any striking or substantial difference between the rates at the ports in the United Kingdom when you take into view the particular facilities at each port as compared with every other?—(A.) I think there is.

Q. I suppose you will say that Glasgow stands the best on the list?—(A.) No, in some ports the vessel pays proportionately more than in Glasgow. For instance, if I may put it broadly, in some ports the vessel pays about half; if you add the dues from the vessels, and from the goods, you will find that in some ports the vessel pays 50 per cent. of that total, or it may be slightly more; in Glasgow up to the pre-war date the vessel paid about one-third of the total dues got from vessels and goods combined.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I propose to conclude the evidence on behalf of London to-day, and I hope also to deal with the small ports.

The CHAIRMAN: You know the view of the Court with regard to the evidence, and I repeat what I said yesterday, that we cannot but respect the way in which the case is being presented, looking to the variety of interests which you have, so to speak, under your charge. On the other hand, you, having respect to our observations, will no doubt exercise a wise discretion as to the volume of evidence which you put in. We do not carry the matter further, and we shall not further allude to the topic.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If I may say so, after your Lordship's intimation, I convened a meeting of the Committee which has the management of the case, and which is instructing me through Mr. Grinling Harris, and we have gone into the matter, and we have cut down to what we think is the minimum the evidence which we were going to give. May I only refer to this: inasmuch as, of course, the decision of this Court depends not upon the force of law but upon acceptance by all the parties, it is very desirable that no persons shall be in a position to say that they were not entitled to put their case fully before the Court, and, therefore, to disregard any finding of the Court.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That I have well in my mind.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. We have not attributed any spirit of binding you by any technical ideas on either side.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will find from this to the conclusion of the case that each witness will deal, I think, with a special matter. I propose to call Mr. Matthews, who will give your

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Lordship first general evidence on the Port of London, and then will give detailed evidence of his inspection of the Port of Antwerp.

Mr. MORRISON MATTHEWS, *Sworn*.

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are the Assistant Dock and Warehouse Manager of the Port of London Authority?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think you have had 33 years' practical experience of the working of ships and the handling of goods in the London Docks?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Prior to the establishment of the Port of London Authority, you were in the service of the Dock Companies?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The Port Authority, speaking broadly, does not load vessels, does it?—(A.) No.

Q. They do a certain amount of discharging, do they not?—(A.) Yes, in two groups of docks.

Q. And I think they discharge all bulk grain and cotton seed?—(A.) That is so, in the docks.

Q. With regard to the loading of vessels, the port performs all the services, I think, until the goods are put under the ship's tackle?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. We have heard before that the Authority's labour is organised on the basis of permanent men, preference men, and casual men?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, we have a memorandum which gives a good many useful particulars about the Port of London, and I would suggest that it would be convenient to the Court if I handed in to the Court a copy of that. I do not intend to take this Witness through it, but there are certain matters upon which I shall have to question him. I think it would save time and be convenient if this document were before the Court.

The CHAIRMAN: You must hand a copy of that to Mr. BEVIN.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Certainly, my Lord.

(*The document was handed in and marked H.29.)

Q. You have that document before you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. On the second page you have set out the conditions of the permanent labourers, of whom there are 4,000?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They are entitled to a week's notice; in fact, it is an ordinary weekly agreement?—(A.) That is right.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The rates of pay are set out there, my Lord. We will show them more particularly in a table in a few minutes.

Q. They are entitled to a week's leave?—(A.) Yes, with pay.

Q. And also proclaimed holidays?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And that, I think, as you state later in that page, is equivalent to £7 5s. 10d. per annum or 2s. 10d. per week?—(A.) That is the assessment.

Q. In addition to that, permanent labourers of long service are as a general rule granted a benevolent allowance at the rate of 5s. 0d. per week when owing to age or ill-health they are unable to continue work?—(A.) That is so, yes.

Q. Of the B or preference men there are 2,800?—(A.) Yes.

* See Appendix No. 106.

Q. I think I ought to have asked you to draw attention to this, that the permanent labourers can be moved about from dock to dock in any way you desire?—(A.) That is a condition of their appointment.

Q. That is a condition of the employment. Then preference men have preferential employment after the permanent labourers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And before any of the casual men are engaged?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then you set out in the fifth paragraph how they are selected, and how tickets or tallies are issued to them?—(A.) Yes.

Q. A different colour every three months?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then you deal with the casual men, of whom there are at present 3,800, I think?—(A.) Yes. The number varies, of course.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Then, my Lord, on the subsequent pages 4 and 5 the Witness has set out how this labour is transferred from one control in a dock to another control, or from one dock to another.

Q. That is so, is it not?—(A.) Yes, that is exactly the position.

Q. Can you tell the Court what percentage the casual labourers bore to the total employed by the Port of London prior to 1914?—(A.) As low as 2 per cent. The strikes of 1911 and particularly of 1912 influenced that figure, so that in 1914 they represented 11.3 per cent. In 1919, owing to the abnormality of trade, they represented 27 per cent.

Q. That is about the present figure?—(A.) That is about the present figure.

Q. With regard to the labour which is employed at Tilbury, both permanent, preference, and casual, do the men mainly live in the vicinity of Tilbury?—(A.) Tilbury, Gravesend, and Grays.

Q. Do they have to travel from London, as a rule?—(A.) Our men, no.

Q. If you have occasion to send a man from London to Tilbury, do you make any payment for travelling?—(A.) Yes. They are generally—in fact always—permanent men, who get a travelling allowance on such an occasion; but the occasions are very rare.

Q. In London I think that between 70 and 80 per cent. of the whole of the labour works on a piecework basis?—(A.) That is so.

Q. We will ask you to go into that a little more closely in a moment. Have you prepared a table which sets out the rates of pay and conditions of employment for practically every class of labour employed in the Port of London?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you mean in the Port of London, or by the Port of London Authority?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: For the entire port, my Lord, not only the Port of London Authority employees.

Sir LYNDEN MACASBY: We are trying to concentrate through one witness as much evidence as possible.

The CHAIRMAN: You are quite right.

(*Document handed in and marked H.30.)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: You have shown there in the first column the class of labour—you have named them; in the second column the approximate number employed; in the third column, whether it is a daily engagement or piecework; then you have given the rate of pay. If you take

* See Appendices Nos. 107, 108, 109, and 110.

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the fourth item, you will see that the figure for the B list ordinary labour is 2s. 10d. per half-day of four hours plus 3s. 0d. That is the 11s. 8d. man. Then it is reduced to the present hourly basis. Then in the next column is given the pre-war hourly basis.

The CHAIRMAN: What does the 7d. come to in a week?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: How many hours was it—nine hours?—(A.) In the reign of the 7d. per hour the week was one of 48 hours nominally, but the day hours extended from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., and any hours worked between that range of hours were paid for at the rate of 7d. per hour.

Q. So that was 10 hours?—(A.) The average working hours at that time were 52 per week, between that range of hours.

Q. What do you call the hourly rate?—(A.) 7d. per hour, applying between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: Anyhow, that is on 48 hours?—(A.) Yes, 48 hours.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Then you give the ordinary Sunday pay, and the overtime Sunday pay?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you have included in this statement the shipowners' men, the London shipowners, the wharfingers, the short sea traders, and the master lightermen.

The CHAIRMAN: Who is the 12s. 8d. man, is that the stevedores?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The 12s. 8d. man is the quay man—the wharfingers, and the short sea trader's quay man.

The CHAIRMAN: That is 12s. 8d., is it?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: 6s. 4d. per half-day. Over the page your Lordship will see short sea traders' quay men 3s. 4d. per half-day, plus bonus 3s.; that is, 6s. 4d.

The CHAIRMAN: There is something on the second page: "3s. 8d. per half-day plus 3s. per hour," that should be 3s. per day?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: 3s. per half-day. That is the 13s. 4d. man, the short sea trader's ship man.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: And the 14s. man and the 13s. 9d. man are the shipowners'. The stevedore 3s. 9d. and 3s. 3d., that is the 14s. man; and the shipowner's docker is 3s. 4d. and 3s. 6d., and 3s. 7d. for the second half, that is the 13s. 9d. man.

The CHAIRMAN: He gets 3s. 4d. per half-day plus 3s. 6d. war bonus plus the second half-day 3s. 7d. war bonus.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is the 13s. 9d. man. The one above is the 14s. man. If you come back to the wharfingers, the quay man, he gets 2s. 10d. and 3s. war bonus; he is the 11s. 8d. man.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the wharfinger and quay man 12s. 8d.?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: 11s. 8d., my Lord; and the ship man is 13s. 4d. The wharfinger's ship

man and the granary man is 12s. 8d. Then over the page the lightermen are given. Theirs is a daily engagement. The ship man is the 13s. 4d. man, and the quay man is the 12s. 8d. man. Then the others are given because they are daily engagements.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Taking the whole of the Port of London men, 75 per cent. of the work to 80 per cent. being piece-work, have you ascertained what their average earnings have been for the thirty-nine weeks from May last to January of this year?—(A.) Yes, £3 17s. per week per man.

Q. That includes overtime?—(A.) That includes overtime.

Mr. BEVIN: Is that piece-work?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, it is piece-work. These are the average earnings of the 75 per cent. piece-workers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And of that £3 17s. have you estimated what amount of overtime is included in that figure?—(A.) 4s. per week.

Q. The deal porters have quite a different rate, I see?—(A.) Quite.

The CHAIRMAN: What was that?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The deal porters, the second in the list, have quite a different rate of pay. (*To the Witness.*) They work at the Surrey Commercial Docks?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And their hourly rate is 2s. 1½d.?—(A.) Including war bonus.

Q. That is a rate that has been fixed, I believe, by themselves, is it not?—(A.) By themselves; we had nothing whatever to do with it.

The CHAIRMAN: What does that work out at per day?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: At 2s. 1½d.; what does that work out at per day?—(A.) They work a 7-hour day and 5 hours on Saturday.

Q. 14s. 10½d. Have you ascertained what their average weekly earnings are for the period you have already mentioned?—(A.) £4 a week.

Q. The corn porters, the first on the list, work entirely piece rate?—(A.) Entirely.

Q. And have you ascertained what their average weekly earnings are for the same period?—(A.) £7 5s. per week.

Mr. BEVIN: Which is that?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The corn porters, the first on the list, the piece workers.

The CHAIRMAN: That would be how much per day—about £1?—(A.) So much per ton, my Lord.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: They are entirely piece workers?—(A.) Yes, without a minimum guarantee.

Q. All your permanent men, and B preference men, and casual men have their earnings supplemented by what is known as the plus system, in London?—(A.) Yes, those engaged on piece work.

Q. Would you just explain to the Court how that plus or bonus system works. I think you have got out a *skeleton statement which shows it?—(A.) Yes.

* See Appendix No. 108.

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Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That, my Lord, is the third sheet. It is headed "Skeleton piece work account."

Q. Will you just tell the Court shortly what the system is?—(A.) The first item on the left-hand side looking at the sheet is "Operations performed at agreed piece work rates framed when wage was 6d. per hour." That is following the 1889 agreement, and as part of the note at the foot I have said that the rates were originally framed after a careful observation and the preparation of statistics of a reasonable day's work output and its cost.

Q. Your basis is the piece rate that was fixed many years ago?—(A.) Yes, from 1889 onwards.

Q. I think you have hundreds and hundreds of those rates?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then that has remained the basis, and you have made an addition for the increase that was given of 1d. an hour under what has been referred to as the Devonport Agreement?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then when the 8-hour day came into operation, it was necessary to make an adjustment?—(A.) To make an adjustment, yes.

Q. And 10 per cent. was added?—(A.) As prescribed by the Agreement.

Q. Because the piece worker had a shorter time to work in?—(A.) Yes, the whole of the items on the left-hand side represent the amount earned.

Q. Piece work?—(A.) Piece work. On the right-hand side first appear the daily entries of the amounts paid to the men at the minimum rate, and the difference shown below represents what is known in dock language as "plus," which is the amount divided amongst the men according to the number of hours each man has worked, and calculated to 1-10th of a penny per hour.

Q. The principle is this: that you have ascertained what is considered to be the normal amount that a man would turn over in eight hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is the effect of it?—(A.) That was the basis of it from 1889 onwards.

Q. And if more than that amount is turned over, he is paid a bonus upon the excess?—(A.) That is so.

Q. When I said he is paid a bonus, he is paid for the actual excess that he turns over?—(A.) He is paid the reward resulting from his effort.

Q. At the agreed tonnage rate?—(A.) At the agreed tonnage rate.

Q. Are these accounts of the result of a job always posted up so that the men can see them at the conclusion of the job?—(A.) The plus, or amount earned, is exhibited on a board at each Department for the information of the men, and the leaders of the men have access to the accounts on application to the office. The Check Weighing Act gives a further safeguard, or oversight, on behalf of the men if they desire it. We have had no application in respect of it, although the notices have been duly exhibited.

Q. I think the table you have put in shows there are very many differentials within the Port of London?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What view do you hold as to whether or not the men would insist upon these differentials being maintained?—(A.) With thirty-three years' experience, I am positive they would.

Q. When the Devonport agreement was made, there was a special reservation, was there not, that the question as to whether, in view of the 1d. increase which had been granted to the Port Authority's men and the wharfingers, the differen-

tial of a 1d. to the shipowners' men should be maintained?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That question was referred to Sir Albert Rollit, was it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And he gave an Award on the subject?—(A.) Yes, he gave an Award maintaining the differential.

The CHAIRMAN: When was that?—(A.) Following the 1911 Agreement, my Lord, known as the Devonport Agreement.

Q. But when was Sir Albert Rollit's arbitration?—(A.) It followed that Agreement.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It followed that Agreement?

The CHAIRMAN: And he kept up the differential of the 1d?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, I have a copy of Sir Albert Rollit's Award. It apparently is not dated, but it was between July 27, 1911, and, I think, August 18, 1911.

The CHAIRMAN: August, 1911, we will put it down as.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I am told it is August 4, 1911.

The CHAIRMAN: Very good.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: And the Award is: "In view of the increase of pay granted by the Port of London Authority and wharfingers under the Agreement of July 27, 1911, there shall, as regards the discharge of vessels engaged in the oversea trade, where the operation is carried on by shipowners or their contractors, be an increase of pay to 8d. per hour to men at present employed at 7d. per hour, and an increase in the overtime rate to 1s. per hour where such is not paid at present." That, my Lord, preserved the differential.

Mr. BEVIN: I will hand up a copy. (*†Copy handed to his Lordship.*)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I do not think your Lordship's attention has been called to the London Agreement of April of last year, the forty-four hours' Agreement. That is the next document* in the bundle that has been handed in. It is headed: "Terms of Agreement." Your Lordship will see that it is made between the Port of London Authority, the Wharfingers, the Shipowners' Dock Labour Committee, the Short Sea Traders' Association, the Master Stevedores' Association, and the National Transport Workers' Federation. It is signed by my friend Mr. Bevin and Lord Devonport.

The CHAIRMAN: This is the one to which so frequent reference has been made.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: It is quite agreed that it is correct.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: There are one or two clauses I want to draw the attention of the Court to. Clause 1, under the heading, "Ordinary Hours of Work," provides for a quarter of an hour before 8 or 1 o'clock being used in proceeding to work and in other preliminaries, so that work may be commenced at 8 o'clock and 1 o'clock?—(A.) Yes.

† Not printed.

* See Appendix No. 109.

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Q. With regard to making a punctual start in the morning, your experience of the port of your own employees is that that is observed?—(A.) Yes, I make no complaint concerning that.

The CHAIRMAN: You have no complaint about that?—(A.) Not about the start.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The Agreement goes on that work is not to cease until 12 noon or 5 o'clock. Do you find that work is carried on up to the finishing periods of 12 or 5 o'clock?—(A.) I make no complaint concerning 5 o'clock regarding our men, but I do complain of the inclination and practice of breaking away from a quarter to 12 onward in practically every department of our service.

The CHAIRMAN: From a quarter to 12—(A.) From a quarter to 12 onwards.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The third provision of Clause 1 is that work is to be continuous and without intermission during each half-day period?—(A.) So far as the general body of men are concerned, except for the instance I have quoted, I raise no objection.

The CHAIRMAN: What paragraph are you on?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The third paragraph of Clause 1, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: "Work to be continuous and without intermission"?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Work to be continuous and without intermission, so that the work is continuous and without intermission except for the breaking away at a quarter to 12 and onwards by the general dock and warehouse labour. Do you find that that Clause is observed by the men employed at the granary department in the Surrey Docks and by the deal porters?—(A.) In neither case. The granary men consistently break away for a quarter of an hour morning and afternoon. The deal porters, who originally broke away for five minutes in each hour, now break away in the main for 15 minutes in each hour of the day.

The CHAIRMAN: The deal men?—(A.) The deal porters.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Do you mean to say that they break away for 10 or 15 minutes in every hour of the day?—(A.) Not as between 8 and 9, but immediately after 9, and after 10; then on occasions after 11, but not every day, because, of course, 12 o'clock is the luncheon interval. They resume at 1, they break away after 2, and very often after 3.

Q. So that in the morning you lose three periods of 15 minutes each?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And in the afternoon 2 periods of 15 minutes each?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With regard to the deal porters, do you find that they work slower and do a less output than formerly?—(A.) Their output to-day, following an announced intention to work slower and carry lighter loads, and the overthrowal of piece-work, may be averaged at 23 to 30 per cent. less than pre-war; on occasions it has reached a lessening output of 50 per cent., and the port, so far as timber is concerned, is hung up because of that. The quays are congested.

Q. What has been the effect of that? Have they recently refused to unload unless cranes were provided?—(A.) 2½ or 3 months ago they quite

suddenly, without notice, told us that they would not unload cargoes of wood in the Surrey Commercial Docks without cranes. That was quite an innovation, and as a result for quite 2½ months, nearer 3 months, about 144 barges have been held up. The Authority could not get cranes at a minute's notice, and we could not persuade the men to unload these barges in the docks, although every morning as I travel I see them unloading barges at other places in the Surrey Canal for competitors.

Q. In consequence of that those 130 to 140 barges have been lying there unloaded for 2½ months?—(A.) All that time.

Q. Are you greatly in need of barges?—(A.) It is one of the great needs of the Port.

Q. You formulated a scheme in conjunction with the Board of Trade so that the men might know overnight what the requirements of the different employers were likely to be on the following day?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That at present is in operation at the Victoria and Albert Docks?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It has not yet been brought into operation at the other docks?—(A.) No. It is based very largely on the Authority's own scheme of formulating their own requirements at 2 o'clock in the day for the day following, and notifying their permanent and B men where work is to be obtained by exhibiting notices in conspicuous places in the docks and at the dock gates.

Q. I think a copy of that has been handed in: **this* is it?—(A.) That is our own and the shipowners' combined notice.

Q. Here are set out the number of workmen that are likely to be required.—(A.) And the time.

Q. Is that a scheme that you hope will be adopted at other docks?—(A.) It is a scheme that I recommend. It announces to a man where he can obtain work.

Q. You have one other Statement which I might deal with: you have set out the Port of London Authority's employees in the engineering department and their pre-war and present rates of pay.—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It is on the reverse side of the last document, my Lord. On the front are the rates of wages to the building trade operatives in the London District, and on the other side are the figures I have just referred to.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin will admit that, I suppose. They have given the rates of pay of all the other trades.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, they are accurate so far as I can see.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS (to the Witness): What view do you hold as to the effect upon those rates of pay if the present demand were granted?—(A.) The other grades would demand increases; and there is yet a further grade I will add to those: that is the coopers who work in close connection with the dockers. They would also require an increase.

Q. All these men have not a 44-hour week but a 48-hour week?—(A.) Yes. The cooper has about a 37½-hour week, and he would require an increase if the men had one. We have only just settled their case, as a matter of fact, but they are bound to come again.

Q. In the past, when the Authority have granted an increase to their dock and warehouse staff, they have given an increase to their clerical

* See Appendix No. 110.

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staff!—(A.) Yes, and to the foremen, of course, and other supervisory grades.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I am just going now to put a question about overtime, my Lord, whether it is necessary to work a certain amount of overtime in the Port of London.

The CHAIRMAN: Put that question, but do not go into that.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS (*to the Witness*): Is that so?—(A.) Yes, overtime is necessary to be worked but the Authority rigidly discourages it.

Q. The percentage of overtime worked in London is very small, is it not?—(A.) I have worked it out on the basis of hours, and it is between 5 and 6 per cent. of the total hours worked.

The CHAIRMAN: In the Port of London?—(A.) By the Port of London Authority. It is quite negligible at the moment.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I think it is not worked after 7 o'clock as a rule, is it?—(A.) No; the men have a disinclination to work, and the Authority contrives to keep the overtime hours as low as possible.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not think any of us have said that some amount of overtime is not necessary.

The CHAIRMAN: No.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS (*to the Witness*): In December of last year you inspected the Port of Antwerp, did you not?—(A.) I did.

Q. Is the work in that port in the hands of the Municipality subject to the control of the Government?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that a Government port?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The work is in the hands of the Municipality of Antwerp, my Lord, and it is subject to the control of the Government. (*To the Witness.*) Have the Government usually provided the capital for the extension of the quay walls and the extra accommodation?—(A.) That is what we were told.

Q. And the Municipality has provided the equipment?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The warehousing is in the hands of private persons, is it not?—(A.) In the main, yes.

Q. I think the Municipality do not employ any labour, do they?—(A.) Only for their mechanical appliances, cranes, and floating elevators.

Q. Before the war Antwerp dealt with some 14,000,000 ton gross per annum?—(A.) Yes, that was the figure supplied to us.

Q. During the war that entirely ceased, did it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is the trade now rapidly picking up there?—(A.) The Port Master told us so. He gave us the figures for the month of November, 1915, of 563,500 tons.

Q. That is the tons of shipping?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: By gross do you mean shipping?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: You are coming on to the tonnage of goods handled?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS (*to the Witness*): What was the first figure you gave, 14,000,000 tons gross?—(A.) Shipping.

Q. You have not any figure of tons of goods handled, have you?—(A.) No; the Germans unfortunately took away the bulk of the records. During their occupation they got hold of those documents and took them away together with some of the plans.

The CHAIRMAN: By the necessity of the case the Antwerp figure must be pre-war, must it not?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: How many men were employed at Antwerp before the war?—(A.) 25,000.

Q. And how many at present?—(A.) When we were there 16,000. We were there in late December last.

Q. Is that number rapidly increasing?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are the working hours at Antwerp at present 48 per week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But there is no weekly half-holiday, is there?—(A.) No, it is a full day on Saturday.

Q. And there is no limit to overtime, is there?—(A.) No.

Q. That 48-hour week is a matter which is now under discussion between the men and the employers, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The men, I think, are asking for the 44-hour week?—(A.) Yes, they are asking for the half-day.

Q. There are three main classes of men employed there, are there not; first the stevedore, who works on the ship?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then the reception men, who work on the quays and in the sheds?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And the men who work in the sheds and warehouses?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They are known as Corporation men?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is there a recognised differential between their rates of pay?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is the daily rate of a stevedore?—(A.) At the time of our visit it was 16 francs, or, at the rate of exchange, 8s.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you go back to the pre-war period, because the rate of the exchange makes a difficulty.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: 16 francs at a normal rate of exchange would be 12s. 8d. (*To the Witness*): Then the reception men get 15 francs a day, which is just about 11s. 9d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is 11s. 9d. correct?—(A.) Yes, that is near enough.

Q. And the Corporation men who are working in the warehouse get 12 francs, or 9s. 6d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Were you able to get any official statistics about the cost of living there?—(A.) In a very broad sense: there were no official statistics available because the Germans had taken what few they had, but the figures quoted by men in a position to know, Presidents of Chambers of Commerce, bankers, and so on, varied from 100 to 400 per cent. above pre-war cost.

Q. For different commodities?—(A.) Yes. I can give you instances: bread had risen from 25 centimes per kilo to 85 centimes, and butter from 2.8 to 3 francs a kilo to 14 or 15 francs.

Q. They work there in 4-hourly periods as here, do they not?—(A.) Yes, morning and afternoon.

Q. Did you make inquiries as to the output of the men there?—(A.) I saw the men at work.

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Q. Did you also make inquiries of the shipping companies?—(A.) Yes, but they hesitated to give me anything in the nature of figures exemplifying the turn-round of ships, and I was then driven to take my own focussed vision of what I will call the stroke of the men as compared with other Continental ports with which I am well acquainted, and practically the whole of the ports in England. I was exceedingly impressed by the speed of the Antwerp docker; it was even better than when I saw it 15 to 17 years before. That is to say, the men in common parlance practically trot at their work. Owing to the state of the quays, and for other reasons, they do not use the labour-assisting hand trucks that we have in this country, but I saw scores of men carrying up to 2 and 2½ cwt. on their backs to the tops of the piles and the beams or trusses of the quay sheds. It was a feature that indelibly impressed me from the point of view of competition; and everywhere you go the foreign shipowner or the agent of the English shipowner tells you that Antwerp can beat London or any other port in England out and out. That phrase was often expressed.

Mr. HARRY GOSLING: In sweating.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Did you ascertain anything as to the punctuality in commencing work?—(A.) They have no difficulty with their men at all: their men are punctual in commencing and work on to the stroke of leaving.

Q. Did you observe considerable activity with regard to port improvements?—(A.) As soon as materials are available, and they are becoming available even there, there will be considerable additions to the Port of Antwerp to compete with the near Continental ports, and more than once it was emphasised to us to compete with London. I have plans in my office which, if his Lordship desires, I can produce showing some of the contemplated projections and very big extensions.

Q. As a result of your inspection, were you impressed with the fact that there was a very keen desire to put up a vigorous competition with other ports?—(A.) That was expressed by those in authority.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. Dealing with the wages of London first, I want to take you to the plus system. I think on the other figures there is no dispute between us. You said in your evidence that the average wages of the Port of London men, including plus and including overtime, were £3 17s. per week. Do you think the plus system is a system that is intended to be a piecework system?—(A.) Yes, with a guaranteed minimum.

Q. We are agreed about that. Do you think that a piecework system which only yields about 4s. a week over the time rate is a satisfactory piecework system?—(A.) The piecework system of the Port Authority yields in instances up to 20s. per week.

Q. I am dealing with the average. I am taking your own figure. Your own figure is that on the average it is about 4s. a week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Not talking about every rate, but on the average, do you think that piece-work system that is so out of date that it only yields 4s. per week over the day-work system is a satisfactory system?—(A.) I do.

Q. You do?—(A.) Subject to the fact that the Union were invited some little time ago to make submissions regarding what might be called lean rates, because we have both lean and fat; and it is provided for in the agreement, but—

Q. What Union? Our Union?—(A.) The Dockers' Union.

Q. We were invited?—(A.) Yes, to discuss rates, particularly rates that had not proved so productive under the 10 per cent. addition as before.

Q. Then you are agreed that if the Union submits after this case is settled a new system of piece-rates which will yield a proper percentage over the day rates, you will go into the matter and re-adjust the whole of this thing?—(A.) Provided so far as my humble position is concerned I am satisfied before making my submission to the Authority that the men give a reasonable output. There are two ways of arriving at a satisfactory yield—one is to put the rates up so that at time rate stroke they will produce, say, time and a-half, and the other is to have something less than that so that the man is compelled or asked to give some additional effort in order to increase his wage—a reasonable effort, I agree.

Q. Supposing that with all the evidence you have in the Port of London Authority now you assume that the time rate is put up to 16s., and you take off the present earning of the plus, that is to say you assume that with the plus a man would be earning instead of £4 8s., £4 12s. at the moment, as regards that portion which yields him the 4s., which must be plus output to yield him the 4s., do you suggest that that portion should yield 50 per cent?—(A.) I do not suggest it: I have heard it suggested, not publicly but privately.

Q. Is not the proper way to fix piece rates—I am not talking about 50 per cent.—I am putting this question because the whole problem of payment by results is now in the melting-pot, not only for this calling but for every calling in the country.—(A.) Yes.

Q. I suggest to you that one of our troubles in getting the men to look at payment by results is the very meagre result of a piece-work scheme like your plus scheme.—(A.) That may be due to more than one cause. In my experience as a practical officer at the docks I have on many occasions had to blame the men for want of effort, and I cannot forget it.

Q. But you have got a plus system which on the average yields 4s. a week, and out of that plus system you have got administrators mixed up in some cases with the sharing of it, have not you?—(A.) The ganger, who does his best and uses his brains in the interests of the men that they may earn the biggest possible plus.

Q. And with the ganger in it using his brains, and with all his tremendous capacity for organisation assisting the men, it yields on an average 4s. a week?—(A.) At the moment. There are reasons why it does not yield more.

Q. I think you will agree that that is not satisfactory?—(A.) It is not, but I could give some reasons why it is not satisfactory.

Q. I think as long as we agree it is not satisfactory we are on the way to try and discuss something that will be.—(A.) Yes, but I would like to give you the reasons at some other time.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Just give them now?—(A.) We will take exports. Our men, as I have said, are in attendance ready to start work at 8 o'clock. The stevedore generally is not ready until half-past 8. Our men lose half-an-hour. That detracts from plus and puts the job in debt. That happens nearly every day.

Mr. BEVIN: Then, if you are going to deal with this piece-work problem you cannot deal with it,

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can you, as a Port of London Authority pure and simple; it has to be dealt with as a port proper?—(A.) Not necessarily. We have always been able to deal with it as a domestic matter.

Q. I want to get at the actual results of it. If you have one set of men on one basis, and on one method of payment, and another set of men who have no interest in that method at all, and on an entirely different basis, does not that lead to an interest in the output in the one case and no interest in the other?—(A.) Yes, in a very broad sense, but that can be tuned up. We always work piece-work with exports, although the stevedores receiving the goods from us work day-work.

Q. My point is this. If you are going to put piece-work on a satisfactory basis, is it not really necessary for the Port of London to look at it as a whole problem in the broad general sense to see how far the systems can be inter-linked and put on a satisfactory basis in order to get the results from both points?—(A.) That would make for a better output, and I should say the Port of London Authority would welcome such an idea.

Q. We have some ideas on the labour side after all. I want to get to the deal porters. I think you will agree that the condition of deal porters in London, antiquated as it was, the system of contracting that existed was a system that ought not to be perpetuated?—(A.) So far do I agree with that that, with the help of my Chairman, I have used every endeavour to try and alter it, but the men steadfastly decline.

Q. You referred to slower work and lighter loads?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think the deal carrier, to earn a living, would have to carry under the old system from 1½ cwt. to 3 cwt. on his back?—(A.) 3 cwt. is a lot to carry on his back. I have never seen 3 cwt. carried.

Q. They did not double up, did they, until they had a deal which was almost impossible for a human to handle in London?—(A.) When you get deals almost impossible for a human being to handle they are handled by crane.

Q. I am taking the carriers. I have watched the carriers of deals in London, and I say quite frankly there are no other deal carriers in any part of the country who would carry deals as they carry them in London.—(A.) Have you seen them in Hull and Grimsby, as I have quite recently?

Q. They do not carry the loads that they carry in London?—(A.) I have seen them carrying the loads they carried pre-war in London as recently as November and December last. I made a tour of the deal ports, not with that idea, but keeping my eyes open, I saw it and examined it.

Q. We will disagree about that because the loads are not so heavy, according to the rules, in the other ports. To earn a living or get a decent day's pay under the old system they would carry at least a standard an hour, would not they?—(A.) No. Under the old system, which, if I may use the term, was a mongrel system—you know what I mean.

Q. Yes.—(A.) It was not the porter that carried the deal who got the money, but the man who employed him, and that was what the Authority desired to stamp out—to give the individual who did the work the result of his efforts. Even so, the men would not have it.

Q. But you do agree that in modern days you could not expect the old loads of pre-war days to be carried?—(A.) I will agree with you to some extent on that, but there is a difference between agreeing with that and having an announced 30 per cent. decrease in output with a wilful in-

attention of trying to force an increase of 50 per cent. in price.

Q. I am coming to that. What is the percentage increase to the deal carrier over pre-war?—(A.) To-day?

Q. Yes.—(A.) Some years before the outbreak of war their price, I think, was 1s. 2d., but we never exactly know because it is a rate fixed by the ganger or the contractor whom we employ and the men. It is with the greatest difficulty that the Authority can find out what actually was paid.

Q. What do you pay per standard now?—(A.) There are three sheets of rates; but piecework is dead. We are working day work: the men will not work piece-work. They had a fixed rate two or three years ago of 1s. 4d. an hour, which they are working to to-day as a flat day rate, with 9½d. per hour average war bonus.

Q. What is the flat day rate now?—(A.) 1s. 4d., a rate of their own fixing. The Authority were not concerned with it; they were not asked.

Q. What would the advance be over pre-war; take 1914 and now?—(A.) The 9½d. an hour war bonus, and you might introduce the 2d., the difference between the 1s. 2d., the old rate, and the 1s. 4d., the present rate; but when that applied we do not know.

Q. Was not that for the reduction of hours, the 2d. an hour?—(A.) No, it was long before that.

Q. That is 11½d., is not it?—(A.) Yes, if you introduce the 2d., but I do not know when that 2d. was introduced.

Q. The actual amount given to them for the war advance is 9½d. an hour, is not it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If they had a rate of 1s. 2d. before or 1s. 4d., whichever is the case, it makes very little difference in the percentage; it is only about 65 per cent. over pre-war, is not it?—(A.) If you put it that way; but the Authority offered them a per cent. increase on piece-work. They refused to accept it.

Q. I am looking at how you have treated them over the war wage first of all. You are talking about rates, and I am talking about war rates.—(A.) But the two are intermixed.

Q. They are when they draw them, I know. This 30 per cent. reduction at the moment, in your opinion, is an alternative to strike action to secure an economic result?—(A.) Yes, it was purposely expressed; it was told me openly.

Q. So it is a temporary passing phase?—(A.) We are hoping this inquiry may bring the thing to an end and bring the men to their senses.

Q. And the employers?—(A.) That is for you to say.

Q. After this Inquiry there is a hope of being able to settle that little matter up?—(A.) I sincerely hope so. Let us get on with the work; we are only playing with it, or not even that.

Q. There is the point of levelling up the rates. The rates we suggest that should be levelled are the rates apart from the 13s. 9d. men and the 14s. men. We suggest that the 13s. 9d. men and the 14s. men would be above the 16s., and that the difference of 3d. should be wiped out. Do you see any difficulty likely to accrue because that 3d. a day is wiped out?—(A.) On the 3d. I do not think so, if it stopped there.

Q. Then we agree on one point. There are four rates below those men including the lightermen. In the case of the lightermen and the Port of London Authority men there is 4d. a day difference, is not there?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There would not be much difficulty in wiping those two out, would there?—(A.) It seems to me that the lightermen will have to come up to the Authority's rate.

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Q. That is two more that we can consolidate. There is then the wharfingers' rate, and the short sea traders' rate.—(A.) You will notice there is a difference of 1s. 4d. with regard to the watchmen.

Q. I am discussing now the main bulk of the men, the 11s. 4d. men. I do not know myself the actual technicality of the watchmen and other people. I am assuming, as his Lordship indicated yesterday, that there should be some little adjustment along the general principle. That leaves us with just the short sea traders and the wharfingers' men. The wharfingers' men at the moment, that is the shore men, are the same as the Port of London Authority men?—(A.) Yes, they follow us.

Q. The only point that comes in, then, is the short sea traders' and the wharfingers' shipment, is not it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I am suggesting that, in spite of all the difficulties of the Rollit Award, if it is agreed between the parties, they can be brought with the Port of London Authority's men and the lightermen on to the 16s. rate?—(A.) I think my answer must be that nothing is impossible along that line, but my experience leads me to this: that where there has been a difference there will continue to be a difference.

Q. Was not the difficulty this, that in 1911 this point of fixing a minimum standard for the country was not before you at all?—(A.) No.

Q. Had it not been for the Rollit Award certain men under these conditions would have had no advance at all?—(A.) No.

Q. Owing to an attempt to include the men who had previously been slightly higher than the minimum on the rate then agreed?—(A.) But there was the Rollit Award.

Q. Is not there a difference, I put it to you, between two parties agreeing on a principle as a basis of negotiations and two parties going into negotiations on opposite principles?—(A.) There is a difference, yes.

Q. So that if the parties could agree that up to a certain point they should go on the minimum, and negotiations went on that basis, is not there a greater chance of consolidating those rates than there would be if one or the other was in opposition?—(A.) As a theorem, yes; that is theory; it is not borne out by actuality.

Q. Do you think this difficulty or this opposition to a standard minimum is any greater than the opposition that was submitted to us for the standard national hours of 44?—(A.) Yes, it is on a different plane.

Q. Is it not a fact that your Authority—at least I will not say your Authority, but the Port of London employers through their representative in their negotiations for the 44-hour week, were directed to stand out most stubbornly against the 44 hours, and against it being nationally applied?—(A.) I do not know. I was not present at those negotiations.

Q. Was it not after all found that, when the national principle of 44 hours was established, it was comparatively easy, when both sides went to work with a definite principle established, the basic principle established of 44 hours, for the parties to adjust their differences in the Port of London?—(A.) But what was the basic principle on which the forty-four hours was established. It had a varying base in London—fifty-two hours. I do not know what it was at the outports—probably longer.

Q. We did decide that whatever the pay was for the old hours should be applied to the new as near as possible?—(A.) Yes.

Q. When we did that, was it not a fact that we found ourselves with a multiplicity of hours for

all the different sections?—(A.) That is very likely.

Q. In London I think we had the Short Sea Traders with one set of hours; we had you with another, had not we?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But, having decided the principle, we then set to compose our differences on the details, and found a settlement?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I want to be quite frank with the Court and you, that certain rates have to be consolidated up to a point. If the 16s. minimum is granted by this Court, and that is a definite given award or decision of this Court, and the Federation, with all its responsibility and a recognition of its responsibility, and the employers accepting the same responsibility, go into negotiation with a view to giving effect to that change, while there may be little eruptions here or there temporarily, it will lead to a stabilisation of conditions and a general improvement as between port and port and sections in the ports?—(A.) I am afraid we must agree to differ on that, on my experience.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you pass from that, Mr. Bevin, I am very much obliged to you for putting it in that clear way—a distinct understanding that certain rates are to be consolidated. I take, for instance, 11s. 8d., 12s. 8d., and 13s. 4d.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: What about any rates that are below 11s. 8d?

Mr. BEVIN: They would come up to it. I do not know that there is any.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: There are the lightermen and the watchmen that the next witness will refer to, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: I rather put it the other way, my Lord: take 13s. 4d. downwards.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what I was leading up to. I want to make a clean job, you know. The point is 13s. 4d. downwards.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: I follow that. Assume the rate to be what you demand, 16s. or 15s.; why should not the 13s. 9d. men be also content when the others are evened up to be evened up also?

Mr. BEVIN: I have been quite frank with the Court. There are conditions associated with that class of man which is not with the others, and I have said in the early negotiations that I did not assume that you could standardise completely in one fell swoop. What I did say was—and I have said it in this Court before—that if you take the 13s. 9d. men and the 14s. men, the margin between them and the bottom man has been widened over pre-war by the operation of the war bonuses. What I have said to the employers—and I repeat here in public—is that we are prepared to arrange above the 16s. somewhere around for those men the pre-war differential. That is what I have put quite clearly. That would reduce the Port of London rates down to about—the deal porters may or may not be pieceworkers—but, outside of piecework, it reduces what is about 5 or 6 rates down to about 2. That is our view, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: I am very much obliged to you, but just take the 13s. 9d. man, what would

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he get? I am only putting a conjectural figure, but suppose all your 13s. 4d. men downwards were lifted at one swoop, as you say, up to 15s.?

Mr. BEVIN: I want you to keep 16s. in your mind, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, we will say 16s. I was only putting any figure in order to test the principle. Assume it was 16s.; where would the 13s. 9d. men go?

Mr. BEVIN: I must give a conjectural figure, too, one that I hope my friends will not hold me to.

The CHAIRMAN: No, it is only to test the thing.

Mr. BEVIN: My view is that they would range about 17s. 6d. The difference between the two sections before the war was in the one case 1s. 6d. and in the other case I believe 1s. 5d. a day. Those were the figures we had yesterday. That came about in this way, my Lord. The stevedore was paid nine hours at 10d. per hour, and he was not paid for his meal hour. The docker was paid 8d. an hour, but was paid for his meal hour. The payment for that meal hour brought the difference to near about where the difference exists at the moment, about 3d. or a few coppers a day. We suggest that now the 44-hour men and the other men are to be on the same hours, and all the other conditions have been harmonised, the 13s. 9d. should become 14s. for the purpose of our calculation, and that the rates for the two section of men (which in 1900 I admit, in the case of the second, and in the case of the first for many years before, have been slightly different) should be, as I indicate, somewhere about 1s. 6d. a day for the minimum.

The CHAIRMAN: On the assumption of us fixing a figure upon the footing that it regulates 13s. 9d. downwards, is there any hope of the parties arranging some working and definite scale for labour from 13s. 9d. upwards?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I just intervene at this moment. There are one or two most vital points on this very question to be considered. Taking the man who has 13s. 9d. he is the London shipowners' docker. It is proposed that he should go to 17s. 6d. If your Lordship looks down, take the wharfingers' ship man; he is at 13s. 4d. now, only 5d. under the shipowners' docker, and he would only get 16s. There would be two ship men, one would be 16s., the other 17s. 6d.

The CHAIRMAN: That is quite manifest. We have been talking about that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is one point I am sure my friend will consider.

The CHAIRMAN: They would be increasing the 5d. difference to a 1s. 6d. difference?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The difficulty is this, that you would be taking two men who were ship men and putting them in the future on a different wage level.

The CHAIRMAN: All that I am leading to, Sir Lynden, is simply this: once you have got an answer to the minimum question that is framed in the claim, would there be any likelihood of the parties coming to such an arrangement with regard to those that would be above that scale, so as

to enable all parties to know where they were, and let peace prevail at the port. We are anxious about that. I do not press either of you for an answer just now, but please in your conferences together consider whether you can assist the Court in that particular.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I take it it will be this. If the minimum is lifted a number of these grades—I daresay we may dispute at the moment how many—would insist upon going up, and the question would be at what upper level they could go to.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the point; because Mr. Bevin has made a very important statement which he said must be the basis of any award, that is to say that the figure adjusted by this Court shall be a figure which will involve the levelling up of all those men now enjoying 13s. 9d. downwards, levelling up to a certain fixed figure. What we want to arrange about that is that, by the arrangement of the parties, any award given by this Court would be upon that distinct understanding, which is put forward on the part of the claimants quite honourably, and that it should be obeyed. What we want to know is if we can do anything more for you in that direction in regard to the further rates upward. It is in the interests of the port and the public that that should be done if possible. Kindly consider that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Quite so; but I am going to ask Mr. Matthews in re-examination some questions on that very matter.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to put this perfectly clearly in response to your statement. I have given you a conjectural statement, speaking from memory. There may be grades in that statement which I ought not to use. There are two ways in which I am prepared, on behalf of the Federation, to proceed if the other side agrees. It is this: You can take first of all a figure, and express in that figure the grades of work. On the other hand you can express the class of work as between ship men and given men, but my figure of 13s. 4d. applied to London. I want to make that perfectly clear, because the condition is not exactly the same, only so far as the minimum is concerned, in other ports. But I am quite prepared (and I know I am speaking for the Executive of the Federation) to go even further than you have asked, and say that if your Court decided to give us the 16s. minimum there might be prepared by the parties for your confirmation a schedule setting forth in each port who the 16s. should definitely apply to, and the grades that should be considered as maintaining a differential. I am prepared to go that far.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Is my friend prepared to go down to Glasgow and enforce that on the men against their consent, for example?

Mr. BEVIN: I do submit, my Lord, with all due deference to the Counsel, that it is not helpful to industrial settlement when Counsel for the other side assumes that I am not speaking for the men I represent, and I rather resent it. I never challenge whether his employers will carry out an agreement or not; but in all this case it is assumed that I am not speaking for Glasgow or Gloucester, or somewhere else. I have definite directions from the Glasgow Executive here, sitting around me now, that they will consolidate the 12s. 8d. and the 14s. men, and, on the assumption that both get 16s., the Glasgow men will make a common cause for 16s. to rule for the port. That is a very

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definite position. I do suggest, if I may make this little digression, that if Counsel on the other side is leading the people outside, through the Press, to believe that if it had not been for me these differentials would have been maintained, and order need not be restored in the ports, then my task is made very difficult, because it will be assumed, when the top man is not going to get quite so much as the bottom, that it is I who have placed him in a false position in trying to give effect to a policy which I believe is in the interest of the country. I say emphatically that, while men may resent our settlement, as they have in other industries, we shall not go back to the employers to ask them to alter it. If men resist it we shall contest the carrying out of the agreement with our own men once we have appended our hand to it. I have never yet gone back to a body of employers since I have been a permanent official of my own Union, and repudiated an agreement I have once signed. In this case if a schedule is drawn out on the basis of my 16s., I can say on behalf of the Federation, "Come what may, we will stand by it."

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I only just say this in reply to it. These are the hard facts of the proposition. In London 13s. 9d. would go up to 17s. 6d., while Glasgow's 14s. and the other ports' 14s. would only go up to 16s. That shows the unstable equilibrium of the proposal. In London 13s. 9d. is to go up to 17s. 6d.; 14s. in other ports only 16s.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope the air has been a little cleared. I am still anxious that the parties should meet together. I do not like the court being faced with saying: "If we give the whole advance it will be so much," because that seemed—I am sure Mr. Bevin did not mean it—to be holding a threat to us that unless we gave every ounce of the demand there would not be good consequences following. I hope that Mr. Bevin, on consideration, will say that, having given every person a fair run here, and fixed in our view what the justice of the case thought should be the daily wage, then all the principles which he has set up would apply to what he has said. The other thing that I wish to say is that I do think that Mr. Bevin is entitled to be treated as representing the solidarity of the British dock labourer, and any award given by this court will be upon the footing that the pledge he has given will be, so far as he and all whom he can influence directly or indirectly in the direction of an honourable undertaking, will be honourably obeyed. Mr. Bevin is entitled to that concession from you, and I am sure you will make it. Your difficulty is with regard to past experience; but here is, for the first time in our history, a demand for a universal minimum, and it is made upon the condition that that universal minimum will not be the cause of internecine strife among various classes of workmen. We will accept that that is not to be the footing of it. If you can arrange any schedule about those who go over the minimum relative to a previous datum we will be very glad.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, but I must say this on behalf of the employers. We are quite willing to make that concession to Mr. Bevin, but the 8-hour day national agreement experience is before us all. That agreement provided for an 8-hour working day. Your Lordship has had the evidence: we have not got the 8-hour working day: in some parts it is down to 6, in others 6½, in others 7; and there has been nothing like an en-

forcement upon all the dock labour of the country of that which they have agreed to give—namely, a full 8-hour working day.

The CHAIRMAN: If you can help us about an enforcement we will be very glad, because such an enforcement would be in the line of Mr. Bevin's wishes and the wishes of all the officials of all Trade Unions in the country.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: While we do not desire to disparage Mr. Bevin's power in any respect, we must have regard to what has been the experience in the past in the most recent national settlement in dock labour on this very point. Your Lordship cannot disregard, if I may submit with great respect to Mr. Bevin, that immediate experience which now is operating all through the country.

The CHAIRMAN: Just let me put it in this way to make it clear. What a confusing thing it would have been if, before the arrangement of the average 44 hours had been made, one of the parties had said: "You may do what you like, they will not respect it," and they accordingly made no national agreement. There would be no progress made at all.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Is not it the same condition now. Here is a national minimum of money. It is rather a hopeless thing to say to a Court: "You may fix what you like, whatever the justice of the case demands, but you need not fix anything because it will not be respected." What are we to do? Is not our duty just to go according to the justice of the case, to state the terms of money for justice on one side in the terms of honour upon the other, and leave justice and honour to prevail according to the social requirements, the feeling of moral responsibility, and so forth. It is our duty to give an answer to the question.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Is not it also the Court's duty to see that, if the Court does fix a minimum wage, the public (because after all they are the persons dependent upon the great dock industry) get for that minimum wage the amount of work which they ought to get.

The CHAIRMAN: From the first hour of this case till now I have been striving for light upon that question. How are we going to get that secured? I have given an idea, namely, that we should by fixing the wage give the workman a motive to increase his output, and make his wage more valuable in purchasing power. That is the only idea—I hope I do not speak in terms of too great admiration of what emanates from the Court—on the subject that I have ever got from the other side. If you can help us, Sir Lynden, with regard to some mechanism or some inducement which would assist the agreements being kept instead of being broken, we will be very glad.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Quite. I can put in half a dozen words the proposals which I was going to ultimately make, and they are these: firstly, that there should be established for the whole industry a national Joint Council of employers and employed, and in each port a local Port Labour Committee, and that should be the machinery through which pressure should be put both upon the employers so far as it was necessary, and upon the men so far as it was necessary.

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That is No. 1. Then, secondly, a proper system of piecework or payments by results should be put in operation everywhere wherever practicable. and, thirdly, that the breaking away and the failure to give the 8-hour day, which is a most vital matter, should be taken up at once, and the men who are offenders against that agreement be fined by their own Unions for their failure to carry out the agreements made by their Unions, and for which they ought to be responsible.

The CHAIRMAN: All that shows me that there is light ahead; it also makes it quite conclusive; but it does not help us in fixing the just figure to assume that the thing is not going to be the subject of honourable consequence.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, I do not ask your Lordship to do that.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what I mean. Output is necessary for agreement. The people want it, the ports want it, the workmen will get no good by not giving it. Therefore, we want that position changed. Both parties at our Bar are entirely united in that. Let us confine this to the question; how is the financial part to be run; apart from any *arrière pensée* with regard to output. You are going to arrange about that possibly if we fix the figure. The point I want to finish with is: get at such a figure that you will on the financial figuring of it out, understand where you are, not only from the point downwards but from the same point upwards. Now you have our views, and we do not trouble you further. We are sorry to have interposed, Mr. Bevin, but I think you will agree that the conversation has been useful.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It has been most useful, but will your Lordship remember this: There is no fund out of which wages can be paid apart from the industry, and the industry means what is produced in the industry; therefore your Lordship must have regard to output in connection with the question of these new wages.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we will have regard to a good deal more than output. We will have to say something very pointed about output; we will have to say something very pointed about whole gangs of willing men being stopped in their trade by the conduct of such people as the hatchmen; we will have to say something on the other side of the account with regard to the absence of necessary machinery, and with regard to the action of the Government. We will have to see that any engagements are obeyed on both sides, and that neither side is impeded by Government action. All that thing will come; but the point that we want to get at at present is: In fixing a figure, is there any reason why we should not draw a line and say: Upwards from that the figure ought to be so-and-so; downwards from that the parties will arrange the figure? That is what we are after, Mr. Bevin.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am not going at this stage to address your Lordship, but I must do it because I shall have to show your Lordship the very different consequences which will result according as you draw the line.

The CHAIRMAN: I know.

Mr. BEVIN: You suggested, my Lord, that my statement, when I said "on the assumption that

16s. is granted," looked like a threat to the Court. I can assure you that I did not intend anything as a threat; but you will permit me to say this, that one of our troubles in carrying out agreements is that so often in the final point of the settlement we are driven down below what we conscientiously believe is the right thing, upon which we can feel sure that we can carry out our undertaking. That is the reason why I used the term "assumption," not in any way as threatening the Court or making a condition. If an agreement were imposed in that way I should have to do my level best with it, which I should do, as I have done with arbitration awards; but I wanted to make my point clear.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you have done so.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you.

Q. I wanted to deal with the grain porter breaking away. A good deal has been made of this breaking away. You said that a grain porter earns £7 a week on piece work?—(A.) That is not the grain porter who breaks away. I am talking of the dock and warehouse labourers breaking away in the granary of the Surrey Dock as distinct from the granaries in our other docks. It is peculiar to that dock and to that batch of about 120 men.

Q. I am putting it to you that it is only about 120 men.—(A.) Yes, at the moment.

Q. You are the Assistant Manager of the Port of London Authority?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The men are in a Union?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you asked that Union's representative to come in and have a talk with you about it?—(A.) The Superintendent of the Dock has, more than once.

Q. But have you?—(A.) Personally, no. I have been content to rely on his action, which he has duly reported to me but the men have denied the Union on it.

Q. This is about 120 men out of the whole lot?—(A.) Yes, it is peculiar to that department.

Q. And I presume a very old custom?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that in the carrying out of the 44-hour Agreement we have given effect to it in that section down to 120 men?—(A.) Yes; but you will remember that it is the dock where the deal porters break away, too.

Q. Quite; it is a custom running right through?—(A.) Not in other docks with the same class of men or work.

Q. No, it is one dock, one area, one old custom?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The 44-hour Agreement has been in operation twelve months?—(A.) Since April.

Q. During the proceedings of the 44-hour Agreement I think you were present.—(A.) No.

Q. I think you remember that it has been suggested that a Joint Committee might be set up for London?—(A.) Arising out of the conferences on the Agreement?

Q. The 44-hour Agreement.—(A.) I have not heard of it.

Q. I did mention it at the proceedings, and thought something would be done. There is no Joint Committee or regular meeting of consultation for the whole of London, is there?—(A.) No.

Q. There are Sectional Committees, but no General Committee for the whole of London?—(A.) No, not at the moment. Generally, as far as the Port Authority is concerned, they have managed their men. Your Union delegates meet

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me very occasionally, and we settle our differences, but this is one which we have not been able to settle.

Q. What I want to get from you is that generally throughout the Port of London the 44-hour Agreement has been adhered to?—(A.) So far as the Authority's men are concerned, yes. There are just those two outstanding features, that is all. If you get them remedied we have got a clear sheet so far as the Port of London Authority is concerned.

Q. The grain work is very dusty, is it not?—(A.) I thought you would come upon that. It is not so dusty as the grain work in the hold. These are big warehouses.

Q. But it does make men thirsty?—(A.) I had better not say anything on that. I could say a lot.

Q. I admit it.—(A.) Then you do not want to hear my view.

Q. It is a very difficult job?—(A.) Quite; I agree.

Q. Let us get to the Port of Antwerp, shall we?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you not think that it is possible in the negotiations in Antwerp for this 44 hours and an increase of wages which are going on at this moment that the Antwerp employers will be saying: "Wait and see what they do in Great Britain over this minimum before we settle"?—(A.) I have not heard of any negotiations in Antwerp. Rotterdam and Amsterdam, I grant you.

Q. Negotiations are on in Antwerp at the moment. I had a wire yesterday for the result of this Inquiry.—(A.) When we reached there I may tell you—

Q. How long ago were you there?—(A.) Late December.

Q. They are on now.—(A.) It had been communicated from London to the authorities in Amsterdam that the British employers had conceded the 16s.

Q. We have not done that.—(A.) No; I was able to put them right upon that point.

Q. But I think it is a natural assumption?—(A.) Shall we say a Dutch one?

Q. In Antwerp it is curious, is it not, that the figures, leaving out the rate of exchange, do run very generally with the Port of London?—(A.) No.

Q. There is not much difference; you said 11s. 9d. for one set of men as against 11s. 8d. for your men on normal exchange?—(A.) Supposing I agree in a general sense, what is your point?

Q. In Rotterdam I think their 45-hour week was established just about the same time as our 44-hour week, was it not?—(A.) Yes. They are watching you.

Q. They were really waiting to see what each other did, were they not?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. So that it is a pretty fair assumption that if we win this 16s. Antwerp will follow suit, and you will be quite happy?—(A.) I have no information upon that point. I do not think that will be the case.

Q. Do you not think that the Antwerp docker, so near to London, will want the same pay as the London docker, as he has had hitherto?—(A.) I cannot think that, any more than I could think that the Antwerp docker, shall I say, will slacken his speed. It is something temperamental to the Antwerp docker as distinct from ports lying close around him that he works better and harder.

Q. As a matter of fact, it is generally known that they are sweated workers?—(A.) I do not know that.

Q. A man running up a plank with 2½ cwt. is

not a very civilised thing?—(A.) It is good work, I will admit. It is the best work I have seen. I am told that it is beaten in Montreal.

Q. It is not good work, is it, when it ruins men?—(A.) They did not appear to be ruined; and I can look at men with a practised eye.

Q. They had a very large number in Belgium who were ruined?—(A.) I do not think that it was in consequence of port working, was it?

Q. This story of Antwerp has been on for a good many years, has it not?—(A.) Yes, and vitally so.

Q. I think the employers of Great Britain asked two of our representatives some years ago to go to Antwerp and suggest that they ought to be brought up; and I think Mr. Tillett and Mr. Sexton went to Antwerp to organise the Antwerp dockers?—(A.) They may have; I do not know.

Q. And the British Shipping Federation used their influence with the Belgian Government to get them both arrested when they landed?—(A.) I was certainly unaware of that.

Q. That is a statement of fact.—(A.) I did not suffer that fate.

Q. You did not go to raise wages?—(A.) I went to raise the wind, I think.

Q. You do not object to Belgium, after all she has gone through, getting a little trade back, do you?—(A.) No, that is not the point of view at all.

Q. You do not object to her restoring her pre-war position, do you?—(A.) That is not quite the point.

Q. What are you worrying about?—(A.) English trade. Belgium can restore her position, and will.

Q. And if the world trade increases, do you object to her getting her share of the increase?—(A.) In connection with her Central Europe trade. She is out to do it; she has announced it.

Q. If the world trade increases, do you object to Belgium getting a share of that increase?—(A.) I should object, as a Britisher, and I think it is right, too, that Belgium should trespass on what has hitherto been England's preserve, and she will.

Q. Do not the rest of the world feel that this little country has trespassed everywhere? Is there a spot on the globe where you cannot find us?—I do not think so; but that is beside the point.

Q. I mean in trade. I think Lord Devonport boasted yesterday that in London you could manipulate things right to the end of the earth?—(A.) I do not think so; but that is beside the point.

Q. Quite. Then you are not going to be jealous of a little country which has gone through what Belgium has gone through just getting a little share of the world's commerce?—(A.) That is very prettily put.

Q. Is it not after all rather a bogey that you raise up?—(A.) No, it is no bogey, believe me.

Q. Have not all the ports in the past argued between one another in exactly the same way; and now that we have got you all together, and you cannot argue, having regard to your opposition to the minimum, that the trade will go to Hull or to Southampton or to Glasgow, because you are all in the soup together, you now rake up Belgium?—(A.) Because London is peculiarly closely situated and in competition with Antwerp.

Q. But Hull had a bogey the other day?—(A.) And Hull to an extent has, but not to the extent that London has.

Q. Seeing the international character of shipping, supposing that we managed to go across to Antwerp and assist them to get the British wages, would that satisfy you?—(A.) I do not know that I need to be satisfied on a point like that.

Q. At the present moment the Dutchmen are on strike, are they not?—(A.) Yes.

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Q. I want to call your special attention to this. The British Transport Workers' Federation is trying to hold up every Dutch ship in British ports to make Rotterdam pay the British wages?—(A.) Yes, I have read that.

Q. That will help you, will it not, so we shall get your assistance to help hold up those Dutch ships, too, shall we not?—(A.) No, I do not think that you will.

Q. What are we to do?—(A.) That is for you.

Q. I want to get this international competition out of it. We are aiming first of all at a national wage?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If his Lordship will get out his decision speedily, we propose to go to Christiania to organise wages internationally. I am asking you, as representing the employing interest: if we do our best in that direction, shall we have your assistance with foreign shipping to assist us in making them pay at least the standard of British wages?—(A.) No, I shall remain neutral in such a case as that. I should have to, by virtue of my position.

Q. Then I see you want British labour to be the only sufferers from foreign competition?—(A.) I have not said so.

Q. But you are opposing the wages of London because of Antwerp and Rotterdam?—(A.) I am pointing out the rivalry and the competition which exists between Antwerp and London and the facts attaching to it.

Q. And when we say: "Very well, we will use what organising power we have, and what economic power we have to see at least that labour is not assisting that competition," and we ask for your assistance, you say that you will remain neutral?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you.

Re-examined by SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. First of all, in regard to Antwerp, has the acute nature of the competition between Antwerp and London been examined by more than one Royal Commission considering the Port of London?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If his Lordship will look at the Royal Commission on the Port of London, which made its Report in 1902, he will find, will he not, the danger of that competition to London emphasised?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: At what page?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: One paragraph which I have in front of me is paragraph 30 on page 23, but there is quite a lot about it. There are paragraphs 24 and 25.

The WITNESS: And 290 and 296, I think.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will have a reference to it on page 11 on the printed document which was put in this morning. For instance, in paragraph 30 it says: "Our attention was, however, called to the fact that if the port becomes less convenient, or more expensive, for the reception of large ships than neighbouring rival ports, such as Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Antwerp, then London is not only in danger of losing anything which remains of the re-export trade to Germany, Holland, and Belgium, but also that part of the general re-export trade may pass to those ports."—(A.) Yes. "So, for instance,

Mr. Owen said: 'Considerable cargo comes to London from Australia and the East to be put on board steamer for America. This trade will come to England in the cheapest, that is to say in the biggest, ships. If London cannot take those ships the trade will go to Liverpool or Antwerp,' and the trans-shipment will be made there.' I have no doubt that large trans-shipments from the East and Australia to America are in fact now made from Hamburg and Antwerp instead of through London."—(A.) Yes, that was the information.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, page after page of this report is devoted to the competition between London and Antwerp.

Q. If that re-export trade is lost to the Port of London, that is a serious loss to the Port?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. Is it also a loss so far as the finances of this country are concerned?—(A.) Yes, undoubtedly.

Q. Therefore, it is not a matter to be looked at merely between the dock workers on the one side and the Port Authority on the other, but from the national standpoint?—(A.) It is a much vaster thing than that: it is a national question.

Q. Of course, if the dock trade of London were to be seriously affected in that way, that would have its immediate effect firstly upon the dock workers?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. And upon other trades in the Port depending upon the Port?—(A.) Yes; I have evidence of that, too. That is to say, I am going back to the 1889 strike; in my personal experience we had a very large trans-shipment trade in Tilbury Dock at that time. The strike here showed the Continental people how to do that work, and it never came back to us. It went straight to the Continent from abroad instead of coming to London and being re-exported.

Q. As a result of the 1889 strike?—(A.) Yes. I was working that particular business at that time.

Q. Then you know from personal experience.—(A.) I know it from my personal experience.

Q. That trade was lost, was it?—(A.) Lost to this country for years.

Q. And it has never come back?—(A.) The war has given some of it back. We want to hold it.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the nature of that trade?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Will you tell my Lord what was the nature of that trade?—(A.) Jute, principally.

Q. I want to put to you one or two questions on the proposition which Mr. Bevin made this morning as to the standardisation of rates in the Port of London. Have you got before you Statement No. 1 which you put in?—(A.) I have it.

Q. The proposition which Mr. Bevin made was this: That the London shipowners' stevedores at 14s. and the London shipowners' dockers at 13s. 9d. should go up to 17s. 6d.—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: If you are going into these figures now, this may be a convenient time to adjourn

(Adjourned for a short time.)

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

The CHAIRMAN. We must apologise for being a few minutes late, but not a minute has been wasted; we have been consulting together.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am sure not, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: Speaking from memory, in putting forward a conjectural figure this morning I used the figure of 13s. 4d. for London. I did not have the table before me at the moment, but it was in my mind that the 13s. 4d. men worked ashore for the short sea traders. On re-examining the table I find he works aboard, therefore the figure I wish to correct should be *13s. 4d. and not *13s. 8d. I have explained to Counsel the difference in the figure. I forgot the grade of work.

The CHAIRMAN: That makes a very large difference in financial results, however.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It saves time at the moment, because I need not now ask Mr. Matthews anything further on that point. I have nothing more to ask Mr. Matthews.

The CHAIRMAN: I have had the pleasure of seeing you down at the port, have I not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Do you happen to remember the men being called on that winter morning?—(A.) Quite well.

Q. I think there was one call and about 200 men responded?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Was that a common case?—(A.) Uncommon, and I have evidence here, if I may state it, that the shipowners on that occasion took on more men than they requested on the poster that you saw, and yet there was a surplus. I am assured by the police officers and my own officers that such a congregation was quite exceptional.

Q. Will you just explain about that? They wanted to get on at 8 o'clock in the morning?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then their next chance would have been at one o'clock in the day?—(A.) A quarter to one.

Q. And at one o'clock that again was only a chance?—(A.) Only a chance.

Q. I gather from your evidence that you think, if possible, some method should be devised to abate that deplorable state of affairs?—(A.) Yes, I think so, as the Authority have done.

Q. The Authorities would assist and co-operate, I presume, with the workers' representative in doing anything to get a register established and casualisation brought down.—(A.) Any assistance or help we could give I am sure we would be delighted to give.

Q. If you do not wish to answer this question, please do not do so.—(A.) I should have to be careful, naturally.

Q. I know your position. Have you any views that you would care to express with regard to whether those properly upon the registered list should have some maintenance allowance?—(A.) I prefer not to answer at this juncture. The case is *sub judice*, as you know, and it is really not for me to say.

Q. You cannot speak on policy?—(A.) No.

Q. You know, with your experience, that in charter parties, even in time charter parties, they have options on ports, have they not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And the state of the labour market, and particularly the rate of output in one port as

against another, might attract from one side or divert trade?—(A.) I have known that to be the case.

Q. That takes us to Antwerp: At present, you know, the rate of exchange is extremely adverse to Antwerp, do you not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. How are the men paid? Are they paid in francs?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have they got an increase in their payment in francs to mark the decrease in power of exchange?—(A.) We were told not.

Q. You see the result of that is that on account of this temporary affair—namely, the rate of exchange, the rate of labour payable by an English merchant in Antwerp would be very much cheaper.—(A.) Yes; and, of course, the governing factor is that the Port is State-aided.

Q. Of course, that in a short time would steady it up? (A.) We would hope so.

Q. Assuming that steady-ing-up to take place, and assuming further that there is a general levelling up of wages throughout Europe—do you follow me?—(A.) Quite.

Q. And assume, futher, that upon the employers' and harbour authorities' side there is an up-to-date policy in the way of equipment, the governing factor would then be the human factor, namely, whether the men would do work steadily and well, or slackly and badly?—(A.) Yes, it would be reduced to that.

Q. So it would then be a fair and even contest between the British workman as a workman and any other workmen in the world?—(A.) Yes, under those circumstances, provided the levelling up does take place, of course.

Q. I am assuming those, what I may call outside factors, to the real problem?—(A.) I think I have got your view, my Lord.

Q. I am asked to clear up this figure in case there may be some error which has crept into your calculations. I think you told us that the average earnings of 75 per cent. were £3 17s. 1—(A.) Yes, £3 17s. are the average earnings of the permanent and the casual men engaged in piecework, which forms 75 per cent. of the Authority's labour.

Q. And 4s. as overtime?—(A.) Yes, that is the average, 4s. as overtime.

Q. The point that I want to know is about the difference between that and the day pay.—(A.) £3 4s. 2d.; that is assuming that the B men and the casual men of that group of three work each day of the week.

Q. £3 4s. 2d. would be the day men. Now add to them also the 4s. overtime, that would be £3 8s. 2d., would it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then the difference between the £3 17s. and the £3 8s. 2d. is not 4s. as you said, but 8s. 10d.?—(A.) I did not say 4s.

Q. Mr. Bevin put it to you very frequently, and that is the reason why some of my colleagues asked you the question about it, namely, that the difference between the two figures was only 4s. per week.—(A.) I was misunderstood.

Q. But you gave your answers upon the footing that that was correct. Is not the difference between day workers and piece workers 8s. 10d. per week and not 4s.?—(A.) I would have said that the main difference was between 8s. and 10s. I must have misunderstood the 4s. if I acquiesced.

Q. You wish your evidence given in examination and cross-examination to be amended in that

* See page 470 for correction of these figures.

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particular?—(A.) On those figures, yes, my Lord.

(*The Witness withdrew.*)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, we do not propose to call evidence from any of the other London employers except the master lightermen and bargeowners. Those are the 5,500 men that appear last on the list that is before your Lordship on the second page. I will call Mr. Palmer.

Mr. WILLIAM CHARLES PALMER, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. I think you are a Director of Humphrey and Grey, Limited?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They are master lightermen and tug-owners?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Is your firm one of the largest tug and lighter owners in the quay lightering trade?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The trade that you are concerned in, which you call the quay lightering trade, means the fine goods trade, does it not?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. How many barges are engaged in that trade?—(A.) Between 6,000 and 7,000.

Q. And how many tugs?—(A.) In connection with those barges about 70.

Q. How many men are engaged? Is it between 5,000 and 6,000?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. The rates of pay are shown in the table that has been put in by Mr. Matthews, and it shows that these men are engaged on a daily basis.—(A.) That is right.

Q. So that there is that difference between your men and the dockers?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. Your men are guaranteed a day's wage?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The pay for a lighterman is 11s. 4d., and for the watchman 10s. 4d., is it not?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. Of those 5,000 to 6,000 men what is the proportion of lightermen to watchmen?—(A.) I think about 3 lightermen to 2 watchmen.

Q. The lighterman is an apprenticed man, is he not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. He serves an apprenticeship?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The lighterman serves an apprenticeship, but the watchman does not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Has that differential of 1s. always existed?—(A.) Yes, there has always been a difference.

Q. Do you hold any view as to whether the lightermen, being what might be called a skilled trade in that they pass through an apprenticeship, would assent to be put on the same footing as the watchmen?—(A.) I think they would not.

Q. You heard what Mr. Bevin said this morning about taking a line at 12s. 8d. and putting all below it on the same footing?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you think that that would be practicable so far as the lightermen and watchmen are concerned?—(A.) I do not.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, this Witness has a memorandum which we have here in a convenient

form. It sets out the whole of the circumstances of this trade, and I think perhaps it would be convenient if the court had it before them.

(**The document was handed in and marked H.31.*)

Q. You received the application from the National Federation last October, did you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Did you subsequently receive from the Secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Watermen, Lightermen, and Bargemen a claim upon a slightly different basis?—(A.) We did.

Q. Have you set out that claim on the first page of your memorandum.—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think it is dated January 6?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is this the claim: "Dear Sir,—My Executive Council have considered the form in which the evidence as to wages and conditions of men employed in the Lightering trade shall be given at the public inquiry which is about to be held into the wages and conditions of Transport Workers, with a view to readjusting the basic rate of 1914 to its proper relationship with other skilled trades in the port, and which were higher than the wages of the general dock labourer at that date."

Q. As you have pointed out, the watchman is not skilled in the sense that the lighterman is?—(A.) That is so.

Q. "This will simplify the addition of pre-war rates to meet the increased cost of living. The increase being paid now to meet the increased cost of living since 1914 is in many cases far below 100 per cent., whereas the actual increase in the cost of living is nearer 150 per cent. I am, therefore, instructed to make an application to your Association for a further increase of 75 per cent. on the wages of foremen, tug masters and mates, lightermen, watchmen, apprentices, roads-men, wharf hands, and weekly hands, and all the men engaged in the quay lightering trade. The increase applied for will be about equivalent to the general application for a minimum of 16s. per day for general cargo workers that is to be investigated by the Court of Inquiry." That is the latest claim that you have received?—(A.) Yes, that is the last one.

Q. The 75 per cent. that is there asked for is, as stated in the last paragraph of that letter, about the equivalent of the 16s. minimum that is asked for in connection with the general workers.—(A.) Yes, if added to the base rate.

Q. Have you set out on the third page of that memorandum a statement which shows the percentage increase to the various men in your trade since 1914?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And have you set out on pages 10 to 17 at the end of the memorandum the details showing how those figures are arrived at?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then in the middle paragraph you have shown what the effect of an addition of 75 per cent. will be?—(A.) That is so.

Q. There again you have given the details of that, on page 17 towards the end of the memorandum.—(A.) That is so.

Q. Generally speaking, the men in this trade, although they are called casuals, are permanently employed, are they not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do they present themselves for work on the morning when they seek employment or the day before?—(A.) The evening before.

Q. That is different to the ordinary docker?—(A.) Yes, quite.

* See Appendix No. 111

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Q. On page 6 of this memorandum, have you set out the facts which differentiate this trade from the ordinary dock worker?—(A.) That is so.

Q. His Lordship will see on page 6, towards the bottom, in two parallel columns, the lightermen have a full day, the docker half a day; they get their orders over night for the next day, and if they do not work owing to weather conditions, they get their day's pay?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. And there are various other advantages. Have you as recently as August last made a settlement with the Trade Union?—(A.) We made an arrangement, but it can hardly be called a settlement; there are still two points outstanding which are being held over.

Q. But you made an agreement which is signed on behalf of the employers and on behalf of the unions.—(A.) That is so.

Q. I should like you to hand in a copy of that.

(*The document was handed in and marked H.32.)

Q. Could you tell the Court quite shortly what the effect of that arrangement was?—(A.) We made this arrangement with Mr. Gosling and his colleagues, and it was signed to come into operation on August 1. There were two points that Mr. Gosling was a little bit afraid of, and so were we, but he did his best to get them carried out. But when we put them into operation, the men in most cases refused to have it. A few of the men took the orders, but the other men refused, with the result eventually that they all refused. We had another meeting with Mr. Gosling, and although he said he had done his best, he could not do any more; we were up against the railway strike which was imminent at the time, and we were urged by the Government not to do anything drastic. We arranged with Mr. Gosling that we would hold those two rules in abeyance for the time being.

The CHAIRMAN: What were those rules?—(A.) One of the rules was that fresh men should accept orders for night work.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is the last rule on the first page, Overtime 3 (c), is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I want you to tell the Court what your system of paying for overtime is under this agreement. I think that is the rule, is it not: If a man finishes work at 5 o'clock, and you require him again at 4 o'clock the next morning, will you tell the Court what happens? He knocks off at 5 o'clock, and does he then go to the office?—(A.) Sometimes. Sometimes he gets his order on the telephone, but we used to be able to relieve the man between 5 o'clock and 8 o'clock in the evening if he was required for work at night. There is an arrangement by which the overtime is continuous, although the man is not employed, and he may not be wanted for many hours, although he is getting paid, which is a great advantage. This has been granted since the war, since August 1.

Q. If you want a lighterman in the pool, we will say at 4 o'clock on the following morning, and he knocks off at 5 o'clock to-day, is he paid overtime until 8 o'clock to-night, and then from 8 o'clock to 4 o'clock to-morrow morning is he paid a full night?—(A.) Yes, until 6 o'clock in the morning.

Q. And then from 6 o'clock to 8 o'clock he gets the ordinary overtime?—(A.) Yes, he gets the overtime again.

Q. So that, although that man may go home at

* See Appendix No. 112.

6 o'clock to-night and remain there, so long as he gets back by to-morrow morning he is paid at overtime rates until 8 o'clock to-night and a full night, which is 12s. 6d. subsequently?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you find that that arrangement puts a good deal into the men's pockets, to say the least of it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is one of the arrangements that was come to in this Agreement of August last, is it not?—(A.) Yes. They have been agitating for it for a long time, and eventually, for the sake of peace and quietness, we gave way.

Q. It has conferred a substantial benefit upon the men, has it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Have you got a statement of the average earnings of lightermen and watchmen, comparing 1920 with 1914?—(A.) That is so, for the same period.

(*The document was handed in and marked H.33.)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It is not quite in the most convenient form. On the first sheet you will find the average weekly wages; it is taken for a certain number of men, 117 and 113, in two separate weekly periods in 1914. On the second page there are two weeks in 1920. The comparison is this: On the first page you will find, "Average per man per week £3 4s. 0d." for a lighterman, and overtime 8s. 3d. If you turn to the next sheet, you will find at the top: Lightermen, average per man, £6 15s. 5d.; average per man for overtime, £1 12s. 1d.

The CHAIRMAN: That comes to £8 7s. 6d.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord. Then, taking the watchmen, in 1914 it was £2 11s. 3d. ordinary time; in 1920 it is £5 11s. 9d., and the average overtime, which was 4s. 0d., is now 15s. 11d. (To the Witness.) Are those fair representative cases of the average earnings?—(A.) I must put that right, I think, with regard to these wages. The £6 15s. 5d. is a full week's wages, of which £1 12s. 1d. was overtime. That is how it should be stated. I do not think that is quite clear on the sheet.

Q. In each case you have got in your larger figure the amount for overtime?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The effect of the tide on the movement of craft very often runs the day work into overtime and overtime into night work by just a few minutes, does it not?—(A.) Yes, unavoidably.

Q. If you had to pay overtime for any minimum period, it would work very hardly upon you, would it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Of course, at the high rate that is asked?—(A.) Quite so.

Mr. BEVIN: I am not in a position to cross-examine this Witness. I can only say that I was not aware of this letter that has been read, and I can only assume that it is an attempt to interpret the claim before the negotiations proceeded.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you kindly look at page 3 of your Memorandum. You see that the increase of pre-war rates with regard to lightermen is 109.7 per cent.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And with regard to watchmen it is 129.6 per cent.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that the tendency of those two rates,

* See Appendix No. 113.

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according to the increase, is to approximate together, is it not?—(A.) The watchmen, you see, practically get the same increase as the lightermen, or near about, on a smaller wage. I think that makes a difference. It is so with regard to the firemen and drivers.

Q. That may explain it, but, as you put it, you think the increase on pre-war rates for lightermen was 109 per cent. I thought it was 109 per cent. on the lighterman's wages.—(A.) On his day rate wages.

Q. Then it is 129 per cent. on the watchman's day rate wages?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That is a tendency to approximate in percentages, is it not?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Will your Lordship look at page 10, where the actual figures are set out?

The CHAIRMAN: No; I prefer the percentages for the purposes of my question.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It gives the same relationship in actual figures, I think it is interesting to see it. It gives the pre-war rate in both cases; it was 6s. in the case of the lightermen and 5s. in the case of the watchmen. That is where the 109 per cent. and 129 per cent. come from.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see myself yet, nor do my colleagues, how that effects the percentage on page 3; it seems to confirm it.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I only wished to draw attention to the fact that there was 1s. differential pre-war, and the differential is the same now.

The CHAIRMAN: That was the point of my question. You see that although the wages have increased in volume, the distance between the two has not gone up in a similar percentage at all; it has remained just 1s. Is not that so?—(A.) That is so.

Q. On the ground of percentage, which is perhaps not a very safe ground, I should say that is an approximation. Now try it in another way further down the page, the lightermen plus the 75 per cent. In the case of the lightermen there is a lift of 184 per cent. over pre-war.—(A.) That is so.

Q. Whereas in the case of the watchmen there is a lift of 204 per cent.—(A.) That is so.

Q. That is the new demand that they are making, is it not?—(A.) Yes, that is what it proves to be.

Q. There does not seem to me to be very much difference in principle between you on that. Normally, it has gone up in an increased percentage on the lower-paid.—(A.) That is so.

Q. And this last demand is asking for an increased percentage on the lower-paid also?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There is not very much to be got out of these percentages, no doubt, but I thought I would put the question to you.—(A.) I am obliged.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, we have a goodly number of witnesses from London, but I am going to take the responsibility of calling no

more witnesses from London, and I will now proceed to deal with the case of the small ports.

The CHAIRMAN: We have no doubt that you will exercise your discretion.

Mr. ABADY: My Lord, as the evidence from London is now closed, would it be an appropriate moment for the Court to come to a decision on my application, which you will recollect, was suspended. You will recollect that you rather put the onus upon myself, as well as upon the Court, of judging whether the evidence presented would or would not make the presentation of the evidence which I had in view necessary.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the nature of the evidence you have to offer?

Mr. ABADY: The first witness that I was suggesting was Mr. Treadwell, and I think I mentioned to the Court that he proposed to speak as to the importance of the entrepot trade to London and the country generally, and therefore the relative importance of the cheapness of transport facilities compared to Continental ports. I realise, since Lord Devonport's evidence, and of the witnesses who followed him in the box, that that is a matter which has been put before your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: I thought that Sir Lynden had had your benediction for bringing out the points.

Mr. ABADY: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: You were good enough to mention that.

Mr. ABADY: Yes; but I simply deem it right to say that if the Court has before them fully the importance of the entrepot trade and the influence which increased transport charges have upon that entrepot trade, then it will not be necessary for me to proffer that evidence—you may not think it necessary. That is the first Witness. The evidence, of course, would be confirmatory of the evidence which has been put.

The CHAIRMAN: I think all the propositions which you have laid down are familiar to us, and I think that on the evidence led none of us as a Court could be blind to the relative effects of these two things on each other: the entrepot trade and trade generally, and the wants of the people, and the prices. All these things are fully before us. It is a satisfaction to know that Sir Lynden has had your approval, but you should keep your eye on him yet. Meantime, I do not think we should trouble you for further evidence.

Mr. ABADY: Then may I mention the other proposed Witness, Mr. Brooks, whom I mentioned as a large waterside manufacturer, who is himself a large employer of transport workers and workers of a similar class, and who is not covered by the Employers' National Council? I desire to proffer him as a Witness as showing the influence of transport charges upon the cost of commodities, and also the influence of increased wages which may be paid by the port authorities or employers in and about the Port of

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London. That is Mr. Alfred Brooks, who is a Director of the Associated Portland Cement.

(The Court conferred.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Before your Lordship comes to a decision, I may say that this very point is a point which I have refrained from dealing with at this stage in regard to London, and I am going to make it one of the special points with which I shall deal in connection with Liverpool, so as to avoid constant repetition. If I may make a suggestion to my friend, when he has heard our Liverpool evidence he will probably see that that is directed to the very point which he is making now, and probably that may be the time for him—I only suggest this—

The CHAIRMAN: That rather confirms my view, Mr. Abady, that you should keep a watchful eye on what is going on, but after Liverpool we will tell you what we think. Meantime, we had better make no statement.

Mr. ABADY: Then, I hope, my Lord, you will not think it necessary for me to make any application, but that you will intimate it to me.

The CHAIRMAN: No, we can have nothing of that kind.

Mr. ABADY: It is only through a desire to save time.

The CHAIRMAN: You have not had a very stiff job. At the proper time, you can chime in just as you have done, and we shall be glad to hear anything you say.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Mr. Abady is sitting beside me, and I am conducting my case under a constant sense of apprehension.

Mr. MANNING LEWIS, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are the General Manager and Secretary of the Gloucester Docks?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And of the unknown docks of Sharpness?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you prepared a table which shows the present and pre-war rates for time workers at both Gloucester and Sharpness?—(A.) I have. (*The same was put in and marked H.34.)

Q. That shows that at Sharpness the 1914 rate was 7s. a day or two guineas a week, and the present rate is 13s. 4d. per day, or £3 13s. per week?—(A.) That is so.

Q. At Gloucester the rate pre-war was 4s. 8d., and is now 10s.?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The respective weekly payments on a full week's work being £1 8s. and £2 15s.?—(A.) That is so. May I explain with regard to Gloucester that those men also work on piecework rates. That 10s. does not cover their wages; they also work on piecework rates on timber.

Q. I think there is a note on the table to the effect that: "The above rates only apply to 25 per cent. of the total men employed both at

Sharpness and Gloucester, and of this percentage the majority may be considered to be regular men."—(A.) That is so.

Q. So that practically all your time workers, the men who are receiving these rates, have regular employment?—(A.) To a large extent.

Q. All the rest of your work is done by piecework at certain prices which I see you have set out, and which we need not go into?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Will you explain to the Court how there is this difference between Gloucester and Sharpness? First of all, where is Sharpness?—(A.) Sharpness is at the south-western exit of the inland waterways. It also has ocean docks there. It is about 20 or 25 miles up the Severn from Avonmouth.

Q. It is about 16 miles below Gloucester?—(A.) That is so. I may say that there is a 16-mile ship canal between Gloucester and Sharpness.

Q. I am told that it is about 100 miles north-east of Devonport?—(A.) More or less.

Q. Both these are what have been referred to as small ports, are they not?—(A.) Quite; and I may say that I am not only representing the port of Gloucester, but I am generally representing the small ports also.

Q. With regard to the rates which you have put in, as the table shows they are considerably in advance of the pre-war rates. The Gloucester rate is more than twice as much.—(A.) That is so.

Q. And Sharpness not quite twice as much?—(A.) Not quite. Of course, you know how the rates were raised. They were raised by flat increases, and our rates of 7s. per day being so much higher than at many ports, it does not increase the percentage as much as at other ports, although they have got the flat increase.

Q. Is the work fairly regular at Gloucester and Sharpness?—(A.) It has been for the last 6 or 9 months, but previously, when the Government had control, it was not regular. The Government sent the ships to ports which were already congested, adding to the congestion, while we were begging them to send them into the smaller ports where we had no work, and consequently the men suffered. I should say that we as a port did not suffer because we were controlled, and the Government took us over, but on the men's account we did our utmost to get the ships there. Probably Mr. Bevin and Mr. Gosling, who were on the Port and Transit Committee, know that we were always waiting on the Government, writing them, approaching them through the Canal Control Committee—

Q. To try to utilise your port?—(A.) To utilise our port.

Q. Does the port labour under considerable difficulties with regard to ocean steamers, which places it at a great disadvantage as compared with other Bristol Channel ports?—(A.) That is so, yes.

Q. What are the disadvantages?—(A.) Only at certain tides can vessels drawing 22 feet or 24 feet enter the docks.

Q. A steamer may have to wait outside a considerable time before it can get in?—(A.) Several days.

Q. And sometimes you have to moor the vessel further down the river and lighten her there?—(A.) That is so; and we have had to construct buoys at considerable expense for so mooring the vessel.

* See Appendix No. 114.

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Q. The point which you wish to make upon that is this, is it not, that shipowners are put to a considerable expense in using your docks at Sharpness?—(A.) Yes, and, of course, they run the risk of delays, which is a very important matter.

Q. And they must have some counter-balancing advantages to bring them there?—(A.) Yes. Of course we mitigate that evil as much as we can by having these buoys and lightening the vessel. That means floating elevators, elevators which will navigate tidal waters, which means extra cost in sending men down; we have to have tugs waiting on the elevators, and also have to lighten ships somewhat in the tidal basin on occasions, which, of course, all adds to the cost to the ships and the goods.

Q. The owners of the docks at Sharpness and Gloucester are a company which is run for, amongst other reasons, a profit; is not that so?—(A.) We run for a profit; but unfortunately we do not get a profit. I mean to say, we pay a certain amount of interest, which is fixed.

Q. To put it quite shortly, you have paid your dividends on the debentures and on the preference stock, I think, up to 1913—or was it 1919?—(A.) We paid it up to 1913, and then the Government came in; and we have paid on the debenture stock, debenture bonds and Class A stock up to the end of 1918 now.

Q. I see that you paid 1 per cent. on your ordinary stock in 1906, and nothing since?—(A.) That is so; and, of course, under the terms, even if the Government keep control, we cannot pay on the ordinary stock.

Q. Speaking for the small ports, do you hold the view that it will do them serious damage if there is a standard minimum rate which is to apply to you and to the large ports?—(A.) I do.

Q. You think that it would have a serious effect upon the trade using the ports?—(A.) Yes. I want to point out that against the disadvantages and the consequently slightly lower wage that we are asking for, there are advantages which the men get, and they have recognised them to a certain extent in the past. I mean to say they have houses; we own houses; we have built a lot of houses; and the men live right alongside their work; and the average rents at the present time—of course, I am only giving you the present time—are about—

Q. They are £9 to £14 per annum at Sharpness, I think?—(A.) Yes, that is so, £9 to £14 per annum, including rates, at Sharpness, and not very much higher at Gloucester. Then there is no time lost in travelling, of course, and no cost of travelling, which is a very great advantage. It means at any rate some shillings per week.

Q. In Gloucester itself the average rent for working-men's houses is £17 per annum, including rates?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Does this 10s. rate at Gloucester compare favourably with the rates in other comparable industries in the district?—(A.) Not by itself, but as I said those men are on piece work as well. It is only when they are delivering timber from the yard that they are paid that day-work rate. When they are taking into the yard they are paid piece-work rates, and I understand that the minimum rate per week when they are doing piece work is £4 4s.

Q. I see at the bottom of the table which you have put in that the labourers in the building trade and the labourers in the engineering trade

get £2 17s. and £2 13s. per week respectively?—(A.) That is when this table was compiled. I would not like to answer for any wages two or three days after, but when this table was compiled those were the rates.

Q. And the 10s. rate, which works out at £2 15s. per week, compares favourably with those rates—or compares with them?—(A.) Quite.

Q. But you want to point out that only 25 per cent. of the men are working upon that rate; the remainder are working at piece rates and making higher wages?—(A.) And I want to make it clear that even those men work on piece work frequently. It is only when they are doing day work that they get that 10s.

Q. What you are most anxious to submit to the Court is that if you are put upon the same wage basis as the larger ports it will have a very serious effect, in your opinion, upon the trade of the ports?—(A.) That is so. There are a very large number of these small ports, as you can see by the Board of Trade return, and although I understand that they have not received this application, they are bound to follow the rates which are given generally. As a matter of fact, with regard to the 44 hours, although they were not parties to the arrangement, they had to follow the 44-hours week, and it has been the same with the different increases which have been given to transport workers. Small ports like Wigan, Berwick, Llanelly—

Mr. BEVIN: What about Peterborough?—(A.) I do not know anything about Peterborough. I do not know where it is.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: In normal times a considerable amount of the traffic which you get at Sharpness and Gloucester would merely be overflow traffic from other ports, would it not?—(A.) Yes. Of course, we are not in the position of the larger ports. The larger ports would have the traffic naturally; it is the ordinary channel for it to go along; whereas we, in company with other smaller ports, have to fight for all the traffic we get. We are in competition, and very keen competition, with the other ports.

Q. It is because of that competition and that fight which you have to put up that you want to resist, so far as you are able to, this proposal of a standard minimum?—(A.) Exactly, especially as we have those advantages which have been pointed out. I would like to say, too, that it is bound to affect the inland waterway rates. That is rather important. You see we have a number of men—200 of our men—who have been dealt with under the Canal Control Awards, following on the Railway Awards. If these rates are given, we shall be bound to increase those men's rates very considerably.

Q. They are working with these very men whom we are now considering?—(A.) Yes, but they are more our permanent men—men engaged in permanent way, platelayers, engine drivers, and so on. Of course, the tradesmen have come under the district awards which have been given to the trades.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You used to be with the Bristol Dock Committee, did you not?—(A.) I did.

Q. And you travelled a good deal about this globe trying to get trade for the Bristol Dock Committee?—(A.) Yes.

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Q. In those days the merchants used to emphasise very strongly that Bristol must not have a higher rate than other ports?—(A.) I had nothing to do with labour at Bristol, as you know; I was on the commercial side, so I never took any part in those negotiations. Of course, I used to tell people abroad that Bristol was cheaper than any other port, naturally.

Q. Quite. I expect that you heard the discussion between Antwerp and London this morning?—(A.) I did.

Q. As you used to tell the people with whom you were dealing then that Bristol was the cheapest port, are you now trying to convince the Court that Sharpness ought to be the cheapest for labour?—(A.) I am trying to point out that it is fair that we should have a lower rate, considering our disadvantages and the advantages which our men have over the Bristol men. That is my point.

Q. The question of advantage is always relative, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. A man may live in a country district, and whilst he has the advantage probably of the fresh air, he may lose some other advantages in social amenities which he gets in the towns?—(A.) Quite.

Q. So that that is purely relative?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Pre-war your wages were higher than Bristol, were they not?—(A.) Yes. The day rate of 7s. was higher than Bristol, but may I point out that that was only because we were losing—I was not there, as you know, I should like to point that out—on all the labour we did at Sharpness; that is to say, the Dock Company was. I have the figures, and from 1900 we have made less than 2 per cent., without putting in any overhead charges at all.

Q. Did not that arise from a struggle which was going on between the Sharpness Dock Company and certain other middlemen who wanted to get in?—(A.) No, I do not think so. I think it was because of the competition which was going on at Bristol. In fact, I know that it was through the opening of the Portishead Timber Wharf that the merchants felt they could not maintain their rates.

Q. If Bristol was 6s. per day before the war and Gloucester was 7s. per day, now that we have levelled you, does not that wipe out that trouble which you had before the war?—(A.) No.

Q. Why make another distinction?—(A.) As I told you, we want something to cover our overhead charges, and that is what we never had before the war.

Q. Take all the lighterage you do, and take all the labour employed on lightering vessels entering Sharpness. What would it amount to in a year? Taking only the actual labour involved, what would the total sum be, do you think? Take an average year's importation, what is involved in it?—(A.) I do not know. I should think about £1,000.

Q. Are you going to suggest that £1,000 per year for lighterage done there for labour—because you cannot blame labour for the tides or anything?—(A.) No.

Q. It is the cost of labour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you suggest that £1,000 wages warrants you getting a less wage on the whole of the men?—(A.) It costs more than labour. We have to have machinery which can go down into the tidal waters as well, and then we have to keep

tugs, as I pointed out, and a special boat to take men down.

Q. But you cannot blame the men for all that?—(A.) No, I do not.

Q. We are talking about the quota which the men ought to contribute assuming your principle was admitted. It amounts in all to £1,000?—(A.) The labour only.

Q. I will leave it to the Court to judge whether they really ought to draw a distinction on so small a sum. With regard to living at Sharpness, you gave a rent of about 4s. 6d. per week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Those rents are going up, are they not, as soon as you get a chance?—(A.) That depends upon the result of this Inquiry. Of course, if you are going to include a 10s. rent in the wages, naturally we shall want to get the 10s. If you put in the 10s. rent and you allow that, naturally we, as landlord, would like to get that 10s.; but I mean to say there is no prospect for the moment of their going up.

Q. I would remind you that my 10s. is in a £6 per week budget.—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you imagine that the Court is going to award £6 per week?—(A.) I have no imagination about it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I thought it was a genuine one.

Mr. BEVIN: It is £6 per week.

Q. That budget gives an average rent, does it not?—(A.) I imagine so.

Q. You have heard it stated in Court during this Inquiry that rents, looking ahead, are in many districts going to be much more than 10s. per week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You are to build a large number of houses at Sharpness?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What will the rents of those new houses be?—(A.) We are not going to build them. We are not building them.

Q. I am talking about the Sharpness Authority?—(A.) I could not say.

Q. They will not be 4s. 6d. per week, will they?—(A.) No, I anticipate not.

Q. The cost of building those houses in Sharpness will be equal to the cost in Bristol?—(A.) Probably.

Q. So that the rent will level itself as between Bristol and Sharpness?—(A.) I could not say as high as Bristol. It will be higher than at present, of course.

Q. So that really the question of rent gets reduced to an infinitesimal sum having regard to the development of housing to which we have got to look forward?—(A.) Probably. I mean it makes a difference, of course; but then you must remember that, as you know, the men live in an agricultural country, and there are a lot of houses about there. They will not want to build so many houses there, for instance, as they would in a city.

Q. But is not your Authority preparing a scheme owing to the shortage of houses there?—(A.) No.

Q. Why are they going to build?—(A.) We are not going to build.

Q. I am talking about the Authority.—(A.) I beg your pardon. They are going to build, I believe, but that is the rural or district council. They

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have taken sites down there, I understand, and they are going to build houses.

Q. They would not build houses unless there was a want of houses, would they?—(A.) I dare say there is a certain amount, but I do not think they are going to build many houses.

Q. With regard to living in an agricultural area, you will not suggest that things are cheaper in consequence?—(A.) Rents, yes.

Q. Only rents?—(A.) Yes; and I mean to say if a man has a garden it is much cheaper, is it not, to live than if he has to buy all his vegetables.

Q. I wanted you to say that, because I like this garden business.—(A.) I am glad to oblige you.

Q. If a man works on a garden and puts labour into it in his spare time, ought the production of that labour to be counted against his wages?—(A.) Quite, but it reduces the cost of living.

Q. But then it is a reduction as the result of a man's own effort, and has nothing to do with the capitalist or the employer, has it?—(A.) Quite. That is what most things are—the result of a man's own effort.

Q. If it is the garden produce, and he lives very much cheaper because instead of going to picture-houses he works on his garden, he ought not to have less wages in consequence in your dock, ought he?—(A.) It is an advantage, though.

Q. Yes, but the advantage is the man's and ought not to go to the employer, ought it?—(A.) But he gets it in his rent. He gets his garden at a cheaper rent.

Q. But rents are going up?—(A.) The houses? Not these—not that I know of. It all depends, as I say, upon the result of this Inquiry.

Q. So that if you put the rents up you will not want the wages down?—(A.) If the wages do not go up I do not think we will put the rents up.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. The serious part of the delay when you are lightening vessels at the moorings is that demurrage is incurred on the vessels?—(A.) Yes, that is so, and we have had to pay demurrage, or help to pay demurrage, on the vessels.

Q. And the water may go down faster than you lighten the vessel?—(A.) That is so. It frequently does.

Q. That is a serious factor causing delay?—(A.) Yes.

Q. My friend has asked you about the garden and the house rent. The fact is that house rent is less in Gloucester and Sharpness, and that there are easier conditions of life than you might find in the larger ports?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And those are local conditions which you think some regard ought to be had to?—(A.) Yes, exactly.

Q. You know that this claim has been put forward, to a large extent, upon the ground of the cost of living?—(A.) Yes, so I understand.

Q. And you consider the conditions of life in that respect are easier at Sharpness and Gloucester than in many of the larger ports?—(A.) Undoubtedly.

Q. Could the Port of Gloucester stand that 10s. rate being increased to 16s.?—(A.) Well, the trade is bound to suffer on account of it, and I should think it would be disastrous on some of the

smaller ports. It is of very serious importance to us.

Mr. BEVIN: There is just one question that I had missed, my Lord.

Further cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. As to other industries, flour milling, of which Gloucester does a good deal, is already classed as Class A, is not it?—(A.) I think you persuaded them, at any rate through your instrumentality they got into Class A.

Q. If Sharpness or Gloucester got classed in any other category, and in fact the same merchants used your port, would not they say that the whole thing would be affected?—(A.) I think Mr. Bevin suggested the other day that these other things should not enter into it at all.

Q. Then you do not think that this increase affects other trades, do you?—(A.) What increase?

Q. This one?—(A.) Not if you put us in a lower grade. I do not think that would affect anybody.

The Witness withdrew.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I have one witness from Ipswich, my Lord, Mr. Tetsall.

Mr. E. P. TETSALL, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. Are you the Chairman of the Ipswich Dock Commissioners?—(A.) No, the Dock Employers' Association.

Q. Ipswich is a port where the chief trade is in grain, phosphate, pyrites, and timber, is not it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is practically the whole of the work done at piecework rates?—(A.) Practically everything.

Q. Will you just tell his Lordship and the Court shortly the nature of the port of Ipswich, how it is situated, how it is affected by the tides, and what size vessels can get up to it?—(A.) It is a port 12 miles from the sea, where we can dock at all states of the tide vessels drawing 17 ft. of water. All the larger vessels anchor in the river about 6 miles from the port of Ipswich, and the goods from those vessels have to be unloaded there and lightered up to the port of Ipswich.

Q. You have said that all the work there is piecework. Is the work fairly constant in normal times?—(A.) In normal times the work is fairly constant for a considerable period of the year, but there is a period of the year when there is not sufficient work for the men.

Q. Are all the men that work at the docks regular dockers?—(A.) All regular dockers.

Q. When they cannot get any work at the docks do they go into any other industries?—(A.) Well, the majority of the dockers do not. They wait for the ships to come in when there is not sufficient work in the port.

Q. When you take a man on for a job for work there he continues as long as the job lasts?—(A.) Yes.

Q. He remains on it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Your piece prices are such. I think that

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every man makes on the average 2s. per hour?—(A.) That is a fair statement.

Q. You know that this claim is a claim for 16s. minimum—that is 2s. per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Would it, in your opinion, have a serious effect upon your output if there was a 2s. an hour minimum fixed for your pieceworkers?—(A.) It would have a serious effect in this way, because it would raise our piecework rates, which are already fairly high on account of the somewhat casual nature of the work, and would prevent us attracting more ships to the port, which we are anxious to do, and trying to do, in order to help the docker to make the work more regular.

Q. In your view it would affect the prosperity of the port?—(A.) We think it would.

Q. Is the view that you take that it is better to create more work at Ipswich than to raise the rates, which in your opinion would have the effect of driving traffic away?—(A.) We think that would be the best way to help the docker.

Q. Have you been having any difficulties with the labour at Ipswich?—(A.) Well, we have our small difficulties. Of course, the docker at times is a somewhat difficult man, but we get on very well with them, and with the help of the Trade Union leaders, who are very helpful to us, we get on fairly well.

Q. I think that you have been able to settle all your differences there with the exception of one outstanding point, that of overtime?—(A.) That is a small matter which we have not been able to settle.

Q. You think if you were left to yourselves you could settle that?—(A.) I have no doubt of it.

Q. Your great objection, and what you wish to lay before the Court, is that you think it would be most detrimental to fix a minimum for your pieceworkers?—(A.) Undoubtedly it would.

Q. You have not any Port Labour Committee, have you?—(A.) No, but we have frequent conferences with the dockers, and we have standing emergency committees. Any questions that arise we immediately deal with by joint consultation in conference.

Q. You find at Ipswich those questions are settled by the emergency committees, and that the men do not stop work while they are being discussed?—(A.) Generally that is so.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. Where is your competitive port?—(A.) Our competitive ports are Yarmouth and King's Lynn.

Q. In both of these cases they are asking for exceptions, I think?—(A.) I am not aware of that.

Q. If your two competitive ports are Yarmouth and King's Lynn, and Yarmouth and King's Lynn were made to pay the same rates as you, there would be no, or very little, difficulty?—(A.) So far as that is concerned, but, of course, we are very anxious if we can to attract some trade from the larger ports, because we want to make our work more regular. Our aim with the dock scheme we have on, about which you know something, is to attract some of the larger ships.

Q. I am glad you say I know something about it. If you are going to build new docks at Ipswich, and attract trade away from London, and that attraction is going to be made possible because you have got less wages, will not London

be in the same difficulty with you as they are with Antwerp?—(A.) That is rather a different position. We should not then raise the same objection.

Q. Once you have got the trade away from London or Hull you would then pay the same rates?—(A.) If we had equal facilities, certainly we should.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You wish to attract trade, and make the trade regular?—(A.) That is our aim.

Q. In your view, will that be a greater benefit to the docker than any increase in wage?—(A.) The docker is already getting a fair wage from us. What we say is that we want to make that wage a regular wage by giving him more work.

Q. I take it that you also want to attract and help to start again the coastwise service?—(A.) Exactly.

The CHAIRMAN: You are doing pretty well at Ipswich, are you not?—(A.) Ipswich has suffered very greatly through the war, and our tonnage is now not quite half of what it was in pre-war days, but we hope to get it all back and more as well.

Q. Are you on the rise now?—(A.) Yes, gradually rising.

Q. I gather it is a seasonal trade at Ipswich?—(A.) It is for about two-thirds or three-quarters of the year.

Q. For the four months do you make any provision for these men?—(A.) The individual merchants do what they can by saving up what stacking work there is for the docker. We do what we can in that way.

Q. What is the season of employment or non-employment?—(A.) It would be fair to say that from the beginning of April to the end of the year the docker has sufficient work, and from the beginning of January to the end of March he probably has not sufficient work. It is a decasualisation problem.

Q. Is it a decasualisation problem?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you been making efforts to reduce the casual work?—(A.) No organised efforts. That is a very proper subject, we think, for a joint committee of the Unions and ourselves.

Q. You would be willing to enter into any reasonable proposition in respect of that I presume?—(A.) We would be very glad to consider that point.

Q. You admit the social degradation that it is apt to involve?—(A.) There is no doubt about it; we do admit that.

Q. What do your piece workers earn per day?—(A.) They earn anything from 15s. to about 22s. 6d., with a probable average of about 17s. 6d.

Q. The claim put before us is 16s. minimum for time work?—(A.) I mean 17s. 6d. for six days in the week; I mean average. I do not mean 5½ times 17s. 6d.; I am thinking of six times 17s. 6d.

Q. Anyway you like to take it. I want eight hours' work. What is the piece work rate for eight hours' work?—(A.) As I say, my Lord, the men earn, to put it weekly, probably easily £5 per week.

Q. And that has to be divided by 11, has it?—(A.) How you like. The week I mean. If you divide it by 11 it gives you just 18s.

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Q. That is 9s. a half-day, which is equal, as near as possible, to 2s. 3d. an hour?—(A.) That is so.

Q. What is wanted is a minimum for time work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If your piece workers went along as happily as they appear to be doing this minimum question would not affect them at all, would it?—(A.) No, it would not affect us except in this way, that if the Court granted the 16s. minimum, of course our piece-work rates would be raised.

Q. Do you think that?—(A.) Undoubtedly, my Lord. The men would require the increase that this Court grants translated into their piece-work rates.

Q. That is the view you take of it?—(A.) That is in our opinion a very serious view.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It is a distinct part of the claim, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you estimated up what that would come to?—(A.) We look at it in this way, that we have a day-work rate of 11s. 6d. per day, but it is practicably negligible. Supposing the Court granted 16s. per day, that would mean an advance on the day-work rate of 39 per cent. The men, we think, would demand a very substantial advance on their piece-work rates, although the day-work rate that we have is practicably negligible. In that respect it is a very serious matter for us.

The Witness withdrew.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I propose to call the representative of the Port of Preston.

The CHAIRMAN: We are very anxious to accommodate you by staying a little later, but you have given very sudden notice of your desire in that respect. We find it is impossible to-day. If on any day you wish us to stay late perhaps you would let us know, because the Court is composed, as you know, of men who are very heavily engaged. To-day we propose to rise at four o'clock.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship pleases. We will save every minute of time and go on till four o'clock.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Would your Lordship allow me, upon that last matter, to draw your attention to what Mr. Bevin said in his opening about piece workers?

The CHAIRMAN: If you will be so kind. I do not doubt for a moment that your view is correct. There is no doubt that the claim is framed in that way.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not dispute that.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: On page 4 Mr. Bevin said this, talking of piece workers: "They should be given such an advance as would leave them in relation to the pieceworkers in the position in which they are at the moment."

The CHAIRMAN: It is one of the heads of the claim, I take it?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I do not know that it is perfectly clear upon the Claim, but Mr. Bevin made it quite clear in his opening.

Mr. H. HOPPERTON *Sworn.*

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Are you the general traffic manager of the Port of Preston?—(A.) I am.

Q. Is Preston Port owned by the Corporation of Preston?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it managed by a Committee called the Ribble Committee?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Consisting of members of the Corporation?—(A.) That is so.

Q. On the Ribble Committee are there four Labour members?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The Port consists of a dock of 40 acres, does it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is the dock 14 miles away from the sea and connected with the sea by a tidal channel?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Is the Port of Preston in competition with the adjoining railway ports?—(A.) It is, very seriously so.

Q. In serious competition?—(A.) Yes, with the ports of Fleetwood and Garston, which are railway ports.

Q. Are those railway ports ports which we know are subsidised by the Government in the first place?—(A.) They are, I understand, subsidised by the Government.

Q. And for the great part worked by men paid on the railway basis?—(A.) I perhaps would not say the great part. I say to some extent they are worked by men paid on the railway rates of wages.

Q. Is the greater part of your traffic low grade traffic?—(A.) It is.

Q. Consisting of wood pulp, road stone, china clay, and things of that sort?—(A.) Yes, of the value of something like £9 a ton, compared with raw cotton, say, at £250 a ton; so the traffic we handle does not bear the high costs of handling.

Q. Your point is that this low grade traffic would not bear the same high costs for handling that high grade traffic will bear?—(A.) That is so. May I explain particularly in connection with road stone? Road stone can come from a port in North Wales by sea, or it can come from the Pennine Range by rail, and if the cost of handling through the port gets above a certain figure it is impossible for that sea traffic to pass at all.

Q. In your view that would be one of the effects of the Port of Preston having to pay the increased wages asked for in the present claim?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. The employers at the Port of Preston consist of the Corporation, who employ 80 per cent. of the labour, and then certain shipping companies?—(A.) Yes, the small coasting companies who work their own boats.

Q. You have prepared a Statement, have you not, which shows the wages at the present time paid in the port?—(A.) Yes, I have.

(*Statement put in and marked H.35.)

Q. Having regard to the fact of your low-grade traffic, to the long distance you are situated from

* See Appendix No. 115.

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the sea, to the fact that your trade is almost entirely coasting trade, do you say it would be a very serious detriment to the port if you were classed with a port like Liverpool, London, or one of these large ports?—(A.) I do.

Q. To come to your men, are these differentials at the present moment existing between your shipmen and your shoremen?—(A.) There are very distinct differentials which have always been maintained. Only 25½ per cent. are on the actual minimum of 11s. or 11s. 4d. The bulk of the men are either on a time-rate of 14s. 2d. or on piece-rates, which give them anything over 18s. per day.

Q. In all divisions of rates up to the present, have those differentials been recognised and enforced?—(A.) To the uttermost farthing every time.

Q. With your knowledge of the port, do you say it would be practicable to extinguish those differentials?—(A.) I think those differentials are on an actual sound basis, and are maintainable by the men.

Q. And the difference between the rates corresponds to differences between the conditions and character of the work.—(A.) The character of the work and the amount of effort that has to be put forward by the different grades of men.

Q. Is the great bulk of your work at Preston done on a piece-work basis?—(A.) Yes, I should say about 70 per cent. in normal times; at present there is about 37 per cent.

Q. I do not want to take you through the details of that statement: the statement will speak for itself. You have endeavoured, have you not, to secure on a permanent basis as many dock workers as possible?—(A.) Yes, that is our aim. We are introducing a tally or registration scheme at the present time, and when we get back anything like our pre-war traffic we shall be able to put the bulk of the men on a permanent basis—at least, we hope so.

Q. Would you regard it as a serious matter if your piece prices had to be raised so as to give the same percentage over 16s. a day as a minimum

as that given to-day over the existing day-rates at Preston?—(A.) I do. It would mean 45 per cent. over the present daily earnings of 18s. say.

Q. It would add to the daily earnings at present of 18s. a day, 45 per cent. ?—(A.) Yes. It would mean some men would be earning 45 per cent. over 22s. Many men make 22s. a day on piece-rates.

Q. That would be a serious obstacle to your continuing to get this low-grade traffic you have been talking about?—(A.) It would.

Q. I think at the moment there is an actual deficit in the annual accounts for the dock undertaking for the year ending March 31, 1919, of £64,500?—(A.) Yes. That is due to war conditions to some extent, although there always has been since the dock was built a big deficit to be met out of the town rates.

Q. Are the rates which are paid at present to the dock workers in fair relation to the rates which are paid to other workers in Preston?—(A.) Exactly so. We as a Corporation lay down a fair wages clause in all our contracts, and consequently we pay, and are delighted to pay, what we regard as the district wages to the men whom we ourselves employ.

Q. You are paying at present to the dock workers wages which are fair having regard to the existing wages in question. Any increase of wages would have to be paid out of the municipal rates?—(A.) Well, I should endeavour to get some of it back from the shipowner and the merchant, but our permanent staff, which is very large, would have to be paid largely out of the municipal deficit.

Q. Therefore, in your view, when fair local rates are paid, is it right that the additional wages to one section of the local workers, the dock workers, should be paid out of the general community—namely, out of the district rates?—(A.) It is certainly unfair.

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning at half-past ten.)

SIXTEENTH DAY.

Friday, March 5th, 1920.

Present:—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON } Secretaries.
Mr. G. H. INCE }

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The CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, the Court has been anxiously considering the further progress of this case. It is manifest that the case of the Port Authorities is well forward, and that great hopes will be entertained of a speedy termination. On the other hand we add nothing to what we said yesterday upon that subject, but leave the case in the hands of the Counsel representing them. As to next week, the parties will understand the inconvenience of our meeting on a Monday. Some of our members are from a distance, and all of us are deeply engaged. However, we think that we might be able to accommodate the parties thus far, that we should begin to sit next week on Monday at half-past eleven o'clock, and we should sit on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, in the hope that it would finish by Thursday. Between the evidence and the speeches, the Court, of course, will reserve to itself the right to consider for, it may be, an hour the position of the parties, and they will then hear the speeches; and then we should hope the whole of this part of the Inquiry will be finished, certainly well within the bounds of that week.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If I might say a word upon that, which may give the Court some idea of what our estimate of the length of our case will be, we have considered very carefully what the Court has said before, and we have eliminated all the evidence which we think can be eliminated. I have only two questions to put to this witness. We then propose to call a witness from Ardrossan; I think he will be quite short. Then we propose to go straight on to the Liverpool case. That must take some little time. The first witness will not be very short, but we hope that he will cover the greater part of the ground, and if your Lordship could see your way to give us, if necessary, a little more time to-day so that we can dispose of all the Liverpool witnesses whom we have here, and whom we hope to get through to-day, I think then, beginning at 11.30 on Monday, we ought to be able to complete the Liverpool evidence, if not on Monday afternoon, at least, fairly early on Tuesday.

The CHAIRMAN: I have no doubt that there is no desire to overload the case on anybody's part. We shall tell you how it looks about lunch time.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If your Lordship pleases.

Mr. H. HOPPERTON, *re-called*.

Examination continued by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. I think yesterday when the Court rose you were dealing with differentials at Preston, were you not?—(A.) I was.

Q. I think there was one matter to which you wished to draw attention: the effect of the maintenance of differentials, if this claim were conceded, upon piece-work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will you just put the point which you wish to make upon that to the Court?—(A.) At present the daily earnings of the men on piece-rates working wood pulp traffic are a minimum of 18s. 8d., and an average earning of 21s. 4d. per day of 8 hours.

Q. You say that at present on piece-work during the 8 hours the amount earned is 18s. 8d.?—(A.) That is practically a standard minimum on this wood pulp traffic, and the average earnings per day of 8 hours are 21s. 4d.; that is from

August up to date. If the differential is added—that is, the difference between the minimum of 11s. and 16s., which is 45 per cent., it would give a minimum earning of 27s. 1d., with an average daily earning of 30s. 4d. per day of 8 hours.

Q. It would put up the minimum from 18s. 8d. to 27s. 1d., and the average earning from 21s. 4d. to 30s. 4d. per day?—(A.) That is if the claim is literally interpreted as it stands to-day.

The CHAIRMAN: You will do your best, Mr. Bevin, to clear this up, will you not? You are noting the figures which the witness is giving?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Just a word on the loading and unloading of timber, on the question of output. What was the pre-war rate of loading ex quay to wagons per gang per hour on time rates?—(A.) Two standards per hour was the basis.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you mind translating what a standard is?—(A.) A standard is 2½ tons. Two standards would be 5 tons.

Q. It is 2 standards per hour?—(A.) Per hour per gang.

Q. What is the number in a gang?—(A.) A minimum of 4. It depends upon the distance the men would have to carry from the piles to the wagons. It is 4 upwards.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: At present what is the rate per hour per gang?—(A.) Certainly not more than 1½ standards.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that the time rate?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is the time rate also?—(A.) That is on time rate. It is equal to a reduction of 25 per cent.

Q. Men paid on time rates carry how many boards as a shoulder load per man?—(A.) There is an agreement in the Pink Book which contains the whole of the working conditions at Preston. I think there are copies put in.

Q. What does that say?—(A.) The agreement says that a man shall carry six boards, 1 inch by 4½ inches, 16 feet average. At present on time rates they will carry five, but if they are paid on piece rates they will carry six; and it is on a similar basis until you get to the bigger sizes, where the difference is more emphasised. You get three 1 inch by 9 inch; the men on time will carry only two, whereas they will still carry three if they are paid the piece rates. They can carry them. It is not a matter that they cannot carry them.

Q. Do the men working on time carry the number of boards which are set out in the agreement?—(A.) They will not and do not.

Q. But the men working on piecework carry more boards on their shoulders than the time workers?—(A.) More than the time workers. They will carry the standard agreed figure.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. The first point I want to put to you is on the paper H.35. There was no difference between the Preston and Liverpool rates pre-war, was there?—(A.) Speaking of the minimum, you are quite right, but the minimum at Preston does not mean the same thing by any means as the minimum at Liverpool.

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Q. That is not the question I am asking. I am talking about minima now, and I want a direct answer. The minimum for time rates at Preston was the same as at Liverpool before the war?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is there any reason why the minimum should not be the same after the war?—(A.) There is.

Q. What is it?—(A.) Because we have built up on the top of our minimum a lot of differentials.

Q. But if a lot of those differentials become consolidated like Liverpool, will not that put you right?—(A.) If you can arrange it, certainly.

Q. On the third page which I think you call "Preston C.," you have got some rents. What kind of houses are they?—(A.) Quite respectable houses.

Q. Back-to-back?—(A.) No.

Q. How big would a house be for 3s. per week in Preston?—(A.) A four-roomed house.

Q. What do you describe as four rooms?—(A.) A kitchen and a room and two bedrooms; or they probably have a kitchen and three bedrooms.

Q. That is not very much room for a family, is it?—(A.) It is not bad accommodation.

Q. You do not live there, do you?—(A.) No, but some of my higher-grade officials live in similar houses, houses up to 5s. and 6s., and they have got bathrooms.

Q. I put it to you that these houses which you have described as dockers' houses in the Port of Preston are, in fact, hovels which ought to be got rid of?—(A.) No, they are good houses. They are not slums by any means.

Q. You would not make a good adviser to the Minister of Health, would you? Of course, we both know the district. Now with regard to piece rates, I should like to know exactly how you interpret that statement which you made just now. You said that the minimum piece rate should be 18s. 8d., and that would put it up to 27s., and that by some extraordinary means would make it 30s. a day. I could not quite follow that.—(A.) We do not guarantee a minimum wage per day for piecework, but we have standards of output. For example, on wood pulp we calculate that an average man under average conditions can turn out 25 tons per gang per hour, and the men are paid per gang of 9 men.

Q. Supposing those men had been working day work, what would they turn out per hour?—(A.) Probably over 20 tons.

Q. And the piecework is only responsible for 5 tons an hour; is that all?—(A.) I have never had any experience of working wood pulp on time rates, so that it is difficult to lay it down in actual figures.

Q. But I notice that as regards timber you said that men carried 50 per cent. more when they were working on piece rates?—(A.) Not 50 per cent.

Q. You said they carried three instead of two?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, 1½.

Mr. BEVIN: Instead of what?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: He said that pre-war the loading was 2 standards per gang per hour on time rates, and that it is 1½ now, a reduction of 25 per cent.

Mr. BEVIN: Under the Pink Book he was describing the rates which the men carried.—(A.) Yes. In some cases it is 50 per cent., but not on the average.

Q. That is what I wanted to get. You say that while in some cases the men carry 50 per cent. more per load when they are working piecework.

on wood pulp it would be only 5 per cent.?—(A.) I did not say 5 per cent.

Q. 25 to 20? You say that there would be only 5 tons difference?—(A.) 25 to 20 does not make a difference of 5 per cent.

Q. Quite, but you say that there would be a difference of 5 tons only?—(A.) Probably, I said. We have no actual data to work on.

Q. Your interpretation of piecework according to our claim then is that you take the present basis of output; and how do you suggest that we suggest that it should be interpreted? What interpretation have you placed upon it? I cannot quite get it?—(A.) You are claiming for 16s. a day.

Q. That is right.—(A.) As a minimum?

Q. That is right.—(A.) The minimum at Preston is 11s., although it only applies to old-age pensioners and hatch men and that sort of thing. But there is a difference between 11s. and 16s. of 5s., so that if a man at present is earning somewhere about 18s. a day on piece rates he wants an extra 5s. a day. That is the way I think in which he would look at it.

Q. How much would that give him?—(A.) 23s. as a minimum.

Q. But you say you have no minimum for piece rates other than that the 16s. would be a minimum?

The CHAIRMAN: That is what we want to get at. There is surely some confusion here.—(A.) The minimum for piece-rates is in effect somewhere round about 18s. 8d. on wood pulp.

Q. What do you mean by the minimum on piece-rates?—(A.) If the output drops below a certain rate the men will say that there are some conditions applying to the traffic which do not give them a fair chance to earn their usual rate, and we have to assess the conditions and give them the equivalent of 25 tons per hour output.

Q. Is that a guaranteed minimum?—(A.) Practically a guaranteed minimum.

Mr. BEVIN: That is to say, if they do not do 25 tons they get 25 tons?—(A.) If it is proved that the cargo is in loose condition.

Q. That is when the cargo is not normal, but assuming that a man goes to work, is he guaranteed 25 tons an hour?—(A.) Practically so, yes, because if the cargo is anything like in condition he can easily do 25 tons; he can do up to 37 tons, as a matter of fact.

Q. But you only pay the minimum in a case where there is something the matter with the cargo, or there are delays when it is in a bad condition?—(A.) Because there is never any occasion to pay otherwise.

Mr. BEVIN: But I think our interpretation, my Lord, if I may clear up that point, is this: that when you have settled the minimum for the time-rate and the minimum that shall apply to the pieceworker below which he shall not fall, then you shall adjust piece rates to yield an advance equivalent in percentage to what the timeworker gets; but it is all a question of adjustment. In the 44-hour week settlement it varied in each port. It depended upon the reduction of hours, and the amount of money that would apply to a timeworker, and then it was analysed on that basis. For instance, the practice during the war in the case of Hull was that 1d. per hour was worth so much percentage to a pieceworker, and by local negotiation that sort of standard was accepted and automatically has been carried out since. At Bristol on a basis of output of 2,400

* See Appendix No. 116.

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bushels on a grain ship, 1s. 0d. per day was worth ½d. per 100 bushels; and so in the various ports a basis has been arrived at for pieceworkers upon those lines subject to local adjustment. That is how it has been arranged before.

The CHAIRMAN: Supposing you had your minimum time allowance fixed under Head 1 of your claim, would there be difficulty in the parties meeting together to arrange this question of the relative rise in piecework according to local conditions?

Mr. BEVIN: I do not think there would be any difficulty at all, any more than there is in the engineering trade, the shipbuilding trade or any other trade, when you fix or raise a time rate, in arranging a relative advance which shall apply to pieceworkers. It was done in the case of London. Your attention was called yesterday to the fact that when we altered the hours in London we agreed, after discussion, that that was worth 10 per cent. to the pieceworker, and we arrived at 10 per cent. It varies in the different ports according to what the piece-rate is. I do not think the parties could agree to a definite 10 per cent. (say) or 15 per cent., or 20 per cent. over the whole country, because one rate yields more than another.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, that applies to localities, as one of my colleagues points out, and if it can be adjusted by striking in a particular locality 10 per cent. on piecework rates, or whatever percentage may be applicable to the particular locality, then there is no general principle to be applied to it except the principle that there will be a rise of some kind in the piecework, which will be locally adjusted on percentage; but the position of the witness—and that is where I think we shall be obliged if you can clear it up—is that he takes the difference between the minimum sum actually paid just now to the poorest workman and your 16s. 0d. Might I ask him a question?

Mr. BEVIN: Certainly.

The CHAIRMAN (*to the Witness*): The relation of the 16s. to—what is your lowest?—(A.) The very lowest is 11s.

Q. That is 5s. 5s. addition on 11s. you see is equal to about 45 per cent.—(A.) That is my calculation.

Q. You do not suggest that the claim of the docker is that because the past minimum in this port has been so small, therefore there is to be 45 per cent. added to all the piece rates in this dock?—(A.) That is the literal reading of the claim.

Q. That is the literal meaning of it; but surely you do not suggest that the dockers are making a claim of that kind?—(A.) My experience of the April, 1919, Recommendation was that the local people interpreted the Recommendation most literally.

Q. All we can say is that having heard your evidence it is quite clear to us that some adjustment will have to be arrived at between the parties—and I understand both parties are willing to meet each other—because the abnormal result to which you point may be a literal view, but we want to get at something which is decent and right for both parties.—(A.) I am quite agreeable, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to say this, my Lord, with regard to the piece rates: there are one or two points we have to keep in mind when negotiations

for the minimum rate are fixed. We are met with this position, that some of the piece rates are much better than others; the yield of some is very low and has not been proportionately advanced during the war, and piece rates, we say, cannot be settled in one general amount for every class of cargo right throughout the country.

The CHAIRMAN: Or even in one general percentage?

Mr. BEVIN: Or even in one general percentage, but it should be looked at for the purpose of adjusting all these piece rates so as to yield a proper result, having regard to the increased output the port gets over a port on time rate.

The CHAIRMAN: The shorthand reporter has that down, and it contains the elements of a reasonable arrangement. The witness, of course, is within his right in taking it on the basis he has explained.

Mr. BEVIN (*to the Witness*): Going from that, you said you were in competition with the Garston and Fleetwood Docks?—(A.) Yes.

Q. As those docks will be covered by the 16s. minimum, there will be no serious injury to you, will there, if you are all on the same rate?—(A.) My point is that Garston and Fleetwood have a subsidy behind them.

Q. Is the subsidy operative since the increase of railway rates?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are you sure?—(A.) Yes; the guarantee by the Government is for a period of two years.

Q. But is it not a fact that the recent railway increase of rates is presumed to have been based upon such a basis as will make the railways economically payable?—(A.) You used the word "presumed," that is just the point.

Q. But the reference of the Railway Rates Advisory Committee, I think, was that they had to put such rates on to the railways as would wipe out the subsidy from the State, and in that form the increase of rates was reported to Parliament?—(A.) There is an increase in railway rates on traffic such as we handle of 25 per cent. and 50 per cent., and the present application means in wages at Preston something like 300 per cent.

Q. But I am putting another point to you: you say that Fleetwood and the other docks, the Garston Docks, are subsidised. It is not a question of what amount the railway companies have put on, but as to whether the rates they have put on will yield on the traffic passing through those docks an amount which makes a subsidy unnecessary?—(A.) That is the hope, of course, but it is not certain that it will come to that at the end of the year.

Q. You do not deny my point, that the Railway Rates Advisory Committee and the Government have put an increase on with the object of wiping the subsidy out, do you?—(A.) They certainly have done that, but I do not think it will have that effect.

Q. Then it is a question of opinion only as to whether the amount they have put on will accomplish their object?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So far as Parliament is concerned, they have voted, or agreed, to certain increases of railway rates which, in their judgment, will do away with the necessity of a subsidy?—(A.) Yes, probably that is so.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. On this last point, what the Railway Rates Advisory Committee has done is to increase the

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railway charges for the conveyance of goods, is it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. It is, the fact, is it not, that the dock dues have not been raised?—(A.) They have not been raised by any Government arrangement.

Q. And all that the Advisory Committee has dealt with is the rates for conveyance?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And nothing to do with the charges. Now Mr. Bevin asked you about the suggested arrangement of consolidation of differential at Preston. In your opinion, can that be done? Do you think it is possible to wipe out the existing differentials?—(A.) I should not like to cut the ground away from under Mr. Bevin's feet. If I say it cannot be done the men will probably quote me.

Q. But do you think there is a very hopeful prospect of that being successful?—(A.) I know the men take the jam out of any agreement, and they ignore the recommendations which are not absolutely cast iron, as they did in April, 1919.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not catch that last answer.—(A.) I said the men were inclined to take the jam out of any recommendation.

Q. What do you mean by that?—(A.) They will take the minimum of 16s. and say thank you; but if there was any recommendation which said that the interests of the port should be considered, and the fact that the piece rates would be extraordinarily increased if this minimum was applied to them, that they would ignore, in my opinion.

Q. What is your age?—(A.) Thirty-seven, my Lord.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: How long have you been at Preston?—(A.) Only since the Armistice. Prior to that I was at Hull, Liverpool, and Leith.

Q. You have had a good deal of experience in dealing with dock labour?—(A.) I have.

Q. You have no data for comparing time and piece work on wood-pulp, I think you said?—(A.) I have no data.

Q. But you have data for comparing piecework and timework on timber?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. You find that the pieceworkers carry 50 per cent. more than the timeworkers?—(A.) On some particular sizes; on the average, I should say, 25 per cent.

Q. On the average 25 per cent., sometimes 50 per cent.?—(A.) Yes; and we pay the timber men 14s. 2d. per day time rate.

Q. You heard what Mr. Bevin said this morning, and he has said it before, it appears in the notes, that the object was to adjust piece rates so as to give an equivalent advance to that given to timeworkers, and it was upon that statement, and a similar statement that he made earlier in the proceedings, that you worked out the difference which you gave to the Court of 18s. 8d. and 27s.?—(A.) As practically a minimum.

Q. You took the 16s. minimum, compared it with your present 11s. minimum, and applied that so as to give an equivalent advance to pieceworkers?—(A.) I did.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I think the witness has explained it, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. Can you tell me what head of claim this would fall under?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I was taking it from Mr. Bevin's speech.

The CHAIRMAN: I know. Mr. Bevin used words

in that speech as to the equivalent, which you may interpret in one way or you may interpret it in another. It is just as much a surprise to me as apparently it is to Mr. Bevin that you should take the same sum and add it to the pieceworkers of a particular port. I will leave that out; but what I want to know is what head of the Claim we are now on.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The head of the printed Claim?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I do not know that that can be brought strictly within the letter of the Claim as formulated and laid before the Court, but it was elaborated, and that is what we went on, by Mr. Bevin when he explained these items in his opening statement.

The CHAIRMAN: But the point that is put to us by the Ministry of Labour, and which is the sole point on this, is that the minimum for day workers and piece workers should be 16s. per day.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the sole point.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is so, my Lord; but, on the other hand, we have to pay attention to the explanation that Mr. Bevin made of what was intended by the Claim, and how he asked the Court to read the Claim that they put forth.

The CHAIRMAN: I again say to you both, that once this minimum is fixed there seems to be quite easily, judging by other examples, the materials for making out a schedule which should be capable of local application in a reasonable sense. That is all that is wanted. Mark you, Mr. Bruce Thomas, if I may say so, you are entirely within your rights in taking it in that sense, and so was Mr. Hopperton; that is to say, in putting the extreme upon it which you wanted to face, but, of course, Mr. Hopperton's evidence is valuable as showing to what rather extraordinary lengths of construction a verbal utterance may be pushed.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If anything had to be done upon this matter it seems to us to be quite clear that it would have to be done locally.

The CHAIRMAN: You will arrange that.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I do not know whether we could arrange it; I am afraid we could not; but if anything had to be done it would have to be done elsewhere.

The CHAIRMAN: You have an opportunity presented to you, and it surely should not be beyond the wit of man to do this. Have you any other question to put to Mr. Hopperton?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, my Lord.

Mr. BEVIN: There was just one point I would like to put in view of Mr. Hopperton's statement that the men selected the best.

Q. Did not the Agreement provide for two half days quite distinctly; from 8 to 12 and 1 to 5 or similar hours? Do you in Preston put into operation the second half day, or do you have broken time?—(A.) On overseas traffic we have

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the two distinct half days, and at the moment also on the coasting trade, notwithstanding the fact that the Recommendation said that special application had to be made in connection with coasting and cross-Channel services. That point in the Recommendation was ignored by the men.

Q. But you did not put into operation right away the two half days, did you?—(A.) No, because we read into that the fact that the coasting and cross-Channel could not work such an arrangement.

Q. There was another Recommendation, was not there, that if there was a difficulty it should be referred back to the National Committee. Did you refer back?—(A.) Yes.

Q. We have never seen it—I am a member of that Committee.

The CHAIRMAN (*to the Witness*): There must be surely some mistake about that. I have nothing to do with it, but are you quite sure that you did refer it back?

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS: No.

The WITNESS: The matter was referred back by certain Ports concerned.

The CHAIRMAN: But did you refer it?—(A.) Not personally.

Q. Did Preston refer it back?—(A.) No, I have to say that, not directly. Of course, we were all working together.

Q. You compare the 16s. and 11s.?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. When was that 11s. fixed?—(A.) In April, 1919.

Q. Are you aware that in other Ports of even greater importance than yours the minimum wage is larger than that?—(A.) I am. We follow Liverpool very largely.

Q. But what has the minimum wage risen to in other Ports? (A.) In Liverpool the minimum wage is 11s. 4d., I think, but our 11s. only applies to warehousemen. If a man is working in connection with cargo ex-ship, he would be paid 11s. 4d., not 11s.

Q. There is 4d., anyway, of the difference?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are there other Ports where the minimum is larger than 11s. 8d.?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Suppose in other Ports the minimum is 13s.?—(A.) Yes, I will suppose that.

Q. In such a case there would be an increase of 3s.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And the result would be that where a Port had paid a pretty big minimum in former years, on your calculation, interpreting what has been said, that Port would escape, would it not, and the workmen would be penalised compared to the Port where there was a smaller minimum. Do you follow?—(A.) Yes, I think I follow.

Q. Well, that cannot be right, you know?—(A.) I hope I have made it quite clear.

Q. It is not your doing, but to apply such a principle could not be right?—(A.) No, it could not.

Q. I am quite sure the parties do not mean that; however, as I say, you are quite right to take it up in that way.—(A.) I am afraid the impression produced is that we are paying below other Ports.

Q. No, I am only putting a comparison to you. Now, I am asked to ask you about the list of rents on page 3. Some of these are as low as 2s. 9d. a week, I think?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What sort of a house is a 2s. 9d. house?—(A.) A four-roomed house, my Lord.

Sir JOSEPH BROODBANK: What is the size of the rooms?—(A.) They are fairly good property, it is not slum property.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it flatted property, or what is it?—(A.) They are in terraces or rows, single houses.

Q. Are they comparatively new houses?—(A.) I would not say they are comparatively new.

Q. Are they old, then?—(A.) Moderately old.

Q. Are they in good repair?—(A.) Fairly good repair, I believe.

Q. I congratulate Preston.—(A.) It is a cheap place to live in, no doubt.

Q. Are these rents existing to-day?—(A.) They are the present rents.

Q. We cannot enter into details, but I gather that the result of your evidence is that these are respectable, decent houses?—(A.) I have no hesitation in saying that, my Lord.

Q. I am also asked to ask you about the weight of loads and distances carried by the individual man. Could you give us any information about that?—(A.) There is a limit to the distance a man is allowed to carry a deal, and he would drop it at a point, and it would be picked up by another man if it had to be carried further, or wagons would be used.

Q. Can you mention that limit to us?—(A.) I am afraid I have not the exact distance in my memory, my Lord. Roughly, it is 120 ft., I think.

Q. 40 yards?—(A.) 40 yards.

Q. To carry what weight?—(A.) A deal—three-quarters of a hundredweight at the very outside.

Q. Three-quarters of a hundredweight—that is a full load?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Had you any men who went to the war?—(A.) We had a big lot went to the war. The dock was practically closed during the war.

Q. How did you supply the labour?—(A.) During the war there was practically no labour required. When I got back to Preston there were about 30 men there at the time.

Q. How do you get the labour supply now?—(A.) The men have returned from the war.

Q. The same men?—(A.) The same men.

Q. Are they as efficient as before?—(A.) Hardly.

Q. You have to shorten either the load or the distance now?—(A.) Yes, we have introduced mechanical appliances to help them, carrying the deals from the ship to the storage dépôt.

Q. I am asked by one of our members whether you know that the men are weaker or that they do not work so efficiently. I use the word efficient, meaning thereby that the man is as fit for his work?—(A.) I should say the men have learned how not to work in the Army.

Q. Do you make any allowance, even in your own mind, for the war upon these men?—(A.) I do, my Lord, and I do not particularly complain about the output; I am simply emphasising the fact that piece rates give better results than time rates, and I am all out for piece rates.

Q. Your view appears to be that the war has made the men less efficient, in the sense of being less willing?—(A.) I think there is something in that, although I admit that some of the men have been injured in health and also by wounds, and that has some effect, of course.

Q. Have you such men in your employment?—(A.) We have.

Q. Do you not see that that would affect the

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total of your output?—(A.) Quite, I acknowledge that, but when the men are paid on piece rates we get much better results.

Q. What?—(A.) When we pay piece rates we get so much better results.

Q. I gather your view is that piece rates are better than time rates?—(A.) Yes, we look upon it as a sort of co-partnership.

Q. What is the proportion of piece rates to time rates in Preston?—(A.) I should say about 37 per cent. are piece rates at the present time, but when our normal pre-war traffic comes back, probably 60 or 70 per cent. will be on piece rates.

Q. And to that extent the output will always improve?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How long have you been in your present position?—(A.) Just over a year, my Lord.

Q. And where were you before?—(A.) I was traffic manager at Leith Docks before joining the Navy.

Q. How long were you there?—(A.) I think it was 2½ years.

Q. How long were you in the Navy?—(A.) 2½ years.

Q. And before Leith?—(A.) I was four years in Liverpool.

Q. What were you doing there?—(A.) I was representing the North-Eastern Railway Company.

Q. Had you dock labour under you there?—(A.) Not actually dock labour, but I was about the docks a good deal.

Q. Because you made pretty strong observations, as it appeared to some of us, about the class of men and about the determination not to work, and that whatever agreement was made, they would not stick to it?—(A.) I think they are quite right in sticking to it, my Lord.

Q. What?—(A.) The piece-rate men at Preston are a good class of men, and they naturally regard themselves as so much an hour or so much a day better than the minimum man.

Q. Then you think that, taken as a class, they are all men who keep their word?—(A.) Yes, I think so.

The Witness withdrew.

CAPTAIN ROBERT WILLIAM ORR, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are the Harbour Master at Ardrossan, and you have been Harbour Master for the past 8½ years?—(A.) That is right.

Q. You have control of the labour employed there?—(A.) I have.

Q. Have you been associated also with the management of the Ports of Irvine, Troon, and Ayr?—(A.) Yes, as far as the conducting of negotiations regarding labour questions is concerned.

Q. They are all on the Clyde?—(A.) They are all on the Clyde.

Q. All on the Firth of Clyde?—(A.) Yes, and worked under the same negotiations.

Q. Are the conditions practically the same at those ports as at Ardrossan?—(A.) Very much the same, the wages entirely the same.

Q. I think the discharging in all those ports is carried out by the Port Authorities except general cargo?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Are the charges leviable at all these ports limited by Statute?—(A.) They are.

Q. And are they now practically up to the

limit of their statutory powers?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think you have got three or four tables which you desire to lay before the Court, have you not?—(A.) Which one do you refer to?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I will just hand these in, my Lord. (*Document put in and marked H.36.)

Q. Would you point out on these tables one or two things. I think in the last table, called Ardrossan D., you set out the class of labour employed at Ardrossan, do you not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And the number of men employed, and the total wages?—(A.) That is so. I may say that under Ore labourers there is a number there 64; that is a mistake, it should be rather more than that—that is a clerical error.

Q. Do you show the pre-war rates here?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Go down to the casual men: the principle men are the Ore labourers and the coal trimmers, are they not?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to raise the point that my friend should not deal with the coal trimmers; the coal trimming is being dealt with to-day by another Conference.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Take the Ore labourers; they are piece workers, are they not?—(A.) They are piece workers, yes.

Q. And the increase shown there is 4d. per ton?—(A.) 4d. per ton on the pre-war rate. They always vary according to the class of ore—3½d. for ordinary ore, 4d. for other ores.

Q. Then you show, higher up, what are the rates for the permanent men, and the light labour down below—under "general cargoes"?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Would you turn to your first sheet, I think you have given there some wages that are paid in the district. I want you to tell the Court how the rates which you pay to the dock labourers compare with the rates you have shown there. Do they compare favourably or unfavourably?—(A.) I think they compare very favourably.

Q. Would you turn to the second statement, Ardrossan B. Upon that statement have you shown that there has been a reduction of output at Ardrossan?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Are the vessels which you have compared in 1919 with 1913 vessels that can fairly be compared from the point of view of facility of working?—(A.) That was the idea of taking them out. We tried as near as possible to compare like with like.

Q. And the result shown on that table is that there has been a decrease on the pre-war rate of discharge of 36 per cent.?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That is per eight hours?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Per squad?—(A.) Per squad.

Q. To put it in another way, I think on your statement it shows that the output in 1919 averaged 36 per cent. of what it was in 1913. That is so, is not it?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then you have taken limestone, and you have shown by a comparison of 1919 with 1913 that the decrease has been equal to 27 per cent. per squad per day?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Again, you have reduced it to the 8-hourly day?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Now, what do you put that decreased output down to?—(A.) Largely to the loss of time. They do not work eight hours.

The CHAIRMAN: What was that?

* See Appendices Nos. 117 and 118.

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Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The witness was saying, my Lord, that he puts this decrease of output down to the loss of time; that the men, in fact, do not work the eight hours. (*To the witness*): Is that correct?—(A.) That is correct. When the 8-hour day or the 44-hour week came into operation we attempted to follow the lines laid down by the Federation to start at 8 o'clock and work till 12, having dinner from 12 till 1, and then working from 1 till 5, but our men absolutely refused. I reckon they lose at least an hour and a-half every day.

Q. Do you consider that the granting of this claim would have any effect upon the tradesmen employed at these four harbours?—(A.) I do.

Q. What effect do you think it would have?—(A.) It would create a lot of dissatisfaction, I think.

Q. It would create dissatisfaction?—(A.) I am afraid it would.

Q. Do you think the tradesmen would want their wages also increased?—(A.) I think so.

Q. With regard to rents at Ardrossan and these other ports: are they low?—(A.) At Ardrossan especially the rents are very low, and the rates are also low.

Q. And have the men gardens—plots?—(A.) Every man who wants it has an allotment from the Harbour Company, if he desires it.

Q. From the Company?—(A.) From the Company.

Q. Do they all live close to the Docks?—(A.) The majority of them do.

Q. Except, I think, in the case of Troon?—(A.) When I mentioned the allotments I only referred to Ardrossan.

Q. Were you referring to Ardrossan when you were talking of the rents?—(A.) When I was talking of the allotments.

Q. Does your statement with regard to low rents apply to the other ports also?—(A.) They are low, comparatively speaking; not as low as at Ardrossan.

Q. Have you found that past increases of rates of pay have been followed by a decrease in output?—(A.) That is so; that is our experience.

Q. Have you had any difficulty at Ardrossan through the men stopping work when they are putting forward demands and trying to force you to accept them?—(A.) We had up till very lately. Up till about six weeks ago we had continual trouble in that respect. We have had no trouble within the last two months. The Union officials took a stand with the men, and since that we have had no trouble. They always helped us all they could, but the men went up against their instructions. The men have been quieter in that respect since.

Q. You find you can arrange with the Union, but the men in the past have not followed that arrangement?—(A.) We have had one or two small fights over the same thing.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. With regard to the ships mentioned in your list, 1913 and 1919, is there any likeness in construction?—(A.) As near as possible.

Q. We agree that all ships are "as near as possible," but how near is "as near as possible"? Take the first list of ships; they were regular traders with ore, were not they?—(A.) The 1913 list?

Q. Yes, they were ore ships?—(A.) Ore ships, the same as 1919.

Q. These ships in 1919 may be carrying ore, but do you say they are constructed like the ships in 1913, without any obstructions and so on for

ore carrying?—(A.) In most cases they are better.

Q. Are you sure about that?—(A.) I am quite sure.

Q. When were they built? Look at the names of them.—(A.) There is the "Redruth" Bristol Channel steamer in the 1919 list. She is not a modern ship by any means.

Q. She was not built for carrying iron ore, was she?—(A.) She has carried iron ore for a good many years.

Q. She is a ship which in the Bristol Channel is usually complained of for obstructions?—(A.) I never heard of any complaint about that ship. We reckon that as one of our good ships.

Q. Before the war you had an output of 303 tons per gang?—(A.) That is the average, that is a 10½ hours day.

Q. I put it to you that that is absolute slavery to maintain. There is no port in Great Britain that is getting an average by hand work as big as you put in 1919, certainly not in the Bristol Channel. If you grumble with 191 tons per day, then you are very difficult to satisfy in Ardrossan.—(A.) They can do better if they want to. I will tell you what happened last week. The way we work, if I may give an instance, is, we work a gang system at Ardrossan so that every man gets an equal share of work. There are three gangs attached to an iron ore ship. The night shift put out as much as the other two squads did all day—10 tons more than the other two squads all day.

Q. That may be, I do not dispute that at all, but my point is this, that I am willing to submit it to any body of employers in the country, that if they from the work in a shovelling gang can get an output of 191 tons per day in these days, they would be very satisfied in any port in the country.—(A.) You understand that we have grab work in Ardrossan as well?

Q. You put a note, "This is compiled exclusive of grabs." I am coming to the point of decreased output in a moment. You have had an output since the war of 191 tons per day hand work. If you worked it out for each man of the 8 men—that means putting over his shovel in the tub each day and breaking down through—to expect 303 tons in these days I say is unreasonable.—(A.) I am saying what they did do and what they are doing now, and what they can do yet if they put their backs to it.

Q. I submit to you that the conditions of Ardrossan, in which the men were driven to do 303 tons of iron ore before the war, hand work, were such that the organisation there was very weak, or they would not have tolerated it?—(A.) Not at all. We have old men on the job.

Q. Do you know it is a fact that when the Mobile Battalion was lent during the war, the Military Commander reported to the Committee that he could not keep the men in physical efficiency for the Home Defence Army if they worked more than 4 days a week?—(A.) That may be so.

Q. Here are soldiers, well fed, well cared for, no employment, nothing casual; it was reported that it was difficult to keep them in physical efficiency if they were continuously on iron ore more than four days a week.—(A.) What conditions were the Military working under? A great many of the Military were possibly unfit for working iron ore.

Q. That is the point I am coming to. Then here were men who were picked to enter His Majesty's Army, whom you now say were totally unfit for iron ore?—(A.) I say many of them were, through wounds and shell shock, and what not.

Q. A lot of your gang^s got broken up, did not they, during the war?—(A.) Not a lot of them; some of them did.

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Q. Did not you have to have the Mobile Battalion in there?—(A.) That did not affect the gangs.

Q. You had a reduced number of men at Ardrossan during the war?—(A.) A reduced number of gangs.

Q. You have had to get other men in, or men have come back from the war since?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With regard to the men who you say were fit to enter His Majesty's service and were cared for and fed, and with no unemployment, you say that many of them were unfit for iron ore?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Did you expect the men who did three or four years in the Army to be back in the same condition that they were when they were in their regular gangs before?—(A.) These men who have come back from the Army are really the best men we have.

Q. But the average output is reduced?—(A.) It is.

Q. That is the point I am putting to you, and I am submitting that no men are going to work with the shovel to give you 303 tons, and frankly and publicly I certainly say that I would urge them not to do it. Whatever the result of this Inquiry may be, I would never tolerate it as a Union official; I would educate them up not to do what they were doing before the war?—(A.) They could not do it; they had 10½ hours then, and they have only eight hours now, so they could not possibly do it.

Q. Was not it difficult all through the war to get men on iron ore? I mean outside labour when your labour got reduced?—(A.) It was in Ardrossan, because there was nothing in Ardrossan but the shipyards and ourselves; no surplus labour.

Q. It was general knowledge that all over the country it was difficult to get men on iron ore?—(A.) I quite agree that it was.

Q. Did not the Mobile Battalion, taking the percentage of its time, have to be employed more on iron ore cargoes than on anything else?—(A.) Quite possibly it had.

Q. Does not that indicate that iron ore discharging is one of the most difficult and arduous tasks in any dock?—(A.) That is a matter of opinion. It is a hard job I admit; but to say it is the worst job, I do not admit that.

Q. It is not a job which you would select for a holiday, is it?—(A.) No; that is no comparison.

Q. I put this to you: I notice your rates for iron ore on "D." is 8d. per ton?—(A.) Plus 20 per cent.

Q. Are you aware that the rates you have stated there plus the 20 per cent. are about the lowest rates in the country?—(A.) I do not know whether they are or not.

Q. If it can be shown that South Wales, say, is paying much higher than that, would you be willing to pay them?—(A.) I know that South Wales is paying more than that.

Q. I submit that at Swansea the eight men are paid 1s. 5d. a ton which you pay 8d. plus 20 per cent. for?—(A.) That may be.

Q. And I am quite sure that Swansea would be willing to increase that by another 30 per cent. if they could get 191 tons a day?—(A.) That is up to them; it has nothing to do with me.

Q. I submit really that having regard to the arduous nature and the very difficult job, the output you are getting at Ardrossan ought to satisfy any reasonable man in a modern state of civilisation?—(A.) That is a matter of opinion.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you mind looking at

page 8 of the Statement which you have been good enough to hand in?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The decrease on the pre-war rate of discharge of iron ore you give as 36 per cent.?—(A.) Yes; that is taking the mean of the whole of the six vessels.

Q. I suppose you must admit that that is a misleading figure, must not you, as represented in this Statement, as it does not represent like with like at all?—(A.) It does as near as possible. That was the idea; you could not exactly get the same ships.

Q. How can it represent like with like? In the one year it was on a 10½ hours day, and in the other year it was on an eight hours day?—(A.) That is reduced to an hourly output, my Lord.

Q. Where?—(A.) You see against each ship it says "per man per eight hours."

Q. I am surprised, but I may be wrong. Just look at your average of the eight hours, that is 23.9 tons per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In 1913?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Whereas it is 23.9 tons per hour in 1919?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Now that would be comparing like with like, would not it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If you worked that out you would find that it does not come to 36 per cent., but it comes to 18 per cent. That must be so, must it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I am dealing with the men's work, and it is 18 per cent. of less output?—(A.) It is practically 5 tons per man.

Q. Which works out at 18 per cent. Then the next thing I want to ask you is: When did you introduce the grab?—(A.) In 1916 or 1917.

Q. That has been going on now for three or four years?—(A.) Since early in 1917.

Q. What do you mean in your Statement by saying "the grab work is not included in above calculations?"—(A.) This is entirely shovel work, work done by the men exclusively by hand.

Q. May we not take it that when grab work was introduced, it was introduced in order to increase output and facility of working?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Can you give us any information as to what the result is all over of the labour with the grabs, as compared with the labour without them?—(A.) In the case of ore, what we do in Ardrossan is, we dig down No. 2 and No. 3 Hatches, which are hatches that are filled up level with the deck; they dig these hatches down, so that the men have a fair start away, therefore doing away with the most arduous work in iron ore.

Q. I think that is quite right and quite likely, but what I am anxious to get at is—and I do not think you follow my question—have you anything showing what is the output of the men with all the new appliances, as compared with what it was when they had not got them?—(A.) I have not.

Q. That would have been rather helpful; I am sorry you did not give it to us. Now we will turn to Limestone.—(A.) Limestone is entirely hand work.

Q. That is entirely hand work, so there is a good comparison?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It is not mixed up with the grab, or anything of that sort. Now, there you say that the decrease is 27.6 per cent. per squad per day?—(A.) That is so, comparing the 10½ hours' day with the 8 hours' day.

Q. You say that 27 per cent. is a very startling decrease?—(A.) It is.

Q. Now, just begin and put it right, so that it may lead us instead of mislead us. That is a

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squad which works 10½ hours as compared with a squad which only works 8 hours?—(A.) Yes. It really should have been 10 hours.

Q. Now go back in the case of limestone to the average per 8 hours; that is, 24.5 tons in 1913, and it is 23.2 tons in 1919. Instead of being 27.6 per cent. down, it is only about 5 per cent; is not that so?—(A.) It is a ton and a quarter.

Q. I think I am right in saying that it is 5 per cent. Now, are not you free to admit that with regard to limestone that 5 per cent. may well be accounted for by the fact that you had been getting the men back from the war, some of them not so efficient as before?—(A.) I do not think that happens in Ardrossan. Men come back from the war who are not capable of going back to the work of iron-ore labourers; they go on lighter jobs.

Q. They are not so capable as the others?—(A.) What I mean to say is that the men who come back from the Army who are wounded or disabled do not join these ports; they go into other employment.

Q. Then you have to get the men from other squads to fill up the limestone?—(A.) No, we work in gangs; we work in rotation.

Q. If they do not go to the limestone, they go to the iron ore?—(A.) In their turn; they all get equal turns; every man in Ardrossan gets an equal turn of work.

Q. So that the returned men who are not so capable are not put on to limestone?—(A.) It is not a case of that. The men are made up into gangs and numbered off, and they take their turn in rotation as they come in, so that every man gets a share of the work as it comes along.

Q. I am very anxious that you should be alive to this consideration, that in the table you have put forward with regard to limestone the output is pretty much the same now as it was six years ago?—(A.) There is not a great deal of difference in the limestone, because they are all small cargoes.

Q. That may be. When you referred to the output of 191 tons per squad, I think it was—is not that what you said?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is it not your opinion that that should be the maximum?—(A.) No; I think that the men should do better than that. They can do it; they have done it.

Q. On piece-work?—(A.) Yes, all on piece-work. They do it frequently when they feel like it.

Q. Do you feel inclined to go so far as to say that, looking to the nature of the work and it having been done, in the figures you have given, by hand 191 tons is a very good output for a working man?—(A.) If I might explain, I think that 25 tons an hour can be done. I do not say so with regard to all ores; some of them are difficult to handle; but it should be done.

Q. What is the number of men in a squad?—(A.) Eight men.

Q. And what tonnage do you say?—(A.) 25 tons. That is a fair average.

Q. That is three tons an hour for a man?—(A.) Yes, a little over. It does not mean a lot of shovelling. They get a bucket on the face, and they work the ore off the face. It is only when they are finishing up that they have any shovelling.

Q. Are you surprised that in other places the output for hand labour should be less?—(A.) I am not surprised at anything. In connection with that statement of wages which is there, I should like to explain that that statement is taken for the last nine months of last year, and embodies every working man working on lime-

stone, whether he was working or not; everyone at the beginning of the period was working at the time he started, and it was really taken from the income-tax returns. It does not follow that every man was working then; it is the average wage that each man received. As a matter of fact, it is to show how the several squads averaged during the period £4 7s. 9d. and £4 7s. 2d., which shows that if everybody had worked alike they would all have earned the same amount.

Q. Did you know about this military report that was put in?—(A.) I never heard of it.

Q. That report exists, I suppose?—(A.) It is quite likely; I do not know. I have never heard of it. I have had a good deal of experience of the squads of the Labour Battalion down there during the war; about 120 were there for a long time.

Q. How did they compare with your men in efficiency?—(A.) They were not so good as our men.

Q. Your men could produce much more?—(A.) Yes, half as much again with very few exceptions. There was one squad that came down which was as good as our men; but it was only one squad that was as good as our own men.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, you will probably have to address us at the close of the proceedings; if you do so, if you have that document by you, you might deal with it.

Mr. BEVIN: With regard to the report?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, the military report.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I was going to put one or two questions in re-examination, if I might put them now.

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. Would you have expected that when the hours were reduced from 10½ to 8 the hourly output would not have increased?—(A.) We expected that the work would go correspondingly better seeing that they were only working 8 hours than it did in the 10½ hours.

Q. On this class of work do you consider that men ought to be able to work more efficiently for 8 hours than 10½ hours?—(A.) They should do.

Q. In fact in each of these cases the reverse has been the result?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In one case 18 per cent., and in the other case a little over 5 per cent.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With regard to the Transport Workers' Battalion, that Battalion did not consist entirely of dockers, did it?—(A.) No; there were very few dockers in it.

Q. It consisted entirely of low medical category men, did it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I believe if one looks down the list you find quite a number of inefficient, low-category barristers. No doubt we shall be able to get the list and see exactly what the Battalion consisted of.—(A.) There was a number of men who were not fit to be dockers; there is no question about that.

(The Witness withdrew.)

The CHAIRMAN: You mean a low physical category?

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Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: A low medical category, my Lord, but quite inefficient for the purposes of a docker.

Mr. BEVIN: Does it follow that if a barrister is inefficient as a docker the dockers' rates in future will be higher than the barristers'?

The CHAIRMAN: It may save you afterwards if you have any questions to put upon that report to look at it now; or would you prefer to mention it later? We are very much in your hands; perhaps you had better look through it first.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I will now call the Liverpool witnesses. I am told that we are being very urgently pressed to call evidence from one other port, but I propose, at least for the moment, to leave the consideration of that to a later stage.

The CHAIRMAN: You mean you may perhaps interpolate a Witness?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: We may. It is rather difficult, if the representative of the port desires to come here, to keep him back.

The CHAIRMAN: We must not impede your course.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I am told it is a Scottish port, so that your Lordship will be more forbearing than usual.

WILLIAM HOWARD BOASE, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are a Director of Walter Nelson and Son, Limited, Master Porters and Stevedores at Liverpool, are you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you had 30 years' experience of Liverpool?—(A.) Rather more than 30 years.

Q. How much cargo do you handle per year?—(A.) Well over 1,000,000 tons.

Q. How many cargoes does that represent?—(A.) Probably about 25 per month.

Q. 25 steamers per month?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The work of the stevedore at Liverpool is of performing every operation in connection with loading, is it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. He does both the quay work and the ship work?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In connection with unloading he does all the operations until the cargo is got to the ship's rail?—(A.) Quite.

Q. From the ship's rail in discharging the remainder of the work is done by the porters?—(A.) Yes.

Q. By the master porters?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The charges of the master porters are paid by whom?—(A.) The consignee of the goods or the trader; call it the trader.

Q. What is the proportion of porters to shipmen at Liverpool?—(A.) I should say 13 to 9.

Q. And it is the porters' proportion that is ultimately paid by the consignee, and later by the consumer?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In your estimate of 13 porters to 9 shipmen, have you included any of the warehousemen?—(A.) No, they do not come under that category, but I believe they number about 12,000.

Q. The charges for the portage services are paid by the trader, are they not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They are paid directly by him?—(A.) Yes, directly.

Q. Those rates are fixed by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, are they not?—(A.) The rates for master portage which are paid by the trader are fixed by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, and were based upon the actual cost of the operation plus an amount laid down for establishment expenses and profit.

Q. Those charges were fixed after taking very close observations of the work done over a considerable period, were they not?—(A.) The observations extended over two years, and they were taken in this way: a representative, an observer, as he was called, was appointed by the traders of the port; the steamship owners and master porters appointed another person, and those two people took particulars of the amount of work done, the actual cost of the operation; those were then submitted to Mr. Lionel Spencer, a chartered accountant, who acted as assessor for the Board, and he then, having examined the master porters' books, laid down what rate should be paid for the handling of those cargoes.

Q. Those were the rates fixed by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Which appear in the book which is public property?—(A.) Sanctioned by what was then the Board of Trade.

Q. During the war, with the wage increases that have been given to the men, there have followed increases in the master portage rates, have there not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will you tell the Court whether in fixing the increases the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board have allowed any additional profit?—(A.) No. It was laid down definitely from the beginning that all increases were simply to cover the extra amount of wages that the labourers had got, and we certainly thought we were very unfairly treated, in so much as we were not allowed to make any more profit, to have no further return on, as it appeared at the end, the 11s. 8d. minimum, than we had pre-war on the 4s. 6d., and our profit was also subject to the same amount of work being done at the time the 11s. 8d. was fixed as the pre-war rate of 4s. 6d.

Q. Just to see that I follow you, you got a certain profit pre-war when your payment to the men was 4s. 6d. per day?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Your payment to the men to-day, taking the lowest-paid man, is 11s. 8d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But you get no more profit to-day on the larger payment than you did on the smaller payment pre-war?—(A.) It has been slightly rectified from December 1 of last year, but up to December 1 of last year we were not allowed any more profit than pre-war on 4s. 6d., and, as I say, contingent upon the same amount of work being done as pre-war.

Q. What is the rectification that took place in December?—(A.) A tentative arrangement was come to that we should bring the rate up from 133½ to 200, but it was only a tentative arrangement subject to figures being gone into and proving the case by the accountants.

Q. In granting all these increases in the master portage rates, the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board have laid down a condition that if there is any decrease in wages the percentage on the portage rates is to be reduced accordingly, have they not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. They have also attached the condition that should the output reach the pre-war standard the rates will again be reduced?—(A.) That is so.

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Q. In your case increased output does not mean any increased profit to you?—(A.) No.

Q. And an increase in output would mean a further reduction in the price of handling the goods?—(A.) Quite.

Q. That would mean that the consumer with the increase in output would pay a smaller sum?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Would you advocate a sliding scale whereby wages would adjust themselves to the cost of living?—(A.) Yes. If you are going to base your wages upon the cost of living plus a certain amount for the higher standard of life, then I should contend that if the cost of living is materially reduced the wages also should be reduced, but the labourer still to retain what you have given him for his higher standard of life.

Q. Do you find that there is a considerable proportion of dockers who do not endeavour to obtain a full week's work?—(A.) Yes. I am afraid that has always been, during the whole of my experience, one of the difficulties. We have a large number of men who are satisfied with three or four days per week. It does not matter whether there is a week's work ahead of them or not; they seem to be quite content with three days per week plus a certain amount of overtime. I do not know whether I am in order, but I took out four weeks in regard to my own firm, four very ordinary weeks—three in November and one in December—they were rather smaller weeks with us than ordinary, and I find that we paid casual through the books 1,544 men. Out of those 1,544 men only 290 worked 5½ days. They had, in addition, certainly 1,708 hours' overtime. 116 men worked 5 days plus 631 hours' overtime. It roughly means that they had half a night each week. I have 70 men who worked 4½ days, and in addition 370 hours' overtime; and I have 74 men who worked 4 days and 576 hours' overtime. So that altogether there I have 550 men who only worked 4 days to 5½ days, and yet through my books 1,544 men were employed. I was in a position that week with my employment to employ not under 700 men. So that we should have been quite in a position to have taken on 700 or 800 men and guaranteed them a full week's work.

Q. Instead of that, during that period you actually worked over 1,500 men?—(A.) Yes, 1,544 men.

Q. If 700 men had been willing to work for you regularly, that is all the number you would have required to have employed over that period?—(A.) Practically, with a few extras. I can take that further; I do not know whether you wish the illustration to go further, but it really bears out the same proportion in four weeks that I have taken here.

Q. What percentage do you estimate come under the category that you have stated are satisfied with a few days—did you state the number of days?—(A.) No. I say 3 or 4 days, with a little overtime.

Q. About what percentage of the men do you estimate would come under that category?—(A.) About 15 to 20, I should think.

The CHAIRMAN: Under what category?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The witness stated that about 15 to 20 per cent. of the men are satisfied with 3 or 4 days' work and a little overtime. (To the witness): What class of workmen mainly comprise that section you have just referred to who do not want a week's work?—(A.) We have a class of workmen on the dock who are holding at present seasonal tallies numbering about 7,500.

What are termed seasonal tallies have been granted in order to make up the shortages that have taken place on the dock either through the men not turning up regularly or a shortage of labour. These men in most cases only obtain work when the regular docker has either failed to turn up or when there may be an extra rush of work.

Q. Have you also got a large number of youths there?—(A.) Yes. It is one of the things which in my opinion is wrong in connection with our dock labour. We have now hundreds of youths working on the docks from 16 years of age and upwards, apparently drawn down there because they can get a minimum wage of 11s. 8d. per day. It is the only employment within my knowledge where a young man of 16 can obtain a button from the Union and present himself on the stand and demand a man's pay.

Q. In your view, if the regular docker worked full time could a considerable number of men who are now on the register and hold tallies and all those youths be dispensed with?—(A.) I would not go so far as to say that all the youths could be dispensed with, because I recognise that the dockers should have some chance of their boys coming on the dock. But there is quite a large number of boys who should not be on the dock, and altogether, in my opinion, if the docker would work regular time, I consider that we might dispense with at least 4,000.

Q. Do you get a large number of out-of-works from other trades who hold these seasonal tallies?—(A.) Yes. The 4,000 would in effect be comprised of the men who hold these seasonal tallies. They have had these seasonal tallies granted to them on condition that the Dock Labour Joint Committee is at liberty to withdraw them at any time. Therefore no hardship would be entailed by the taking away from them of those tallies.

Q. Your view is, I understand, that if there was any system of maintenance considered it would not be fair that the dock industry should be saddled with these out-of-works from other industries?—(A.) It would be absolutely unjust, because these men are not dockers. They have drifted there from other trades, and to my mind their own industry should support them.

Q. You have stated that in your view if the docker worked full time some 4,000 men could be dispensed with, and at least a certain number of the youths. Do you call that 4,000 the fringe of dockers unemployed?—(A.) No, I should not term them the fringe. It certainly is the fringe at present.

Q. You rather look upon them as an unnecessary surplus at present.—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. Unnecessary if the other men are willing to work more or less full time?—(A.) Quite.

Q. In your opinion, could and ought a large number of these seasonal tallies which go to swell the numbers which appear on the return of the exchange to be withdrawn?—(A.) Yes, in my opinion, we could well do without them. My opinion, I think, can be substantiated by the fact that pre-war we had employed on the docks a number of men paid by the Board of Trade in July and August of 1914 which ranged from 13,500 to 14,500. At the present time we are not handling as much cargo in the port as we did pre-war, and yet we have something like 21,000 or 22,000 men.

Q. Before withdrawing these seasonal tallies you would think it necessary that there should be some certainty that the remaining dockers would work full time, would you?—(A.) That is the difficulty. If we could be assured that the remaining dockers would give us at any rate 5 days a week

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we should be quite satisfied that these tallies should be withdrawn.

Q. I do not know whether you heard, if you did not hear it you have no doubt read, the evidence and cross-examination of Sir Alfred Booth?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You saw the figures that were taken from the Clearing House, upon which Mr. Bevin cross-examined him, and I think that the figure that was represented through Mr. Bevin upon Sir Alfred Booth's figures as the average earnings of a docker exclusive of overtime—do you remember what the figure was?—(A.) I am not at all sure, but I fancy in one case it was £2 8s. and £2 11s. in the other case, speaking entirely from memory.

Q. That was knocking off a certain percentage of overtime?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you consider that that is a just estimate of the average earnings of what we may term the professional docker exclusive of overtime?—(A.) No. I think that you ought to add to that at least 20 per cent. In my opinion, the professional docker can earn on a just estimate well over £3 per week exclusive of overtime.

Q. We will refer to the earnings a little later; I think it will be more convenient. Do you frequently put on men for work who, after having accepted the engagement, fail to take the job on, or who, having commenced work, only remain for a very short time and go away?—(A.) Yes, that happens most frequently.

Q. Is that a very serious matter to you?—(A.) Yes, it is one of our great difficulties. The complement of men has been put on, and then the foreman will go round the gang, perhaps half an hour afterwards, and he finds so many short. Then he has really to try and make them up, or, what is very much worse, he has to work short-handed.

Q. This is not a small matter for you, but a very important and difficult matter, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What inference do you ask the Court to draw from that?—(A.) The inference, of course, is that the docker likes to be a free agent. If the job does not suit him he is not going to work at it; it is a little bit natural, I suppose.

Q. One of the witnesses who gave evidence on Liverpool on behalf of Mr. Bevin stated that the work was laborious, or very laborious, I forget the phrase. What have you to say to that?—(A.) Undoubtedly, some dock work is laborious, but I should not consider trucking on the quay either laborious or skilled; and that is our minimum paid work in Liverpool. I think that is borne out by the fact that all the out-of-works from other trades, and youths, come down to the dock, and they take on this work quite well without any trouble whatever; and that is the man to whom the 16s. would apply.

Q. Where the work is heavy or disagreeable, then, extra payments are made?—(A.) Yes. There are certain cargoes in the chemical line which quite may be put down as heavy, soda ash and bleaching powder amongst them; but, then, on the other hand, they affect only shipmen, and a comparatively few in that category. Of course, they earn extra money for that work.

Q. Will you tell the Court how laborious you think the shipmen's work is?—(A.) Shipmen's work discharging cargo is not what I call laborious, and that is borne out inasmuch as at least 25 per cent. of our gangs working below can be absent, and, as a matter of fact, are absent. The system at one time up to within a comparatively recent date had reached such a

pitch that at least 25 per cent. of a gang took their hour off right through the day.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you mean by that?—(A.) Two men took one hour in the morning and another two followed suit when they came back, and so it went on right through the day, morning and afternoon; there were always two away.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Is that state of things improving, or has it improved lately?—(A.) Yes, it has improved lately since this new agreement came into force, I think on account of the fact that we had extra time taken, and we took up the attitude that we should not pay a man if he was not there; but it is still carried on to a very large extent.

Q. And you put that forward in support of your view that the work cannot be laborious, otherwise the gangs could not afford to have one or two of their number absent?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Do you find that the quaymen absent themselves?—(A.) Yes; and this has a very much more serious effect, inasmuch as you have got to bear in mind that the master porters rates are based upon the actual number of men in a gang, and therefore we are not in a position to put what you might term a surplus; so that if a trucker goes away from his gang and is away for half an hour or an hour, and that continues right through the day, that means that there is one man's work less being done right through the piece.

Q. You have said that a large number of dockers do not wish to work full time.—(A.) Yes.

Q. Does that to some extent apply to your regular man, the man we may term the professional docker?—(A.) Yes. It has been my experience that the best of our people have lapses. His freedom of action is appreciated by the docker in no small degree.

Q. And is your view that you will never be able to get the docker to be a permanent worker?—(A.) The docker is very conservative, and he reserves to himself the right—and it is natural—to work for special foremen or special firms; and we do know that if certain of our foremen are without a shift working, a certain number of those men are more or less idle.

Q. Is the result of that that you may have, and you do have, a larger number of men following dock employment than is absolutely necessary?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. If there were any scheme for regular permanent employment, then you would have to have a guarantee that the men would work the full number of hours per week, and would be prepared to work for any employer, would you not?—(A.) That is quite evident, under any permanent employment scheme.

Q. I do not think we need go into it again, but I think we did have the number of attempts which Messrs. Holt had made to induce their men to become permanent men. I think there were three or four attempts made?—(A.) I do not think there is any question but what the majority of Liverpool employers would favourably entertain a permanent employment scheme; but, of course, it would carry with it certain conditions, such as regular turning out and willingness to go where they were sent and to work for any employer whatever.

Q. During the war certain attempts were made, of which Sir Alfred Booth spoke, and I think you were one of the employers who made an attempt to get regular men on to your staff.—(A.) Yes. We were prepared to take on as an experiment 250 men in addition to our permanent staff. Of

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course, we have a permanent staff, but we were prepared to take on at least 250 and to guarantee them a minimum wage. 100 applications, I think, only were received. Some of them retained the permanency three months or six months, but very few reached the twelve months' stage. In fact, I may say that to-day, I think, we have only three or four remaining.

Q. Speaking from your experience at Liverpool, do you hold the view strongly that you will not be able to persuade the docker to accept permanent employment?—(A.) Whatever the officials of the National Transport Workers may say or desire, speaking from my experience I do not think that the docker will accept permanent employment, involving, as it does, regular turning out and working for any employer.

Q. Your view, then, coincides with Mr. Sexton's as he expressed it at (I think it was) the Poor-Law Commission, that you cannot de-casualise dock labour though you can alleviate it?—(A.) Absolutely. It is quite untrue to say—I think Mr. Bevin has said it—that shipowners have always strongly resisted de-casualisation.

Q. That has not been so in Liverpool?—(A.) No. I am speaking only for Liverpool.

Q. The evidence given with regard to Messrs. Holt shows that, so far as they were concerned. I think you have already told the Court that you have a much greater number of men on the register now than you had in 1914, although you are handling a very much smaller quantity of tonnage?—(A.) Yes, 14,000 pre-war and 22,000 now.

Q. In order to give the Court some view of the average earnings, have you taken out from the books of the Ocean Steamship Company of Birkenhead the average earnings from January 7 to February 13, 1920—that is to say, four weeks—of 100 men who regularly follow that firm?—(A.) Yes, those have been taken out.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, I am afraid we have only one or two copies of this. I will hand one to your Lordship and one to Mr. Bevin, and we will be able to supply copies later.

(*The same was handed in and was marked as Statement No. 1 of Document H. 37.)

The CHAIRMAN: Is the Ocean Steamship Company Mr. Alfred Holt's Company?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord.

Q. I think it was Mr. Brammall who gave evidence from Birkenhead, and he stated that he, though regularly working, was unable to earn on the average more than £3 10s. per week, including overtime?—(A.) I think he must have missed some of his earnings if he was a regular worker.

Q. We know, as Mr. Brammell stated, that he was a stevedore, who gets an additional 2s. per day?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In this table you have shown 100 men working regularly, and that shows their average earnings including overtime?—(A.) Yes. There are a small number in that list who worked only during three weeks.

Q. They are shown on the last sheet?—(A.) Yes, they are on the last sheet. The earnings here go up as high as £5 5s. 9d., I think—no, £5 13s. 4d. seems to be the highest one.

Q. Is it, in your view, correct to say that any stevedore ready to work a full week will earn substantially more than the figure of £3 10s. which was mentioned by Mr. Brammall?—(A.) Quite.

Q. I wanted to go to the question of output at Liverpool. First with regard to the delivery of

goods from the quay—that is, after they have landed—is your output there up to the pre-war standard?—(A.) No, we have only 8 hours a day, of course, for the delivery of goods now, as against 9, and, in addition, we are not getting nearly as much work done per gang as pre-war.

Q. In this sort of operation with which you are now dealing—which, I believe, is a most important one from the merchant's point of view, is it not?—(A.) Quite.

Q. What do you estimate to be the reduction of output?—(A.) After very careful watching I estimate the reduction of output on delivery at 30 per cent.

Q. Of course, some of that is attributable to the reduction in hours?—(A.) 11 per cent.

Q. And that leaves you with just under 20 per cent. reduction?—(A.) 19 per cent. reduction.

Q. To what do you attribute that reduction? Do you suggest that it is entirely due to the docker?—(A.) No; I should put down 5 per cent. of that to the increased delays in carts and motors which we have coming in for the goods, leaving, in my opinion, 14 per cent. which is due to the lesser amount of work done. I have gauged this, I think, without any question of there being a mistake, that in special gangs where they have had a constant stream of lorries and motors the reduction averages as nearly as possible 25 per cent.; and if you take off the 11 per cent. for the shorter working day it leaves you 14 per cent. actual loss.

Q. Now you are dealing only with delivery from the quay to the merchant?—(A.) Quite.

Q. You have not yet touched the question of discharging vessels?—(A.) No.

Q. We will come to that later?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With regard to this reduction to which you have been referring, can you put down any of it to congested quays?—(A.) No, not to any greater extent than pre-war. We have always had quays more or less congested. We have no berth in Liverpool which will hold a ship's cargo—at least, only one in any case—so, therefore, it does follow that when you have taken two days' work out of a steamer your quay is more or less full. But the difference is this, that pre-war we had far more gangs employed in our delivery than we have to-day, and, in addition, we got much more work, of course, from the gang.

Q. But every estimate and calculation which you have made, and every test which you have taken, has been taken per gang, has it not?—(A.) Per gang, yes.

Q. When people talk of congestion at Liverpool, what does that mean?—(A.) It means this, that we have a number of steamers under load; they are waiting for a berth, and the reason they cannot get into the berth is, of course, as I said, that we are not able to get rid of the goods from the quay.

Q. You say that the congestion which is spoken of at Liverpool is through a vessel not being able to get to a berth, and it does not mean that you have got the quays piled up with goods so that the men cannot move about, any more than it did pre-war?—(A.) Of course, you must have the goods rather more, because you have not got the same delivery; but as compared with working gangs your congestion to-day is not any more than pre-war.

Q. Because you have to reduce the number of gangs that you bring on?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. You cannot work so many gangs?—(A.) That is so.

Q. With regard to mechanical appliances, have you more in Liverpool now than you had in 1914?—(A.) Yes, a very large number more. The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board have

* See Appendix No. 119.

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placed a large number of cranes on the dock estate in addition to those owned by private owners.

Q. Has this made any difference in your delivery; has it assisted you in delivering?—(A.) Practically not at all, but we cannot blame the docker for that. We find this, that no matter what sort of machine you put there, we cannot get the goods off the quay on the cart any more quickly. There is as big a drop in the carters' work as we have in ours, and, therefore, the fact of having a machine has really not helped us in any way. We have had to take those machines on because they will not now attempt to lift anything approaching the weights which were lifted, say, ten years ago.

Q. They refuse, I think, to handle anything more than two cwt.—(A.) Practically we have nothing loaded up now over two cwt. by hand.

Q. So that so far as delivering from the quays to the merchant is concerned, increased output on the part of the docker will not be sufficient; you must also have increased work on the part of the carter?—(A.) Quite, and his charges, of course, go against the trader directly, and, of course, to the consumer.

Q. The carters are not concerned in this application, but are they affiliated to the National Transport Workers' Federation?—(A.) I believe so.

Q. To put right the matter which you are now bringing to the attention of the Court, you must have the co-operation of both those bodies of workmen employed by my friend?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. Can the work of Liverpool be done in an 8-hour day?—(A.) No, I do not see how it can—not with the present output.

Q. Some overtime is essential if you are to get goods through the port?—(A.) Yes. As employers, of course, we do not relish overtime, and personally I do all I can to stop it.

Q. Overtime, you say, is absolutely necessary to get the goods through the port. What view do you hold upon the proposal which is made with regard to the payment that should be imposed for overtime? Do you consider it to be penal?—(A.) Absolutely. The demand in effect means that the overtime is going to be double pay. That means this, that everything that you handle after 5 o'clock is going to cost you double the price.

Q. Do you hold the view that where overtime is necessarily worked it ought to be at a reasonable sum for a reasonable period?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Would a shift system meet the difficulty at Liverpool?—(A.) Certainly not at the rate of time and a-half, which I understand is laid down in the application.

Q. Yes, that is the proposal.—(A.) Beside, you cannot consider a shift system in Liverpool without you are going to revolutionise the whole of the transport and the distributive agencies.

Q. That is inland transport agencies?—(A.) Inland transport and distributive agencies.

Q. It is no good your discharging your vessel at a time when the carters and the other means of distribution are not there to take the goods away?—(A.) Quite.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: You stated before the interval that the porters rates were now 200 per cent.—provisionally, I think you said—above the pre-war figure.—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. Have you been able to make any estimate of what those charges would have to go up to if the present demands were conceded?—(A.) I have

not gone into it closely, because it would be a matter of considering the establishment charges, but it certainly would not be less with the present output than 320 or 325 per cent.

Q. As you have already stated, the whole of the charges incurred in your business go on to the public?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have already dealt with the question of dockers' output in giving delivery from the quay. I want you now to deal with the question of output in discharging and loading comparing the present with 1914. Have you gone into this matter very closely?—(A.) Yes, very closely indeed.

Q. Will you first tell the Court generally what decrease you find there has been in the work done?—(A.) I put it down at fully 30 per cent. Of course, again you must take the 11 per cent. off for the loss of the hour.

Q. That leaves 19 per cent.—(A.) Yes, for the lesser amount of work done.

Q. To what do you attribute that 19 per cent.?—(A.) Absolutely to the lesser amount of work.

The CHAIRMAN: Without any deduction in this case of another 5 per cent.—(A.) Quite so.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It might be suggested that congested quays have something to do with the 19 per cent. reduction to which you have referred. Is that so in your view?—(A.) No, not in this case. I will give reasons to support that. In the first place, in Liverpool a steamer which is allocated a berth for discharging is not allowed to commence work until the traffic manager has signified his approval that there is sufficient space for the incoming steamer to work.

Q. That is the traffic manager of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—(A.) Yes; those are the conditions upon which we obtain the berth. If we refuse those conditions we are not entitled to a discharging berth at all.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the condition?—(A.) That we are not to commence to discharge a steamer in any berth unless the traffic manager has given us permission, he basing his consent upon the room on the quay as to whether we can reasonably work and do a fair day's work; and also he lays down at the beginning the number of gangs with which we are to commence the business.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is in order that the trader should have a fair opportunity of removing the goods?—(A.) Yes. Somewhere about three years ago we found that ships were being put into the berths without any proviso, and they were discharging into all sorts of corners, and the trader then reckoned that he did not get a sufficient chance to get his goods away within the limited time.

The CHAIRMAN: And it necessarily occupied the berthing space for others coming in, and delayed that vessel in the berth, did it not?—(A.) No, I do not go as far as that. It was really to give the trader a chance to make the best use of his opportunities to get his goods from the quay; and while those goods remained on the quay, of course, the incoming steamers could not work.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: This regulation has been in force for three years?—(A.) Yes, three years.

Q. I think you have another reason that you wish to put forward relating to the payment of the master porters being at the rates fixed by the Board?—(A.) Yes. That is purely a selfish reason as to why I, as a master porter, will not

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put on more gangs than I can comfortably work in the space I have at liberty. You see, we are paid regulation rates based upon the actual cost of labour, and I, as a master porter, could not possibly afford to work an increased number of gangs in a space where I was not likely to get a proper amount of work done by my gang for the day.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you paid tonnage rate?—
(A.) Yes, tonnage rate.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: So that you only put on to a ship which you are discharging as many gangs as you can efficiently work?—(A.) On the quay. The rate of discharge from the ship is governed entirely by the space that I have on the quay.

Q. In all the calculations which you have made, upon which you have based this evidence, you have taken your averages upon gangs per day?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And is that, in your opinion, a method which entirely eliminates any question which might be raised of congested quays?—(A.) Quite. I had better explain it in this way: If we have a steamer in a berth, of course she has hatches with a large amount of cargo and hatches with a smaller amount. Naturally we want, of course, to get at the large hatches first. It may be that in discharging on the quay the space may not be quite adjacent to that large hatch. I would then have to put on extra trucks, but still in my calculation I have not based it upon the number of men I have employed; I have called that a gang. It does not matter whether I have had the regulation number on the quay of fifteen to twenty or whether I have had thirty men; I have still termed it one gang, so that the average is not affected by the number of men in the gang.

Q. I want to put in, through you, the tables which you have prepared relating to this question.—(A.) Yes.

(*The same were handed in and marked H.37.)

Q. The first table in H. 37 is called Boase 2. You have set out particulars of landings taken from observations before the war for the purpose of fixing the portorage rates for the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You told his Lordship and the Court this morning how the Mersey Dock and Harbour Board fixed the rates upon observations which had been made?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Those are some of the observations which were taken?—(A.) This first one is sago flour, and the portorage rate was based upon an average landing per gang per day of 2,068 bags.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not in my copy.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Which one is that?—
(A.) Perhaps they are not in the same order as I have them.

Q. Have you got "Sugar ex Java"?—(A.) No, I am on sago flour.

Q. Will you take first "Sugar ex Java"?

The CHAIRMAN: That is 2,114 bags.—(A.) Yes.

Q. Those are observations which were taken for the purpose of the master portorage rates before the war?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Just after that, have you given particulars of landings which you took in August and September of last year?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You did not take those observations for the

purposes of this Inquiry, did you?—(A.) Not at all; I had no knowledge of this Inquiry. They were taken because we felt at the time that as master porters we could no longer continue unless there was some increase granted to us by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, and these figures were got out for that purpose.

Q. That shows upon those observations a drop from 2,114 bags per gang per day to 1,400 bags per gang per day?—(A.) Yes. I think that is about 34 per cent.

Q. Are those observations fairly comparable?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Then you have taken the next two sets of figures, observations of cotton ex "Galveston." There you show that the drop has been from 561 bales to 415 bales?—(A.) Yes; that is 27½ per cent.

Q. Then the next table is taken out in the same way, and it speaks for itself. There the figures are given of 2,068 bags, dropping to 1,490 bags of sago flour?—(A.) Yes; that is 27½ per cent.

Q. Then over the page you give rice meal ex "Rangoon."—(A.) I want to be perfectly fair on this, and to say that when the observations were taken for rice meal pre-war, by which the average per gang was 193 tons per day, we had a most pernicious system in operation; how long it had been in operation before my days I do not know.

The CHAIRMAN: Were all these ships rice meal?—(A.) No; this one which we are taking now was.

Q. Do you mean at the top of page 3? It is not sago flour?—(A.) No, we have gone on to rice meal. In that 193 tons average there was, I was saying, a pernicious system in force in Liverpool whereby these men on the quay were allowed so much beer money if they obtained a certain amount of work. Mr. Sexton, I think, will know quite well the facts. That had been in operation for more years than I can remember, but when they found in the shorter working day that the minimum number of bags could not be obtained our output dropped to an average in this case of 105 tons. Of course, this observation was taken purely for the observations which we were presenting to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board for an increase of rate.

Q. What has the beer money to do with the comparison?—(A.) It is very difficult to know what they would have done pre-war without beer money.

Q. The beer money was a bonus?—(A.) The beer money was a sort of bonus.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Do you think that if there had been no beer money pre-war there would not have been so great a drop, because the 193 tons would not have been quite so high? You think that is possible?—(A.) Yes, that is so, certainly.

Q. Upon those tables it is correct to say, is it not, that in 1914 you were getting, roughly speaking, a 50 per cent. better output?—(A.) Yes, that is so; I was getting a 50 per cent. better output than I am to-day.

The CHAIRMAN: What class of work does that 50 per cent. cover?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: These three tables cover sugar, cotton, sago flour, and rice meal. That is allowing a very considerable discount on the rice meal because of the beer money?—(A.) Yes.

* See Appendix No. 120.

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Q. The table showing a reduction from 193 tons to 105 tons?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But you think the beer money may have had something to do with that?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will you take your next table, which is headed in the left-hand corner "Loading Cargoes at Liverpool." Taking four steamers in 1914 you have given the tonnage and the number of gangs and the average. That average should be average per gang per day, should it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Everywhere where we find average it should be rate in that sense?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Will you just draw attention to the points you wish to make on that table?—(A.) The average given for loading in 1914 on those four steamers is 128½ tons per gang per day.

The CHAIRMAN: Does that appear in the table?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I am afraid that is not on the table.

The WITNESS: I have worked that out from my papers.

Q. What do the six vessels give that you have taken in 1919?—(A.) They give 90 tons per gang per day average.

The CHAIRMAN: It is 128 tons down to 90 tons?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Is it 128 or 130?—(A.) 128.

Q. You have to weight the cargoes?—(A.) Yes. You can take my figure of 128.

Q. Are those vessels fairly comparable?—(A.) Yes. They are not steamers that I handle myself; they are steamers that I asked another firm to send particulars of to me.

Q. Do you know those vessels?—(A.) Quite well.

Q. There is nothing in the vessels to upset the comparison that you know of?—(A.) Nothing whatever.

Q. Over the page you have given particulars of loading at Birkenhead?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With regard to Birkenhead, are the berths there almost entirely set aside for loading?—(A.) Practically all. The berths in which these steamers on this sheet worked entirely.

Q. Were entirely set aside for loading?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that no question of congestion could arise in this case?—(A.) Not here.

Q. Are those vessels fairly comparable?—(A.) Yes, they are exactly the same class of steamer. There can be no question about that. I can give you the averages on these, if you wish.

Q. What are they?—(A.) The average on the first seven steamers—they are City boats—commencing with Netherby Hall, during that period is 88 tons per gang per day. The average for the present day—that is, November and December, 1919—taking the six steamers commencing with Mandalay and finishing with the City of Calcutta (I am mentioning those in comparison because those steamers are done by the same firm in the same berth), is 52 tons per gang—that is, 88 to 52. Next you have six steamers of the Ocean Steamship Company.

The CHAIRMAN: What did you call this first set of seven?—(A.) I should call those the City Line. The average there in 1914 is 74½ tons, and the average of the five loaded by the same people for December, 1919, is 50 tons.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The next table is "Discharging Deals," is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have taken two vessels in 1913 and two in 1919, have you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That shows a substantial reduction?—(A.) A decrease of 31 per cent. in one instance and 30 per cent. in the other.

Q. That figure in the right-hand column for 1919, 16 over 34,101, should be the average of 34 and 16 over 101, should it not?—(A.) Yes, but call it 34.

Q. Are those vessels fairly comparable?—(A.) Yes, quite.

Q. Then you have taken the discharge of aspen logs, and there is another substantial reduction shown?—(A.) Yes. You will see that in the first case, 1913 as against 1919, there is a very large decrease. I might say in fairness that I was so struck with the percentage being too great that I communicated with the stevedore in question and asked him if there was not something to account for the remarkable decrease, and he gave me the information that the conditions were exceptionally adverse, so that I do not think I really ought to take it now.

The CHAIRMAN: You will take that out?—(A.) Yes, I will take that one out because it is not quite fair to put it in. On the other hand, let me say that in the case of the other one, that is the Bellaventure, the conditions were very favourable.

Q. Have you anything to say that does not appear on the table as to the next statement?—(A.) No. You see I have taken the average that we dealt with before, the 193, and I have given now three steamers of rice meal, which show with the table given on the other portion of the sheet which showed 105 tons in October, three or four months after our rice meal dropped down from 105 in July to 96 in October.

Q. On the next table you have dealt with the discharge of sugar ex Cuba. The comparison you make there is between the Balgray, the first vessel in 1914, and the five vessels that you have shown in 1919?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The reason why you have put in the discharge of sugar from Germany in 1914 is to show that the 210 tons that you have put in for the Balgray is a low figure?—(A.) Quite.

Q. You are not comparing the subsequent vessels with the vessels bearing German sugar?—(A.) No, because we had no sugar.

The CHAIRMAN: The real comparison is 210 against 126?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord. The other figures are just to show that 210 is not excessive.—(A.) No, I have given rather better than that. There are five others. I would point out that those were all Cuba boats, which give the average of 135 tons against the 210 tons.

The CHAIRMAN: Those on the right-hand side

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are Cuba boats?—(A.) Yes. The average is 135 tons for the five vessels.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Will you state what you show in the next table?—(A.) These are steamers from Java. Those boats show an average of 125 tons in 1914, and in 1919-1920 (I have brought these up-to-date) the average is 92.

Q. On the second half of that table you have got some vessels from Singapore?—(A.) Yes, their average being 103. On the other side the average is 85, taking the whole lot, which is only an 18 per cent. reduction. But I should say that three of those steamers, I think the first four, more favourably compare with the steamers of 1914. We had not yet been receiving up to that date on those steamers the cargoes which we were receiving in 1914. The two last steamers, the *Atrous* and the *Teucer*, show different cargoes; however, I thought I had better put them in, and it works out at a reduction of 18 per cent. on the whole lot.

Q. In the next table do you show cargoes from Bombay?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is the comparison there; have you worked that to an average?—(A.) Yes. I think we should only compare the last three steamers. The first three steamers had a large proportion of grain, which is heavier, and in the steamers in 1919 we have had no grain, so that I think in fairness I will not compare those.

Q. You will take the last three, the *Massilia*, the *Circassia*, and the *Scindia*?—(A.) Yes, the average there being 136½ and the average in 1919 being 95.

Q. I see there you have got the *Massilia* and the *Scindia* on both sides of the table.—(A.) Yes, they are the same kind of steamers, exactly.

Q. Are they the same vessels?—(A.) Yes, the same vessels.

Q. In the *Scindia* in 1914 the output was 142 tons, and in 1919 90 tons?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And in the *Massilia* 131 tons in 1914, as against 96 tons in 1919?—(A.) That is right.

Q. What was the average there in 1919?—(A.) 95 tons.

Q. Then does the last table deal with cotton?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are those fairly comparable?—(A.) Yes, quite comparable.

The CHAIRMAN: Where does that come from?—(A.) These come from various ports, Savannah, Galveston, and New Orleans. They would have a small portion of general cargo in every case. The steamers can be compared. The 1914 steamers show an average of 143 tons, and the 1919 steamers show an average of 97 tons.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: In your view do those tables support the statement that you have made that the reduction is 30 per cent.?—(A.) Quite.

Q. You have taken 11 per cent. off that, as you have told the Court, on the ground of the reduction of hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have attributed 19 per cent. to the work not being done as energetically as formerly?—(A.) Quite.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry, but there is one figure I must have misapprehended, I think, where the Witness mentioned 50 per cent. What did he mean by that?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: What the Witness said was that there had been a reduction of 30 per cent. That means that he was getting done in 1914 50 per cent. more than to-day. It is just putting it the reverse way.

The CHAIRMAN: It depends upon your data, of course.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord. (*To the Witness*): Are you as an employer opposed to higher wages?—(A.) Absolutely not, if I get the output.

Q. Are you in favour of granting the docker some increase in the hope that that increase would be responded to by a better output being given?—(A.) No, decidedly not.

Q. What has been your experience in that respect?—(A.) I am sorry to say that I could not rely upon any such response without some effective guarantee from the Union. I look at it in this way: I, on my part as an employer, have to guarantee the money. My Association see that that is paid, and I think I have a right on the other hand to expect that I should have some guarantee if I give this money that I am going to get an increased output.

Q. You have to deliver your part of the goods beforehand, so to speak?—(A.) Quite.

Q. And you do not know whether the other side will subsequently give the return that you feel you are entitled to?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think you have made it clear that so far as the master porter at Liverpool is concerned a greater output will not benefit you to any extent?—(A.) No, nothing at all.

Q. But still you feel the great necessity for a greater output?—(A.) I consider that a greater output is necessary generally to benefit the nation, and incidentally the docker and myself.

Q. Yourself as a consumer?—(A.) Quite.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. With regard to your rates as a master porter, supposing you have got a gang of men working at delivering, they would be guaranteed a half-day, would they not?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Supposing that those men's labour was employed delivering the goods of two or three consignees, is it possible sometimes that you would charge more than one person for their services?—(A.) I conduct my business in an honest manner.

Q. I am asking you the question whether the charges for that labour—I am not saying whether it is honest or dishonest, it may be a custom of the port; I am only asking whether it is a fact—are charged to more than one person?—(A.) No, emphatically.

Q. You only charge one consignee for that labour?—(A.) For the labour incurred on his goods. And you must please bear in mind that my charges are laid down per ton, and I am only entitled to put the consignee on labour plus percentage when he has failed to comply with Dock Board Regulations, and when he will not give me a guarantee beforehand that he will keep that gang going for the half-day.

Q. If that guarantee does not come along, it may be possible that those men are employed?—(A.) If the guarantee did not come along from a consignee in such a position, I should probably not load his goods off until I had it.

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Q. But if you did load his goods off, the men may not be engaged the whole morning, and he may have to pay for half a day?—(A.) No. You are wrong. If I had no guarantee from that merchant that he would pay me labour plus percentage then I am only entitled to charge him tonnage under Dock Board Regulations.

Q. But in fact what do you charge him?—(A.) Tonnage, except under conditions such as I have mentioned.

Q. Coming to the labour, you mentioned in your evidence that lads of 16 were employed?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you think that is conducive to output?—(A.) Lads of 16 could very easily do the work that they have been put to.

Q. That is not the question I ask. I am asking you whether if you put lads of 16 on a dock side in a gang it is conducive to output working with men?—(A.) As long as the lad can do the work, yes; it does not make any difference.

Q. Do you think it is good for the lad to be put on to take his corner in the gang at 16?—(A.) No; if I had my way I would not have the lad there.

Q. But you engage the labour?—(A.) It is Hobson's choice; I cannot help myself.

Q. But you have said that there are 7,500 more people registered than are necessary?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you suggest that it is Hobson's choice? You have got the Joint Board; you have got a registration scheme. Is not it a fact that you yourself very often engage men apart from the register?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And pay them apart from the clearing house?—(A.) Quite, because I have to.

Q. Is that conducive to making the registration scheme a success?—(A.) I am bound to employ these men if men with registration tallies are not there. I do not employ any men to my knowledge who have not got a button from your Union.

Q. Has not the Union submitted in Liverpool that instead of the number of stands, and in order to facilitate the application of the 44-hour week and to get a prompt start, there should be central stands? Instead of the surplus stand and instead of the number of stands that the men now have to go to, has not the Union tried to get central stands?—(A.) The matter has been brought forward at the Joint Board, but no decision was arrived at, and it was up to your representatives to see that the thing had gone through.

Q. But if the representatives of the men have submitted a scheme for central stands, and it has been refused by the employers, can you blame the men's representatives for not having them up?—(A.) I have seen no scheme put forward yet that was workable.

Q. Then it has not been workable in your opinion?—(A.) In my opinion.

Q. By workable what do you mean?—(A.) Workable.

Q. What do you mean?—(A.) Workable so that I have men at my work at the hour for starting, and workable so that I can arrange the necessary business in connection with the delivery and the receiving of goods.

Q. Have you set out in writing, and can you produce it, anything showing where the scheme submitted for central stands would not provide for that?—(A.) I have not done so.

Q. Yet you have lent your assistance to oppos-

ing it because it is unworkable?—(A.) It is unworkable in my opinion.

Q. Is not this the fact, that you, as an employer, want the men right on the spot of your work regardless of the surplus or the boys who are employed?—(A.) Nothing of the sort.

Q. I will leave the Court to draw its conclusion from your statement that you have not submitted a workable scheme as a counter scheme to the workmen's representatives. I submit to you that if the workmen's representatives submit a scheme and the employers argue that it is unworkable, then is not the onus of an alternative scheme upon the employers' shoulders?—(A.) You might look upon it in that light.

Q. That should be the proper method, should it not?—(A.) If on your scheme being submitted in our opinion it is not workable, and you on your side are not in a position to show that it is workable, I do not see why I should adopt it.

Q. You think it is wrong that these boys should be on the dock and you would get rid of them?—(A.) The boys that you are talking of on the dock now and are being employed much against my will personally are of a recent date.

Q. But you said in your evidence that there was too great a surplus?—(A.) I do say so now.

Q. It has been the boast of Sir Alfred Booth, and the inference to be drawn from your Counsel's leading questions, that Liverpool is ready to go a long way to solve this great problem.—(A.) We are.

Q. Now we are agreed up to that point?—(A.) That is right.

Q. The workmen's representatives tried to provide a solution, in their opinion; it may be as faulty as possible, but they did try to improve things by means of central stands?—(A.) Yes. It was suggested; I do not know whether it went any further.

Q. When they got to that point you as employers just formed an opinion that it was not workable and rejected it?—(A.) Quite. What else could we do?

Q. If you are so keen on finding a solution to the problem, why did not the employers on the Joint Committee say to the workpeople: "This is unworkable; we will make an alternative suggestion to see if we can arrive at a solution"?—(A.) Did not we suggest that the men not employed should go to the surplus stands at the clearing houses?

Q. I did not quite follow your answer.—(A.) Did not we suggest that the men not employed, the surplus, as it were, at the various stands, should make their way to a surplus stand in the clearing houses?

Q. But the surplus stand, I understand, has not been found to be an efficient method of dealing with the problem?—(A.) The men would not go there.

Q. Is it not a fact that by the time they reach the surplus stand it has got so late that there is very little value in going there?—(A.) Of course, it depends on how long they take to get there.

Q. After all I think you will agree that the surplus stand was brought into operation in the original scheme?—(A.) With the clearing-house scheme.

Q. Then you begin a scheme and you find one part of it has not worked. Is it not the duty of both parties to try and find, as a result of experience, something that will work?—(A.) Yes, but

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you must not overlook the fact that until the last six months we have had no surplus labour in Liverpool, consequently we have had to employ the boys and the men as we could get them.

Q. That leads me to the question of output. You say that owing to the difficulties at Liverpool you have had to take into the docks all sorts of people?—(A.) Yes, sent by the Union.

Q. Is not the Union under an obligation to keep you supplied with sufficient men to run the dock?—(A.) I have not looked at it in that light.

Q. Is not that part of the clearing-house scheme?—(A.) No, not that I know of.

Q. Supposing the Union decided to close the register and to give no more tickets at all, which I understand they did, and in consequence a ship was delayed because at one given moment you did not have enough men, do you not think there would be a protest from the employers?—(A.) Yes, if it was continuous. But then you must bear in mind that even in the days when we were apparently short yet the number on our register and the number being paid week by week, in my judgment at any rate, would have been sufficient for our needs had they worked five days or 5½ days per week.

Q. When we get to that question of men breaking away from their work, or at least not following their work—I do not know whether your statement is a fact as to Liverpool—in Liverpool a man to-day has no right as a right once engaged to leave his job until that job is completed, has he; has a right as a part of the rules of the port?—(A.) No, but we find that we cannot depend on the men coming back to their jobs; at least a large percentage of them. The custom in Liverpool is that when a steamer commences her work the gangs are put on, and it is usual daily to call those men back to work again the next morning; that is my custom, at any rate. To give you a concrete instance as to the way this obtains, last Friday I had in one berth 325 men. Every one of those men were required on Saturday morning, yet I was 60 short out of those 325. I obtained 60 other men in their place; and again on Monday out of the number I had on Saturday I was a further 46 short. We certainly obtained 46 others, but my point is that those men who were working on the Friday night have been working on the Saturday and on the Monday, and they were not present. The work was there, and if they had turned up they would have been called out, and would have been called out up to the end of the ship.

Q. But are they told the night before that they are definitely certain of starting next morning?—(A.) No. We have had hundreds of instances where they have been definitely told that they can come back the next morning, and then the next morning, having depended upon them, we have been left in a fix because they have not turned up.

Q. Have you tried a scheme in Liverpool or have the dockers a scheme which makes it an obligation to retain a man and an obligation for the man to follow his employment?—(A.) I do not think we have discussed it.

Q. You have a Joint Committee, have you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Might not solutions of these problems be found with this great clearing-house scheme if there were regular meetings of the Joint Committee and heads were put together to consider all these problems?—(A.) If that suggestion had been put forward by your side we should have had great pleasure in considering it.

Q. But it is a Joint Committee?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is every suggestion of improvement to come from the workmen?—(A.) If you find it is lacking, then it is your duty as well as mine to put the suggestion forward.

Q. Quite, that is my point. Have the employers themselves put forward a single suggestion for improvement at the Joint Committee?—(A.) I could not give you them, but I think in my experience we have put forward many.

Q. On the problems we are now discussing?—(A.) It may be not on this particular problem; I cannot send my memory back.

Q. During the war I believe nearly 9,000 men went from the Liverpool docks out of 31,000 to the war?—(A.) Yes. I have no figures.

Q. I beg your pardon; it was 7,500 out of 31,000.—(A.) I have no knowledge with regard to that, except that a large number went.

Q. Taking such a vast number of men away from their employment and out of their ordinary groove of life, men whose ages ranged from 18 to 41, is bound to cause serious disruption and change, is it not?—(A.) Quite.

Q. The war is over, and since the war has been over the employers have not sat down with the workpeople and contributed to a re-settlement of the conditions of Liverpool from the point of view I am now cross-examining. Is not that so?—(A.) I have not had those things brought up or heard of them being brought up, nor have we had any suggestions from your side to bring them up.

Q. You admit that you have had the central stand suggestion?—(A.) Not since the war.

Q. I am not allocating blame to you or to the workpeople, or to anybody; but my point is this: Here is a charge made against a great body of workpeople numbering over 20,000 about output, and about running away from their work. Here is one of the most important ports in the world, and, I suggest, with a heavy responsibility on both sides; with 7,500 men taken away from the port, and with large numbers killed and others who have come back maimed; with a clearing house system in existence; and yet the bodies responsible have not sat down to try and find a solution for resettlement. Is it right to come to a court of inquiry to complain about the conduct of the men, when apparently you on your side have not made your contribution towards finding a solution of the great problem thus created?—(A.) Do you contend that men now should not do a similar amount of work in the same time as they did before?

Q. I have not come to the question of the amount of work per man; I am coming to the question as to the use of the machinery by you, both as a citizen and as an employer, and whether you people in Liverpool have made your contribution to settle the basic condition of employment which must be settled to get the other result; I am on the point whether you have done that since the war ceased other than as regards wages?—(A.) It is only within the past few weeks that we have been in a position to say that we have a surplus amount of labour.

Q. I still press my point. Men went from Liverpool to save this country?—(A.) Quite.

Q. The conditions of Liverpool became disturbed, and a new problem had been created because of bringing in outside labour and boys and all sorts of people. I press my point that the responsible employers, in spite of their protestations of what they are prepared to do for the dock

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labourer, have not called the Committee together to consider the problem thus created?—(A.) Because it is only now that we are in a position to consider that we have any surplus labour.

Q. Then I put this question to you: Do you never consider any problem, or are the employers of Liverpool so short-sighted that they have not the ordinary foresight to consider a problem which will arise until it does arise?—(A.) If the other side are prepared to give us a guarantee for a full working week, I think I may say on behalf of the employers that the problem would be considered very quickly.

Q. I am not talking about guarantees?—(A.) But I am.

Q. Before the men can give guarantees, other conditions must be put right, which make the guarantee possible?—(A.) Provided then that the employer is willing to carry out his, what guarantee will you give me to carry out yours?

Q. I am asking you whether it is right to ask for anything before the Joint Committee have sat down to consider the problem?—(A.) Yes, but you are not going to ask the Joint Committee to sit down and consider a problem which was not in evidence? It was no use your asking us to sit down three months ago to consider surplus labour, when at the same time you on your side were signing cards for an increased number of men on the dock.

Q. I have this from you, that at any rate the problem has not been considered by the employers?—(A.) Up to now, no.

Q. Now I come to the output. First of all, I will take the breaking away that was mentioned. I notice in the white book on page 4 in the bottom paragraph of the Agreement, there was a sort of recognition of spells under certain conditions. It refers to loading or discharging frozen meat cargoes, etc., and many other items?—(A.) Yes.

Q. At any rate, there has been under that Agreement a recognition of this spell system?—(A.) Only to this particular class of cargo, and that was because it was not good for the health of a man that he should be asked to remain down in a refrigerating hold more than a certain period of time.

Q. We are agreed about that; but I notice that control of the thing is absolutely left to the foreman of the ship?—(A.) Naturally.

Q. What control is the Union expected to have over men when they pass into your employment under present conditions? You do not allow us to say anything about how they shall be employed, or who shall be employed; the only point we have is that we issue the tally?—(A.) You issue the tally, and you also see, or your representatives see, that men holding your tallies are employed, and you object to my putting on any man, no matter how efficient he may be, unless he has a button from your Union—and no matter how inefficient he may be.

Q. You said just now that you do put men on without tallies?—(A.) No; you object to that.

Q. You have put men on, have you not, without the tally or the button?—(A.) Without clearing-house tallies?

Q. And without the button at times, have you not?—(A.) Rarely I have had the chance.

Q. It has been a question of chance?—(A.) Not altogether, no. I have always been a Union firm. I think as far as my particular firm is concerned,

it has always been a Union firm from the earliest days.

Q. If this question of breaking away exists in certain parts of Liverpool Dock in the cases you quote, have you raised that at the Joint Committee?—(A.) It has been raised more often than once.

Q. Have you brought up before the Joint Committee the specification to which you called our attention?—(A.) My dear sir, if I had to take note of the number of men—

Q. Will you please answer my question?—(A.) I am answering it. If I had to take note of the number of men who break away daily after having been employed, or who either do not go to their work or who, after having started their work, leave it, we should have a very heavy list before the Joint Committee to consider.

Q. But you have taken the trouble to raise it as a complaint at this Court of Inquiry?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Very good; you have had a Joint Committee in Liverpool for a number of years which Sir Alfred Booth said the other day was an efficient Committee. I want to know why this difficulty in controlling the men has not been raised with the Unions and the Joint Committee, and an attempt made to find a solution?—(A.) Because your officials as well as our own have been in the impossible position of not being able to control them or get the men to remain at their work after having been put on.

Q. I really want to put it to you again, because in other ports these problems are discussed at our Joint Committees. I want to find out whether this complaint is raised for the purposes of this Inquiry to blacken the men when you have neglected to use the ordinary conciliation machinery of the port to try to find a solution.—(A.) This matter has been mentioned time and time again, but your officials are not prepared to take any effective part in altering it.

Q. You will agree that to have an effective machine to deal with a problem of this kind it must be a joint measure?—(A.) The major portion would have to come from you.

Q. But it would have to be a joint measure?—(A.) Not so much on our side, I am afraid.

Q. Would there be a little bit on your side, then?—(A.) Very little.

Q. Then, to get the little bit it is necessary to have joint negotiations at your Joint Board, is it not?—(A.) Yes, we have mentioned it.

Q. But you have never put up a proposition to deal with this problem on the Joint Board, have you?—(A.) I am afraid we thought that it was no use.

Q. I notice that with regard to this output you selected 1919. First of all, let me ask you whether in the 1914 column this is worked out on the overtime, or whether it is per hour? Is it the day's output?—(A.) The day's output, counting half a night as half a day.

Q. Is it exactly the same number of hours in the two cases?—(A.) If you press that, and I work it out on this other side, I am afraid I am going to show a greater average against you.

Q. I do not care how much you show; I want the facts.—(A.) I purposely refrained from doing that, because I was working pre-war considerably more overtime than I am doing on the bulk of the ships to-day. Therefore, taking it in that light,

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my average pre-war for day work would in all probability have been over, making the output a more decreased output to-day.

Q. During the period of 1919, the period which you are quoting, was there not a dispute about overtime?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Was there not general discontent during that period throughout Liverpool?—(A.) Not with regard to the day.

Q. But, in view of the fact that the men were more or less in dispute during that period, would not that affect output?—(A.) No, because, if you like to take it further, on my returns here I do not mind taking them up to January. You will admit that there is no dispute in December, either. I have them for every month, but I do not find any alteration in the returns.

Q. With regard to your statement about congestion in output, is it not a fact that recently, or during this past year, the period which you are quoting, the Port and Transit Executive Committee were compelled to assist the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, or at least to advise them strongly upon the imposition of penalty rents?—(A.) That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Penalty rents?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, to compel the merchants to remove the goods from the quays.

Q. Was it not a fact that there was considerable difficulty in getting the merchants to pay those rents?—(A.) I do not know about that.

Q. Was not the congestion so bad in Liverpool that the assistance of the Port and Transit Committee was asked to get storage away at Aintree and other places?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. Do you suggest that with all the efforts which the Port and Transit Committee have had to put forward on behalf of Liverpool to clear up that congestion it has not affected Liverpool in the discharge of steamers and the handling of stuff?—(A.) It has not affected my returns one iota. I have based them, as I stated previously, on gangs worked according to the space we had.

Q. Have you been able to stow to mark in Liverpool as you did before the war?—(A.) Yes, in 90 per cent.

Q. I repeat that question, and remind you where you are. I ask you: Have you been able to the extent of 90 per cent. to stow to mark right throughout the Port of Liverpool for re-delivery?—(A.) I have.

Q. You are speaking for the port of Liverpool?—(A.) I am not speaking for the Port of Liverpool. I cannot tell you what other employers have done. I am speaking as an employer.

Q. I am asking you whether that is so in the Port of Liverpool?—(A.) That is virtually impossible. How can I answer a question as to what other employers are doing?

Q. You have quoted output from other employers—not your own—upon which you have sworn as facts; and I want to know from these other employers whether they have been able to stow to mark exactly as they did pre-war as well as yourself?—(A.) As it happens, the figures I have put in with regard to discharging cargoes outside the sugar steamers I think are all my own. That is for discharging cargo, not the loading.

Q. And you say again that, in spite of the Liverpool harbour authorities having to impose penalty rents, in spite of congestion, in spite of the carters working shorter hours, and your complaint against them, the sheds of Liverpool where you have worked your steamers have been so clear that you have been able to stow to mark and deliver from mark quite easily?—(A.) I have, or I have not worked my steamer.

Q. Quite easily you have done it?—(A.) Easily.

Q. As easily as you did in 1914?—(A.) Quite.

Q. You are an exception to the whole country.—(A.) I am glad to hear it.

Mr. HARRY GOSLING: It is not fair for the Witness to come and talk about representing all the port at any moment he likes, and then when he gets in a tight corner to say that he only represents himself. I say it is not fair.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do object to an observation such as a member of the Court has made, my Lord, and the shorthand note will show that there is no justification for it.

Mr. HARRY GOSLING: That was the impression on my own mind, Sir Lynden. I am not sitting here like a fool.

Mr. BEVIN: I come now to the wages earned at Birkenhead. I think Sir Alfred Booth stated that a man's overtime or extras ought not to be taken into consideration in calculating his standard of life?—(A.) I am not sure if he did.

Q. Do you agree with that?—(A.) If you say so I will take it.

Q. Do you agree with that as a principle; that, if we are going to fix a man's income upon which he should maintain his family, overtime and extra earnings ought to be disregarded, and it should be the base wage which should govern his standard of life?—(A.) Yes. I think we may accept that. I will accept that.

Q. In Birkenhead the figure is 12s. 2d. a day?—(A.) Minimum.

Q. So that the man in Liverpool really would earn 5½ days, or 11 half-days at 6s. 1d.?—(A.) Quite.

Q. These figures take in overtime hours. Assuming he worked 44 hours and rearranged the range of hours ranging from five to, in some cases, many more to arrive at this figure, it must be reduced to arrive at a computation of the man's earnings to 11 half-days?—(A.) Plus, of course, any extras.

Q. What extras?—(A.) That he earns. You have so many men at any rate in the gang who are earning extra money.

Q. I am talking about the minimum man.—(A.) Quite, but in the column which you have, and on the sheet which you have, the men there have extras as well as the minimum.

Q. Yes, you have got extras, overtime and everything; and I think you would find, if you calculated your hours, that in the three weeks' figures you would have anything from 20 hours upwards in the three weeks of overtime to arrive at the figure of £4 odd?—(A.) It has been given to me as "Possible full week of 5½ days, 44 hours; possible overtime, 14 hours." That is 58 hours. That would be the utmost that the

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man could have worked, I take it, from this statement.

Q. Fifty-eight hours in a week?—(A.) That is the utmost; yes.

Q. We are agreed upon that: so that the man would really have 14 hours' overtime to arrive at the figures you have got in the extreme column—I mean the highest?—(A.) I cannot find on here any man in this column—this is not my work, may I say, my Lord; I have just taken it from the column here, but in looking down the column I cannot find any man who has worked the full time for each week; that is to say, what they term the full possible.

Q. Have you gone through the books to see that it is correct?—(A.) No.

Q. But you have sworn that it is a statement of fact?—(A.) I am prepared to put it in here signed by the firm.

Q. But you have not checked it yourself?—(A.) No.

Q. How many men did this 100 men represent?—(A.) 100.

Q. No, take the firm. You have got the name of the firm, the Ocean Steam Ship Company, and you have got 100 of the most regular men. How many men did that represent as employed by the firm?—(A.) I really could not tell you how many men they employ.

Q. So that to arrive at an average wage this would not be any guide, would it?—(A.) Not as an average wage for the whole of their employees.

Q. It is the highest exceptions, is it not?—(A.) It is what it says at the top: "Names and earnings of 100 of the most regular dock labourers." That is what it is.

Q. But Sir Alfred Booth said the other day that if you took the average of the Clearing House figures you arrived, exclusive of overtime, at £2 8s. 7½d., I think it was. You said this morning that that should be added to.—(A.) Quite, for the regular docker.

Q. But if you proceed on that average over the whole dock, have you compared the wages of Liverpool with Professor Bowley's Budget?—(A.) No.

Q. Assuming there is £2 8s. 7½d. on the average—(A.) But I cannot assume that £2 8s. 7½d. is the average for a regular docker.

Q. That is the Clearing House figure?—(A.) I think I explained that this morning: that it was not fair, and it was not a correct thing.

Q. How much did you add to it?—(A.) I should add on, I think, in my judgment—

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: 20 per cent. is what you stated this morning?—(A.) 20 per cent. should go on top of that to be a fair average for the regular docker.

Mr. BEVIN: That would give us just under £3, would it not?—(A.) I think I did state here—

Q. That would give us just under £3, would it not?—(A.) I think what I said, Mr. Bruce Thomas, was that the professional docker would earn, in my judgment, over £3 per week exclusive of overtime!

Q. The Clearing House figure is against you upon that, is it not?—(A.) On the average.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: You have taken the lowest Clearing House figure that Sir Alfred Booth gave.

He gave £2 8s. 7½d. and £2 13s. 7d. after deducting overtime.

Mr. BEVIN: I submit, my Lord, in reply to Mr. Bruce Thomas, that we are discussing the minimum, so that I am entitled to take the lowest figure.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: We are not discussing a minimum average.

Mr. BEVIN: At 11s. 8d. per day, taking your own figure of £3 for the average figure for the casual at Liverpool: if 11s. 8d. per day produced for the regular docker £3, then Professor Bowley's budget being what it is, how much during the day would be required to produce his budget?—(A.) I cannot tell you what his budget requires.

Q. His budget really shows that it was £3 13s., I think, in Liverpool. I do not know why, but he suggested that it was slightly less than London; and if the present casual rates of the regular docker—the regular docker, mind—produced £3 or less, it would need a substantial advance to grant even the very meagre allowance suggested by Professor Bowley?—(A.) If he is correct.

Q. Have you gone through that budget and seen the amount he allowed for an adult to live on in food?—(A.) No.

Q. I will not ask you anything about it, then. You said this morning that before the war you allowed so much beer money in certain cargoes for carrying so much goods?—(A.) One class of cargo only.

Q. Only one class of cargo?—(A.) I think that is so; to my knowledge, yes.

Q. What would that run to? How many pints would you give them?—(A.) I really could not tell you, because I never gave it to them.

Q. Would you mind getting your side to take out the calorific value of that beer, so that we can apply it to this budget?—(A.) If you want my opinion, there is no value in it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It was before beer was nationalised.

Mr. BEVIN: You do not know whether the calorific value of beer has gone down, do you?—(A.) I should think it was nil.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It has been nationalised now.

Mr. BEVIN: Not yet, unfortunately. I wish it had; one would get it pure and more of it.

Q. When you took this comparison of ships, were they at exactly the same berths—each ship?—(A.) No; some of them were. Of course, we are dependent for berths in Liverpool on where we are sent.

Q. It is rather difficult, having regard to the difficulties of berths and the methods of berthing, to get a real comparison, ship by ship, is it not?—(A.) No, I do not think so.

Q. Not for an inquiry, I admit.—(A.) No, not at any time.

Q. I notice in looking through your sheets that even in 1914 the output rather differed between ship and ship. How do you explain it, then?—(A.) Can you give me some instances?

Q. Take your 1914 output. There is a difference

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in the tonnage?—(A.) To which sheet are you referring?

Q. Take any of them; they all differ in the tonnage to arrive at your average.—(A.) Quite. Ships are bound to differ. I mean to say you are not always having ten thousand bales of cotton in this ship; probably you have eight thousand the next time, or fifteen thousand; but still, on your average where can the difference come in?

Q. But the ships did differ, and the cargoes differed, pre-war?—(A.) I have put nothing in these discharging steamers but which I can honestly compare 1919 and 1920 with 1914.

Q. I am not discussing your honesty; I really wanted to get at the facts. I wanted to get from you whether two ships, or the same ship coming twice in one year, could have such a variety of cargo that she will give a different output.—(A.) Those ships I have not put in. I have put nothing in that you cannot compare.

Q. The point I want to put to you is this: Can you find two ships and two cargoes that you can actually compare?—(A.) Yes, easily.

Q. Can you arrange it exactly?—(A.) Not the exact amount of tonnage, but if you have a ship with 5,000 tons of cotton and you have another one coming with 6,000 tons, it cannot affect your average. It means this, that the 6,000 tons will take more gangs than the 5,000, does it not?

Q. You see you do not get exactly the same berth each time either.—(A.) No.

Q. Sometimes you get the advantage of hydraulic cranes, and sometimes you do not?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Or even the ship coming twice may be at different berths?—(A.) If you take my last sheet, I think probably four had hydraulic cranes; but that does not give us any figures of tonnage per gang per day.

Q. Take that traffic manager business; you say it has only been in operation three years?—(A.) It has been in operation three years.

Q. Is not that an indication of the congestion of the port of Liverpool?—(A.) Well, it is an indication of the congestion, I admit, but it was used simply as a stop, that shipowners should not put their steamers into a berth which was already full of cargo, or three-parts full of cargo, from a previous steamer, and commence its work, without giving traders (who also have their rights) a chance of clearing the quays.

Q. With regard to the cost, I did not quite catch your figure. Did you say that this increase would add 300 per cent.?—(A.) It would add about 320 or 325 per cent. over pre-war.

Q. What is the percentage of increase now?—(A.) We are now having 200 as a tentative arrangement only.

Q. Do you mean labour or the master porters?—(A.) The master porters.

Q. What has labour advanced in Liverpool?—(A.) Labour has advanced from 4s. 6d. to 11s. 8d.

The CHAIRMAN: 150 per cent.?—(A.) It is about 159 per cent., I think.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, it is 159 per cent.

Mr. BEVIN: And the master porter who employs the men has advanced 200 per cent.?—(A.) Yes, but you have overlooked that I have lost an hour.

Q. I am not saying anything at all about it; I am only just asking for facts.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: He is giving you the facts.—(A.) And there must be a reason given. I have lost an hour; I am not doing as much work; and it was only on December 1 that I got my 200 per cent. Previous to that it was 133 1-3 per cent., so that for six months —

The CHAIRMAN: I think that is sufficient. Mr. Bevin only wanted to elicit the facts. There is no suggestion whatsoever.—(A.) I thought that he was suggesting that I had got 200 per cent. when I should only have had 159 per cent., or something of that sort.

Mr. BEVIN: That is a question for your conscience, not my cross-examination.—(A.) My conscience is clear.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It was your suggestion, Mr. Bevin.

Mr. BEVIN: Nothing of the sort.

Q. You suggest that if this output business can be arranged that 200 per cent. would go down?—(A.) No, I do not suggest that the 200 per cent. would go down, but I do suggest this: that if I could get the pre-war output it would come within a reasonable distance of being sufficient to meet the bill.

Q. To meet the 16s.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that really it is a problem of output. I want to put this to you again with regard to your Joint Committee: you say that during all this period you have had difficulty over this output. Have you discussed that on the Joint Committee?—(A.) Yes, it has been mentioned time and time again.

Q. But has any concrete proposal been put down by the employers to try to grapple with it?—(A.) They have not.

Mr. BEVIN: That is all I ask.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you much to ask in re-examination, Mr. Bruce Thomas?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, my Lord. I think I can do it in ten minutes.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope so, because I was wishful to let Mr. Boase go away.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I will cut my questions down to the utmost limit.

The CHAIRMAN: There does not seem to be much for re-examination. However, you will judge.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. Mr. Bevin put it to you that the men had had not the right to complete the job in Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You pointed out this morning that, taking a period, I think, of two weeks of your work, you only really required 700 men to do that work, but you in fact had 1,500 on the job?—(A.) That is it.

Q. Does that confirm your view that they do not

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want this right to complete the job?—(A.) That is my opinion.

Q. You gave an instance of 325 men that you had on the Friday night and you wanted them on the Saturday morning, but 60 were short, and then you said that there were another 46 short on the Monday?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you find in Liverpool that you always get a bad turn-out at the beginning and the end of the week?—(A.) We are frequently short on the Saturday and on the Monday.

Q. But you get a good turn-out on the middle days of the week?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Have any proposals been put before the Joint Committee since the war from the men's side with regard to these service stands?—(A.) Not that I remember.

Q. But the proposal that has been referred to was one which was brought up years ago?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I mean the centralised stand?—(A.) Yes, I understood.

Q. The Joint Committee are always ready to consider your problems?—(A.) I think so; yes.

Q. And it is open to the men—and they are very ably represented at Liverpool —(A.) Yes.

Q. —to bring forward whatever they desire before the Joint Committee, and it is fully discussed?—(A.) Quite.

Q. It is suggested that all the initiative should come from the employers' side, but do you consider that the Dockers' Union at Liverpool have equal rights and equal obligations in that matter?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: That is argument.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: With regard to the breaking away, the Joint Committee have in the past frequently reported this breaking away, and the men's refusal to do the job when they get on to it to the Dockers' Union, have they not?—(A.) I understand that that has been done on several occasions.

Q. Do you know whether any satisfaction has been received from adopting that course?—(A.) As far as I know none.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you on the Joint Committee at Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How long have you been there?—(A.) I was on some years previous to the war, and I should say perhaps four or five years I was off altogether since the Joint Committee was formed.

Q. During this last period how long have you been on?—(A.) Three or four years.

Q. Have you been here before, Mr. Boase?—(A.) Only one day.

Q. You know the desire of the Court, if possible, is that there should not be any technical objection made to documents on account of them not having been framed by the particular witness, but that they should just be put in unless there is some radical objection. You know that, do not you?—(A.) I had not heard anything about it.

Q. What I want to ask you about is in reference to a rather difficult matter which arose a few moments ago. This will bring it to a point. Among other things that you presented was a list of 100 men's earnings?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That was the Ocean Steamship Co?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is Holt and Co.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You are not a member of that?—(A.) No; I do a portion of their business on the Liverpool side of the water.

Q. What I mean is that you are not in any way personally responsible?—(A.) Not at all.

Q. But you favour the Court by bringing that and giving it to us?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are there any other tables in that position, in regard to which you are not in a position to testify—the sugar matter, for instance?—(A.) Yes, those are not mine. I can put in letters from the firms.

Q. It is only to bring out the point that I am going to ask you about. With regard to the rest, those are your own experiences that you can testify to?—(A.) Yes, the whole of the discharging steamers outside the sugar I think I can safely say are mine.

Q. In so far as your testimony goes, there seems to have been a misapprehension that you were speaking for Liverpool as a whole. Your testimony refers to your own actual experience, and you have added to that the tables furnished you by Messrs. Holt and Company, and by the sugar industries?—(A.) As regards these tables, yes.

The CHAIRMAN: That is that cleared up. It was not cleared up before, Sir Lynden, and probably that may have caused a certain friction of ideas. We will say no more about it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, I think that is much better, and, if I might suggest it, the shorthand notes might be equally silent.

Mr. GOSLING: I must say publicly that this witness was described by Mr. Bruce Thomas as a witness coming from Liverpool to speak generally as to Liverpool, or else I am very much mistaken. If I am mistaken I shall withdraw it at once. That was the description of him, that he would be a very important witness, taking up a great deal of time for that reason. My complaint was that immediately he got into what I call a tight corner he went back to his individual self and forgot all about Liverpool. I must say that publicly, because I do not want to say things on this Bench that I cannot substantiate.

The CHAIRMAN: You see my position is perfectly plainly this. I have now reduced the witness's testimony to its true dimensions. If anything was said by learned Counsel or anybody else which enlarged or amplified your position that has been checked by your now telling us the sources of your testimony.—(A.) With regard to the output on those tables those are my personal experiences.

Q. That is what I am saying to you.—(A.) The only figures that you have here which are not my personal experience are those which you have called attention to.

Q. Your evidence has been very valuable, but it has that limit, and we must all recognise that limit. Just a question upon Messrs. Holt, upon a point I am going to put to you about married men. The Ocean Steamship Company has put in that list. Mr. Gosling and I have gone through it. They are all married men?—(A.) I think they are.

Q. Surely that cannot be an average list, can it, unless Messrs. Holt's men are all in a singu-

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larly happy matrimonial position?—(A.) I only know that those are put in as being 100 of their most regular men, and men that they will be prepared to make permanent at any moment.

Q. There are one or two things which it has been mentioned to me I should ask you, and I can do it in a moment. Is there any permission given to any firm to have appropriated berths in Liverpool?—(A.) Not to any firm.

Q. In your experience has that permission been given to you by the traffic manager?—(A.) We have appropriated berths in Liverpool. What we understand by an appropriated berth in Liverpool is one which is allocated specially to certain steamship lines, but my other meaning was that for what we might term outside steamers you have to make an application to the harbour master for a berth. He, on his part, allocates you a berth on condition that you do not commence any work in that berth until the traffic manager has given you permission.

Q. I was asked to put the question to you; we have now got the explanation. Is not Mr. Bevin so far right that there seems to have been occasion anyhow in the view of the authorities to introduce this system of penal rents?—(A.) That was purely a measure to force traders who had goods on the quay to exercise more powers in their direction to get them removed.

Q. That applied to clearing the ship?—(A.) Quite.

Q. To make room for the ship?—(A.) To make room for the incoming ship.

Q. There was a scheme of central stands that was thought of, devised?—(A.) I cannot quite remember.

Q. A while ago?—(A.) Some time ago.

Q. Then there was a scheme of surplus stands?—(A.) Which was part of the clearing-house arrangement.

Q. Yes. Neither of those unhappily seemed to succeed in practice. Without blaming anybody,

your position was that in those circumstances which confronted you, you had to get your surplus labour from outside?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Of course, the men that were outside had not the tally, but you chose the button men?—(A.) The button men, I think, without any question.

Q. Has your firm always been supplied by union labour?—(A.) Practically.

Q. For years, do you mean?—(A.) For years, yes.

Q. The thing I would like to say to you before you go (I think it is my duty to say it to you) is this: the cross-examination by Mr. Bevin opened with a question whether you charged tonnage rates twice over or probably three times over to consignees?—(A.) I take it that that is what he was meaning.

Q. I was sorry that that was put to you, and I think we are all sorry now, including those at the Bar, because so far as we know, please go home to Liverpool feeling that none of us desire to attack your integrity.—(A.) I thank you, my Lord.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: On the tables which Mr. Boase has spoken of, which we merely put in through Mr. Boase for the purpose of saving time, I shall now call witnesses from Liverpool, each of whom will prove these tables from his own personal knowledge.

The CHAIRMAN: If you think it necessary; but I think it is pretty well cleared up.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If your Lordship pleases.

(Adjourned till Monday next, the 8th inst., at 11.30 a.m.)

SEVENTEENTH DAY.

Monday, March 8th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

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The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Guedalla, you have some application to make?

Mr. GUEDALLA: If your Lordship pleases. Would your Lordship allow me to make an application on behalf of the Ministry of Munitions. Certain very serious statements have been made, as the Court is aware, with regard to the importation of wool by the Ministry of Munitions into the Port of London. I do not desire to make any further comment at this stage on those statements than to say that the Ministry takes the view that in the public interest they should not be left unanswered any longer than is necessary. My application is that your Lordship and the Court will consent to receive the evidence of the Director-General of Raw Materials, Sir Arthur Goldfinch, who is the responsible official, and that this evidence, if possible, should not be taken earlier than Wednesday.

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord, I am very anxious that the public should hear the evidence of the State Departments, but this side of the Court was not responsible for Lord Devonport's evidence, and in the earlier stages of the proceedings I did appeal for an early decision or an interim report on wages. I repeat that appeal now. I hope the Court will have a sitting to hear the reply of the State Departments as to the statements of Lord Devonport, but I do not think that it ought to be at a period which will delay a decision on the question of wages, because matters are becoming very, very acute; and I would ask for that to weigh with your Lordship in giving a decision. May I, while I am on my feet, make one observation to save time. When the witness, Mr. Boase was leaving the box on Friday last, you made an observation, which is in the Notes, in regard to his integrity, in view of the questions which I put to him in the early part of the cross-examination. I did not hear exactly what your Lordship said to the witness, because of a little hubbub in Court, but having read the Notes, may I be allowed to associate myself with the remark your Lordship made when he was leaving the box.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, that is a most creditable line for you to have taken. The Court very much appreciates it. Mr. Guedalla, you have heard Mr. Bevin's observation. How long will this witness whom you propose to put into the box last?

Mr. GUEDALLA: He will only make the shortest possible statement. I do not see how his evidence could take more than half-an-hour even if he were cross-examined, unless he were cross-examined very elaborately; and I do not imagine he would be.

The CHAIRMAN: The Court is very anxious to make one thing particularly clear: It is not going, on account of any statements made by any witness, to permit this Court to be drawn into a political contest, and it is not going to allow itself to be made the means of political agitation or suggestion in favour of one or other or any party in this case. The bearing, and the sole bearing of the evidence given by Lord Devonport upon the issue which we are now determining was that the matter of congestion was brought forward by him as an excuse or explanation for the increase of casual labour at the Port of London. Having made that statement, in that view and that view only relevant to the Inquiry which is at hand, this Court is willing to afford the oppor-

tunity which has been asked, and will concede the demand of Mr. Guedalla, on the footing that the evidence will be directed to that point and that point alone, and knowing that if that be so there will be no delay in coming to a determination upon the issue now under investigation. I add with firmness that the Court is using every endeavour to proceed at the earliest possible date to a settlement of the questions before them. To-morrow morning will be the time when this witness will be examined.

Mr. GUEDALLA: If your Lordship pleases.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I propose to proceed with the next Witness from Liverpool; but before I call him would your Lordship allow me to make an observation with regard to the evidence of Mr. Boase, which was given on the last day? A question arose as to his representative capacity, and we are anxious to make this statement: that, of course, Mr. Boase came here and gave evidence as one most familiar at Liverpool with the master porters' work, being a very large master porter and assisting in the discharge of 25 steamers a month. It is obvious, I submit, that Mr. Boase was a man who was the best suited to come here, as one person only, to give evidence as to the conditions at Liverpool, and the only point where his evidence could be restricted to his own business was upon the question of the output and the tables; and your Lordship questioned him upon that. Most of those tables were Mr. Boase's own tables; one or two were not, and your Lordship elicited that from him. But what I am anxious to state here now is that Mr. Boase came here, of course, as an individual, but nevertheless upon the general aspect of the case giving evidence on behalf of the whole of Liverpool. I think that possibly there was some misunderstanding upon that, and it appeared so from the report which appeared in the Press.

The CHAIRMAN: I think everything is cleared up, and we should not go back upon that.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If your Lordship pleases.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Boase produced other statements than those which he had personally compiled or was answerable for. He did so in response to a general desire upon both sides that there should be no cavilling at statements on any technical grounds, and I do not understand Mr. Bevin to be in a position, if you submit the statements to him, of doing anything more than this: that if he sees any ground to suspect or question any statement he will at once demand that that statement should be proved; but nothing of that kind has arisen, and therefore I think you may just pass from that point and proceed.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If your Lordship pleases. I was only anxious to state that apart from tables—

The CHAIRMAN: I think we have got to that stage; but we are past it now.

Mr. GEORGE R. PRITCHARD, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You come here to give evidence representing the Liverpool Coastwise Employers' Association?
—(A.) That is so.

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Q. The members of that Association consist of firms who are engaged in passenger, cattle, and general cargo trade to Irish ports and to coastwise ports?—(A.) Yes.

Q. To maintain the regular sailings in the coastwise service, is a quick turn-round essential?—(A.) It is.

Q. Do you work to a time-table?—(A.) We do.

Q. And in many of the English ports you have to work to tides?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. Have you prepared a table, or has a table been furnished to you, by one of the coasting lines, which is a summary of wages paid by them to dock labourers for the ten weeks ending December 6, 1919?—(A.) That is correct.

(*The table was handed in and marked H.38.)

Q. Has this table been submitted to the employers, or a large number of the employers, of coastwise labour?—(A.) It has been submitted to the whole of the coasters, and they all agree that it is typical of their own. It has been checked by them, and they quite agree with the figures.

Q. They agree that it is typical of their own cases?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That table shows that the average earnings per man per week are £4 9s. 2d., including overtime?—(A.) Yes. That is made up of £2 17s. 2d. for day work, £1 8s. 11d. overtime, and 3s. 1d. for extras. The overtime represents about three half-nights.

Q. You have taken there the number of men employed during the period for each week, and in the third column you have got a heading, "Possible man-days." That means 5½ days per week, does it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then, in the next column, you have shown the actual man-days worked; that is 4 7-10?—(A.) That is correct.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I think that ought to have been on the table, my Lord.

Q. That table shows that, roughly, you worked about 50 per cent. overtime—three half-nights, you said?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. I mean it is 50 per cent. in pay. That £4 9s. 2d. is an average of 19s. 0d. per day, is it not?—(A.) It works out at that, yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Just make that clear. It is 19s. 0d. per day, and that includes overtime?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord, that is comparable with the £4 9s. 2d.

The CHAIRMAN: How many hours does that represent?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That means 4 7-10 days.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the number of hours per week?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: How many day-time hours would there be?—(A.) Eight hours.

The CHAIRMAN: It is eight hours plus overtime?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord, eight hours plus overtime—plus the three half-nights spread over the week.

The WITNESS: Yes, that is so.

Q. What was the cost of handling general cargo

* See Appendices Nos. 121 and 122.

in the coastwise service prior to the war?—(A.) About 10½d. per ton.

Q. And what was the speed of the work?—(A.) About ten tons per hour.

Q. What is the present cost per ton and the present speed?—(A.) It is now 3s. 6d. per ton, and the speed is 7½ tons per hour; but, in fairness to the men, I must say that during the last five or six weeks there has been a considerable improvement, and the speed has gone up to about eight tons per hour.

Q. Under the rates proposed in the demand which we are discussing, what would the cost go up to per ton?—(A.) We reckon it will cost us about 4s. 7d. per ton for labour alone. This, of course, does not include the permanent men, such as the checkers, goods receivers, deliverers and foremen. It is just for the labour, pure and simple.

Q. Their wages would have to follow any increase given to casual men, would they not?—(A.) Yes, undoubtedly. They have in the past.

Q. And that would increase your 4s. 7d., would it not?—(A.) Considerably.

Q. Have you suffered from stoppages owing to the men demanding extra pay for certain classes of cargo?—(A.) I am sorry to say we have. A matter of two or three months ago a stoppage occurred on one of the steamers discharging cement. The men get 1s. 0d. per day extra for cement; it is called dirty money. They stopped work and demanded 2s. 6d. We communicated with the Union, and they sent delegates down to the ship, and I have every reason to believe that they did their best to prevail upon the men to continue and submit their dispute to the Joint Committee. The men, however, declined. The ship was held up for a day and a-half, and finally we had to agree to the 2s. 6d. to get the ship away. Only recently, on Thursday last, another question arose regarding sugar. The men get 1s. 0d. per day extra for Pernambuco sugar. It is very dirty and sloppy stuff to handle. A consignment of sugar was sent along from the Leyland Line to one of the coasting steamers, from the West Indies. It is of a drier nature. The men turned round and demanded 1s. 0d. per day extra on that. It was declined, and they were told to submit their case to the Joint Board. They said: No, they were going to have it or they would not touch the sugar. The end of it is that the sugar is now on the quay in Liverpool awaiting the decision of the Joint Committee, because once the money is paid, even if it is paid under protest, you never hear anything further about it. On this point I would like to say this: that I think it is a matter which the Union officials themselves should take up. It is these constant stoppages which cause no end of friction, irritation, and annoyance to the whole of the port; and I think what might be done is to have a schedule agreed upon by the Joint Committee and revised from time to time, and let the men clearly understand that they should abide by it.

Q. You have a difficulty in getting the men to work after 1 p.m. on Saturdays, have you not?—(A.) Yes. On many lines they positively refuse to do it.

Q. What is the effect of that on steamers, such as the Isle of Man steamers, which are only in port one tide?—(A.) It means that they have either got to send the steamer away short of cargo, or to leave her over until the Monday.

Q. You have stated that overtime is essential in the coastwise service?—(A.) It is, undoubtedly, particularly in regard to the cross-Channel trade. The steamers coming from Dublin and Belfast

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carry cattle, passengers, and general cargo. Their sailings are so arranged from the other side as to permit of their going to the Wallasey cattle stage, land their cattle, and then catch the same tide into the dock. They remain there until the following day. Their cargo, as a rule, consists of perishable goods, such as eggs and butter, and it is necessary to get that away on to the railways and into the various shops as quickly as possible, so overtime is absolutely necessary.

Q. The effect of overtime rates which are not fair and reasonable, or any overtime conditions which are not fair and reasonable, on the coastwise trade is particularly oppressive, is it not?—(A.) It is. The new rate would work out at 18s. 8d. per ton, which is more, in many cases, than the steamer receives in freight. That is to work from one hour, from 5 to 6 p.m., taking the average as 9 tons (and I think I am putting it at a generous figure, hoping the men will gradually work up to that) it works out at about 18s. 8d. per ton.

Q. That is upon the minimum demand for overtime?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. What would be the effect of imposing these demands upon the existing services?—(A.) It would mean holding the ship up until the following day.

Q. Until the next period of ordinary day time work?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Or you would have to send your ship away short of cargo?—(A.) Short of cargo, and leave the cargo on the quay.

Q. Or, on the other hand, you might have to advance your freights to meet these heavy charges?—(A.) That is so.

Q. If you hold up your vessel until the next day, would that destroy the efficiency of the service?—(A.) Absolutely. We should be unable to keep up our daily sailings.

Q. And if you send away the vessel short of cargo, that would be congesting the quay, would it not?—(A.) It would cause a great deal of inconvenience, because a good deal of the cargo crossing to Ireland comes from English interior towns.

Q. And you would not be using your ship capacity fully?—(A.) No, it would mean the earnings of the ship would fall considerably.

Q. Under either of those conditions, would it be possible to carry on the existing service?—(A.) It would not.

Q. What would happen if you increased freights to meet these charges?—(A.) It would mean this, that in regard to those lines running to the English and Scottish ports they would be unable to compete with the railways and would cease to exist. They would drop out of the service.

Q. In the past, the coastwise service has had a great struggle to establish itself against the railways, has it not?—(A.) It has. Keen competition has always existed, due in a great measure to the basis of the railway classification, which enables the Railway Companies to cut into port traffic.

Q. And the Railway Companies have cut the port-to-port rates to a figure below that at which the traffic can be economically conveyed at a profit on the railway, in the hope of picking it up again on the inland haul?—(A.) That is quite correct. If you take the case of traffic from Liverpool to London, it is as low as 12s. 6d. per ton, and the same class of traffic passing through Rugby will pay about 25s.

Q. Liverpool to Rugby 25s. a ton, Liverpool to London 12s. 6d.?—(A.) That is on heavy chemicals and soap, from the Widnes District.

Q. Is the Liverpool to London rate being kept down by the sea competition?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. Do the coasters serve an absolutely essential purpose in the transport trade of the country?—(A.) Undoubtedly.

Q. And is it necessary that they should be able to give in efficiency and price as good a service as the railways?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think that we all know that during the war the coastwise service was practically killed, owing to the competition of the subsidised railways?—(A.) Quite a large number of ports were closed down, owing to the action of the authorities. They were closed for commercial purposes, and in the case of others the traders have simply gone off; they could not live against the railway competition.

Q. An attempt has been made to what has been called subsidise the coastwise service?—(A.) Well, it is indirectly; it is the merchant who is subsidised; indirectly the coaster is.

Q. The merchant is subsidised to this extent, is he not, that he is paid the difference between the Railway rate and the coastwise freight?—(A.) Yes. There is a Committee called the Home Trade Transport Control Committee, and in August last they brought out a scheme with the object of diverting traffic from the Railways to the coasters. The ports got very much congested, particularly with the Import and Export traffic, and they undertook to pay the difference in the cost of conveying traffic by rail and by sea, and this Committee's functions were to divert traffic from the Railway to the coaster so as to relieve the congestion. That put a few more coasters back on the service.

Q. It has helped to some extent re-establish it?—(A.) It has, but it applies only to Import and Export Traffic, not Home Trade goods. The Home Trade goods have, practically speaking, left the sea route and gone on to the rail.

Q. What has been the result of the shutting down of the coastwise service on congestion in large ports. Does the coastwise service act as a distributor of traffic from the large ports?—(A.) Undoubtedly.

Q. And the effect of shutting the coastwise services down was to deprive those ports of an important means of distribution?—(A.) That is so. If you take the case of Poole, that port distributes goods to Bournemouth; Shoreham is the distributing port of Brighton and district. Those two ports are closed down. There is nobody running to them, because it is nearly all what you might call Home Trade traffic; cattle-feeding stuff and flour and so forth.

Q. With regard to the proposed increase, in your view can the coasting service be maintained in competition with the Railways if that charge is put upon you?—(A.) I am afraid it cannot. Many would drop out of the business altogether.

Q. There is one other point, I think, you want to draw the Court's attention to. The coasting trade, as compared with the ocean trade, will have to bear this charge both ends?—(A.) Yes, that is at the loading and the discharging port.

Q. Whereas the ocean trader will only bear it one end?—(A.) That is so. In other words, if you have a coaster, say, on the berth at Liverpool loading for Barrow, it would cost as much to put the cargo in that vessel as it would cost to put it in a vessel sailing to Australia.

Q. Any increases as you have already, I think, stated would mean advancing the rates or the withdrawal of steamers from old-established trades to more remunerative employment?—(A.) That is so.

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Q. Will that result in throwing further traffic upon the Railways?—(A.) It will.

Q. On the second page of the statement you have handed in I think you have shown the list of ports served by coastwise services from Liverpool in 1914 and those which are being served now?—(A.) In 1914 there were regular services from Liverpool to 64 coastwise ports. At the present time only 19 are served. During the war it dropped down to 10 ports; 9 have been re-established since, as the result of the Government's scheme.

Q. Would it be possible to re-open all the pre-war services if the goods have to be passed over the quay during an eight-hour day?—(A.) Quite impossible.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you asking this Court to go back upon the eight-hour day?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, my Lord. What I was going to lead to from that is this: it is, therefore, essential for this trade to work overtime.

Mr. BEVIN: We have not denied that.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: And that the overtime rates should be reasonable. You have heard the remarks I have made. Do you assent to them?—(A.) I do.

Q. And that the overtime periods should not be curtailed?—(A.) Well, we have no wish to go beyond 9 o'clock at night. In pre-war times the vessels used to work later, probably up to midnight, but we have so adjusted matters now that we would be quite content with 9 o'clock, say, from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Q. Can the big ports in this country be kept clear without the assistance of the coastwise services?—(A.) I am afraid not.

Q. What would be the effect upon the smaller coastal ports if you have to divert your vessels to other employment? Would it mean shutting them down?—(A.) Undoubtedly they would suffer and the public would suffer and it would throw an immense amount of traffic which went by sea on to the railways.

Q. These smaller coastal ports are what may be called secondary distributing centres?—(A.) Yes, they are.

Q. Would it be possible to arrange for the proper distribution of food if they are shut down?—(A.) You would be left with nothing else but the railways. Many of the ports in the South of England, for instance Torquay, Teignmouth, Exmouth, and Plymouth, used to get shiploads of stuff down there, store it and distribute it in the surrounding districts. All that has ceased and the stuff is now going by rail.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I want first to ask you about the rates. If traffic is carried from Glasgow to London it carries, I think, a remunerative freight?—(A.) I cannot answer about Glasgow to London.

Q. Is not the real difficulty with all this coastwise traffic the competitive rates to which your counsel has called attention, that is to say Liverpool to London 12s. 6d., and Liverpool to Rugby, where there can be no water competition, 25s. That is the real trouble, is not it?—(A.) That is the railway rates.

Q. In my opening speech, I do not know whether you have read it, I indicated that I thought the real remedy for both congestion and to utilise the coastal service in its proper relation in internal distribution was that the Government

should insist upon fixing Railway rates per ton per mile—classified?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Assuming the Government fixed its Railway rates per ton per mile, would not that of itself practically bring the coastal service into proper use?—(A.) Indirectly it would help us considerably—unquestionably.

Q. If the Court could see its way in the Report to make a strong recommendation that Railway rates should be fixed per ton per mile it would, in your opinion, considerably help docks from the point of view of distribution, and bring the coastal service into its proper relationship for distribution?—(A.) It would.

Q. Thank you very much, because I have been pressing that at the Ministry of Transport and cannot get anybody else to agree with me. However, as a man who has been in the coastal service for a long time, I am glad to have the value of your opinion—at any rate, that it would help. Do you think that the men should suffer—that is to say be given a wage for the daytime hours of £2 17s. 2d.? Sir Alfred Booth agreed with me, I think, that overtime should be regarded as something extra to a man's income—that is, over and above his subsistence level. I think you would agree with that?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You agree with that, do you not? So that the real basis of calculation is the £2 17s. 2d., is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Professor Bowley gave, you see, on his very meagre budget, £3 13s. 7d. for Liverpool and £3 17s. for London. Assuming that our demonstration proved that that is inadequate, and that the figure that I have quoted in our application is the correct figure—assuming that—you do not think, do you, that the men should be reduced below a proper living standard in order to maintain any service when, by a very easy process of re-arranging the railway rates, the thing can be paid without injury to anybody?—(A.) I am not opposed to higher wages. The question of what the industry can stand is the question. At the present time it is kept alive by Government assistance, and any further increase would mean higher rates, and, incidentally, a charge upon the taxpayers whilst the scheme lasts. When that support is withdrawn and the coastwise traffic is thrown on its own resources it will practically cease to exist. Under present conditions it cannot possibly compete with the railways. With regard to the question of overtime, I consider 12s. per hour, which I understand is your demand—

Q. How much?—(A.) 12s.; a minimum of 12s.

Q. Per hour?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, if only an hour is worked.—(A.) It works out at that.

Mr. BEVIN: Do you assume that the men will only work one hour's overtime on your boats every night?—(A.) We have to regulate the sailings according to the tide. If the tide serves at 6 o'clock and we work from 5 to 6 we have to pay those men, according to your statement, 12s. for that one hour. I am open to be corrected.

Q. I think in my opening speech I was rather pulled up by Sir Lynden Macassey, or at least in one cross-examination, or at least I think when his Lordship questioned me on the overtime I was a little bit ridiculed when I said there were certain circumstances which had to be met. Do you remember that?—(A.) I do not.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to say—

Mr. BEVIN: Not you, my Lord; but I thought the other side ridiculed.

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The CHAIRMAN: One does not want to interfere with a witness who is giving his evidence after careful preparation, but we are on a minimum for time and piecework. We are not direct on the question of overtime. One has the hope that these questions, which manifestly pinch at particular points, may be the subject of some sort of reasonable arrangement, but meantime I think you need not press the matter further.

Mr. BEVIN: Thank you, my Lord; I will leave it at that.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. If the railway rates are put on a per ton per mile basis, as was suggested, would you be able to re-establish the coastal services if the present demands were conceded?—(A.) No, not in all directions. If you take the case of the short runs, such as Liverpool to Preston, Liverpool to Barrow, it would be utterly impossible. The Barrow trade has gone out of existence altogether; the same with the North Wales ports. The firm have sold their gear and closed the business down, and they are running on the outside trade, tramping about. The coasting trade will never be in the same position as it was before the war. That is my candid opinion.

The CHAIRMAN: It is very good of those engaged in seafaring, and dockers, and people like that, to suggest that the Railway Company should put a mileage rate. The railways may have something to say to that. From your point of view, it would simply mean that you would have an enormous opportunity of raising your freights, would you not?—(A.) It would give us a chance to live, my Lord.

Q. You mentioned 4s. 7d. a ton for labour alone, did you not, if granted, but what we are anxious to get from you, if you please, is how many ordinary hours does the man at your port work for £2 17s. 2d.—(A.) He works from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Q. How many hours in the week give him £2 17s. 2d.?—(A.) About 38 hours.

Q. How much is it per hour; about eighteenpence?—(A.) Yes, about that.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like this point to be drawn out. It slipped my memory. In this 4s. 7d. per ton, how far does that go; does it include aboard and ashore to stacking in the shed?—(A.) It includes all the labour we employ. That is the coastwise trade.

Q. I just want to get how far it goes. If it is an oversea trade we are calculating, the cost to the shipowner, it is only to the rail of the ship, is it not?—(A.) In the coastwise trade we land the goods on the quay; there are no porters.

Q. No porters?—(A.) No; we do not want porters. This is the 12s. 2d. rate.

Q. Does it include re-delivery from the shed?—(A.) No.

Q. Just to the stacking out in the shed?—(A.) Yes. Porters are employed to load up the carts. For that the consignee pays extra.

Q. That would be an increase of 1s. 1d. to stacking out in the sheds, that is your opinion of it?—(A.) The proposed increased rates would cost the ship 1s. 1d. per ton more.

Q. Out to stacking in the sheds?—(A.) Yes.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Mr. MILLER HAWSON, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are the Transport and Stevedoring Manager of Bree, Limited, Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to ask a question here on that, if I may, because I do not want confusion. The Transport Workers' Federation has requested the coal bunkering people of the country to meet us in a distinct conference to deal with coal, and I had not the slightest idea, or I do not remember ever receiving any indication from anybody, that bunkering work was to be dealt with at this Inquiry. I did not know about it, and I do not know really the position.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: What I have said is this, that it appears to us that the men that Mr. Hawson is here to speak about are covered by the application which this Court is considering; secondly, my Lord, these men have invariably followed all awards that have been given to dockers at Liverpool, and they expect to follow them; they are members of the Dockers' Union.

The CHAIRMAN: How do the facts stand with regard to the point that is made, that they are being dealt with separately under the head of coal.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, we do not agree that they are being dealt with separately. We say that they are covered by the demand that is made here, and—this is the importance of it, my Lord—whatever is done for the dockers will have to be done for these men. I have here, my Lord, a number of awards, where the dockers have been dealt with, and these men are specifically mentioned in those awards. Mr. Hawson will tell you that it has always been the custom at Liverpool for these men, who I may remind your Lordship are members of the Dockers' Union, always to follow the awards that have been made in favour of the dock labourers.

The CHAIRMAN: This comes under paragraph 11 of the application: "This application is deemed to and shall include all workers loading and discharging general cargo and handling same at quays and wharves, over-side, and in warehouses, and at docks and wharves." You can hardly bring it under that.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Will your Lordship read on?

The CHAIRMAN: Could you bring it to a point by asking him one question? I am not making any judgment just now upon the objection. I will just ask him one question. (To the Witness): Has your firm received a separate application from the Transport Workers' Federation?—(A.) Yes, about a fortnight ago, after this Court started to sit.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I have that. I can lay that application before your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you might withdraw this witness in the meantime, and endeavour to make some adjustment of this matter before resuming after lunch, if you could see your way to do that; otherwise we may have to give a hard and fast ruling with reference to the application of clause 11.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If the application does

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not cover these men, and they are not to be dealt with, I think there must be a number of other men who will be in a similar position.

The CHAIRMAN: Sufficient for the case is the witness thereof.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I was thinking of my next witness, when the same case will arise.

The CHAIRMAN: Then we may treat it on the principle of the bundle of sticks.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It is a difficult position for us, and it is one which I have already put, that these men expect to follow the dockers, and they always have followed them. Mr. Hawson will tell you that whatever the docker gets these men will insist upon having, and there will be no resisting it. If that is correct, I submit that Mr. Hawson ought to be heard here upon the facts of his case.

The CHAIRMAN: Have I omitted something in paragraph 11, Mr. Thomas, that you wanted to refer to?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord. I do not think one can stop after the first paragraph, which refers to discharging general cargo. It goes on: "Such application shall include all employees embraced in existing local agreements"—those men are embraced in existing local agreements—"and whose Unions are affiliated with the National Transport Workers' Federation"—this Union is affiliated with the National Transport Workers' Federation—"and employed by the various authorities, employers, and employers' associations, cited in the Terms of Application, and being in receipt of the above application. The application shall provide for, among others, dock labourers, crane men, warehousemen, and all others employed in docks and river traffic, manipulators of machinery, and maintenance staffs employed by dock authorities, and other employers engaging aforementioned classes of labour and taking part in the various operations of transport." It is difficult to see, in view of the latter part of clause 11, how "general cargo" can be taken to be the governing words, because you will see that it clearly includes all men who are employed in docks, and river traffic, and maintenance staffs.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bruce Thomas, are not you taking this too seriously, because Mr. Bevin has informed us that there is an application from that separate body of men, and you admit that?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, I have got that here.

The CHAIRMAN: That application will have to be treated on its own merits. If you like, we are quite willing to say that anything we award shall not include those men whose case is to be submitted or inquired into under some other process; but if we do not do that it is perfectly manifest that there will be overlapping, and instead of utilising this inquiry for a definite and specific purpose, you will have it fringed with things where it overlaps with other people who are making separate applications. We are against doing that if we can avoid it, Mr. Bruce Thomas. The only point I want to assure you of is that we are quite willing to make our award in this way—that, on evidence being tendered from Messrs. Reay, the well-known firm in Liverpool, with reference to the coal-bunkering, and information being produced to the Court that a separate application had been pre-

sented on their behalf to the employers of that class of labour, and was being separately dealt with, we should not make any award which would cover that case. Would that suit you? You see your difficulty, Mr. Bevin. You are in a difficulty as well as Mr. Bruce Thomas, because you are appearing for those coal-bunkerers, are not you?

Mr. BEVIN: What I suggested to Mr. Bruce Thomas was this, that I thought that during the adjournment Mr. Bruce Thomas and myself might meet and obviate any difficulty arising out of this.

The CHAIRMAN: It would be most desirable.

Mr. BEVIN: I think after the adjournment we might be able to just put the matter square in order that there may be no friction at all in any port about it.

The CHAIRMAN: You might accept that suggestion, Mr. Thomas.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: If your Lordship pleases. Then I will withdraw the witness.

(The Witness withdrew.)

The CHAIRMAN: Before you put in another witness, Mr. Thomas, I have to call your attention, by the interposition of Mr. Macpherson, our Secretary, to Sir Lynden Macassev's statement on page 5 of the Minutes of the Court of Inquiry of February 3. He says this: "The desire was that all authorities who have been served with the Application, or who, if I may use the phrase, ought to have been served with the Application, should be represented, and, therefore, I am going to ask my friend Mr. Bevin to agree to a list with me afterwards, so that I shall be able to put before the Court a precise list of dock harbours and port Authorities, and the employers of dock labour against whom he is making the application, and for whom I appear." That is a list upon the one side. It is quite clear that it is in the spirit of that that there should be some arrangement, on the lines that Mr. Bevin suggested, on the other side, showing who are excluded or covered by the Application. I think you must try and arrange this; we will give you the opportunity, anyhow.

Mr. JOHN ALFRED IRVING, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are a member of the Liverpool Warehousekeepers' Association?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You are the Chairman of the Rates Sub-Committee?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is the Committee that fixes the different charges?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How many men are employed in the Liverpool warehouses?—(A.) Approximately about 10,000.

The CHAIRMAN: In public warehouses?—(A.) In public and private warehouses.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: These are in the various warehouses that are about the town; they are not on the quayside?—(A.) They are not on the dock estate.

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Q. Are the bulk of the men regular?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In practice do they get a week's notice and give a week's notice?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With regard to the men that cannot be termed regular, do you often take them on for the half-day only?—(A.) It is quite occasionally done. The bulk of the men are taken on for two or three days at least.

Q. You never take a man on to work overtime only, do you?—(A.) Oh, no. He is working during the day, and he is kept on some time afterwards.

Q. Since this Court has been sitting, have you made an Agreement with the men's representatives to increase to rate and a-half the overtime rate of pay?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: These men are not dockers?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, my Lord, they are warehousemen. They are in the Dockers' Union, and they follow the dockers—

The CHAIRMAN: Is that so?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, they are in the affiliated Union.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: They are represented by my friend, Mr. Bevin; perhaps that is the more accurate way of putting it.

Mr. BEVIN: They are one of the classes of men who have always followed the dockers' awards and conditions.

The CHAIRMAN: I know, but you cannot bring this under an Agreement which is subject to arbitration. Please do not misunderstand the Court. We are quite open to any argument that whatever is done for the dockers will in all probability be imitated by similar classes of men.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I quite appreciate that, my Lord, but that is not this case. These are members of the National Warehouse and General Workers' Union.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes. I think you may proceed with this. Mr. Fletcher has called my attention to this, that this application should include workers handling goods at quays and wharves, over-side and in warehouses.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, my Lord. (To the Witness): These Unions are affiliated with the National Federation of Transport Workers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And they are covered by this claim which has been put forward?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Since this Court has been sitting the delegates of the men have been to you with a demand for an increased overtime payment?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you have met them?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And agreed to rate and a-half?—(A.) Yes.

Q. When the delegates came to you, did they make any statement with regard to the minimum demand that has been made for overtime in this case?—(A.) We discussed the overtime question generally, and they acknowledged that this demand which is now before this Court for a minimum four hours was not practicable in our particular part of the trade of the Port of Liverpool.

Q. Will you tell the Court how, in your view, and apparently in the view of these delegates, it is not practicable in your business? What sort of overtime have you to work?—(A.) We get our loads up to these warehouses from the quay all

hours of the day. We might get a load up there, say, about 5 o'clock in the evening. When half past five comes, which is their time to cease work, there may be a quarter or one-eighth of a load or a few packages left on the cart, which keeps the men 5 minutes, 10 minutes, or 15 minutes after their time. We pay them a full hour for that, and to-day, since this last arrangement, at time and a-half. If we were brought under what the Federation are asking for to-day we would pay 12s. for that few minutes work.

Q. The warehouses open half an hour after the work begins at the docks, and they close half an hour after the docks finish?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord, is there any real reason why this should be laboured? I really made my point in my opening statement, that there were occasions where the four-hour minimum would be subject to special arrangements. This is one of them.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, I will not pursue it if that is understood.

Mr. BEVIN: It is on the notes.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: This is a most serious matter to the warehousekeepers, and a figure that I can give your Lordship shows how serious it is.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you are quite right to bring it out, but observe, Mr. Bruce Thomas, there is a little difficulty in my mind about this, because, while this Court has been sitting, these men and their employers have met together; they have made this arrangement. I hope that is a symptom of an arrangement which might be come to here. As you know, our efforts are to bring all parties together, but it is a curious position to put the Court in, to say that some of the applicants have gone, as it were, apart from anything we may think or do, and have arranged this. I hope this is part of some general arrangement; but you have brought your point out, and I do not think you need pursue it further.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I am instructed, my Lord, that there was no particular desire on the part of the warehousekeepers to concede that demand at the moment, but they were forced to.

The CHAIRMAN: The men were applicants here. The warehousekeepers were then respondents here.—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Then these people ought to come forward and contribute this sensible and reasonable course to the general pool of good sense which is going to manage the whole thing.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Mr. Irving will tell your Lordship that the men here said: "Unless this is granted now we will not work overtime."

The CHAIRMAN: I really think, having made your point, we may let Mr. Irving go. We are not blaming you for having made it, Mr. Irving—in fact, we may look upon it as a hopeful symptom—but we are not going to be debarred from doing justice all round by reason of any individual arrangement.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: What is the cost to the warehousekeepers of conceding a minimum demand of 16s.?—(A.) We estimate it would be approximately about £572,000 per annum.

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The CHAIRMAN: To whom?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: To the whole of the warehouse employers. (*To the Witness*): Is that correct?—(A.) To the whole of the warehouse employers. The cost you referred to, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, quite so—to the Liverpool warehousemen.—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. For labour alone?—(A.) For labour alone.

The CHAIRMAN: You need not cross-examine on the earlier portion, Mr. Bevin, but you are entitled to cross-examine upon this figure if you think it desirable.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, I had a statement to put in showing the rates of pay of these men, but I am afraid it has been mislaid. Perhaps I can give you the figures through the Witness; they are two plain, simple figures. (*To the Witness*): What was the pre-war wage of your minimum rated man?—(A.) 2s. 3d. per half-day.

The CHAIRMAN: How many hours were in a half-day?—(A.) Nine hours per day.

Q. That is four and a-half hours?—(A.) It was four hours and five hours; it was split up in that way.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: What is the present pay for the eight-hour day?—(A.) 12s. for the eight hours; 6s. per half-day.

Q. Have you estimated the average earnings of the men?—(A.) Yes. The average earnings of the men are £3 15s. per week. That is the minimum wage, which includes 9s. overtime.

Q. That 9s., under the recent arrangement, will be increased, will it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Will that result in the average earnings going up to about £4 per week?—(A.) About £4.

Q. It will increase the 9s. overtime?—(A.) Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I would like to ask you whether you think £4 per week is too much in these days for a warehouseman.—(A.) No, I do not think it is too much.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. Do you think it is enough?—(A.) Yes, I think it is.

(The Witness withdrew.)

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Mr. THOMAS WORTHINGTON COOKE,
Sworn.

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. Are you an ex-President of the Cotton Association?—(A.) I am an ex-President.

Q. And you are the Chairman of the United Trades Association of Liverpool?—(A.) I am.

Q. That Association represents the Associations of the following trades:—Cotton, corn, timber, wool, provisions, sugar, fruit, seed oil and cake, canned goods, general brokers, shipping and forwarding agents, West African merchants, and the Co-Operative Wholesale Society?—(A.) It does.

Q. Are you able to tell the Court whether any increase in the wages paid to the Liverpool porters and warehousemen is added to the value of the goods and passed on to the trader?—(A.) Any increase in the handling charges would naturally be added to the price of the goods, which the consumer ultimately pays.

Q. Have you upon this question been in communication with the Associations that I have mentioned to ascertain what their actual practice is in his respect?—(A.) I have.

Q. Did you get a communication upon it, in reply to an inquiry which you made, from the Co-Operative Wholesale Society?—(A.) I did. May I read that.

Q. If you will kindly read it to the Court, I will hand his Lordship a copy, and I will hand my friend one. What was the reply which you received from them?—(A.) The letter is dated January 31, 1920, and it is addressed to the United Trade Association, Liverpool. It says: "Gentlemen,—In reply to your letter of the 29th with reference to your Chairman's evidence in connection with the raising of wages, we are pleased to respond to your letter stating that all handling charges are added to the cost of f.o.b. or c.i.f. purchases in order to arrive at a net handling cost, either quay or warehouse, so as to arrive at a selling price. If any alteration in the service charges takes place, we immediately amend our figures." This makes it quite clear that any increase is passed on to the consumer.

Q. Did you, among others, also receive a letter from the Liverpool Provision Trade Association?—(A.) I received a letter from the secretaries of the Liverpool Provision Trades Association—namely, Messrs. Harmood Banner, and Sons, the well-known chartered accountants, saying: "Dear Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 29th instant with reference to the proposed increase in the rates of wages paid to dock labourers and warehouse workers, we have made careful inquiries amongst our members, and as a result we have no hesitation in saying that such increase will immediately affect the cost of handling the goods at the port, and that it will ultimately fall upon the consumer in the form of increased cost of the commodities handled by our members."

Q. From all the persons of whom you have inquired, have you received replies to the same effect?—(A.) I have received replies to the same effect.

Q. Are you also able to say from your own experience that that is what in fact takes place?—(A.) I am.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you any questions to ask, Mr. Bevin?

Mr. BEVIN: No, my Lord.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Mr. SYLVESTER JAMES PROCTER, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. Are you the Manager and Secretary of the Alexander Towing Company?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you employ some 600 men on tugs working in the river and in the dock?—(A.) At Liverpool, yes.

Q. These tugmen are members of the Dockers' Union, are they not?—(A.) I believe they are, yes.

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Q. Their work consists in moving vessels from berth to berth?—(A.) From berth to berth in the Liverpool Docks, and taking them from the berth to the river, and docking them.

Q. In the past, when increases have been given to the dockers, have increases also been given to your men?—(A.) On every occasion for the last five years.

Q. I think two tables which were put in by Sir Alfred Booth show the present conditions of employment, that is on "Booth B," the second of the tables which Sir Alfred Booth put in.—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: On what page is that?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is the document "Booth B" in the bundle which Sir Alfred Booth put in, and they appear on the last sheet of that document marked "Booth G."

Q. That states the period of engagement—that they are engaged by the week of 48 hours, made up of six periods of 9 hours each, including meal hours each day, starting at any time of the day. Is that correct?—(A.) Yes, that is right. It is six periods of 9 hours six times a week; that is 48 hours.

Q. What is the overtime?—(A.) One forty-eighth of the week's pay.

Q. It is one forty-eighth of the week's pay for any hours worked over the 9 hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In "Booth C" you will find in the latter half of the table a statement showing the pre-war rates of wages with each increase which was given. Taking the masters first, the pre-war wage was £2 4s. 6d., and the present weekly rate is £4 17s., but there is a star against that, and there is a note at the bottom that "Masters and chief engineers receive commission based on the gross earnings of the tug."

Mr. BEVIN: Do those figures include overtime?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, those are just the rates.

Q. Prior to the war these tugmen ranked as seamen, did they not?—(A.) They did, yes.

Q. And their standing wage, as shown in the table, was £2 4s. 6d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. They had no overtime, I think?—(A.) No overtime before the war.

Q. They went home when their boat was lying idle?—(A.) When there was no work for the tug, which was very frequent.

Q. The 48-hour week has now been imposed on you, has it not?—(A.) Yes, now.

Q. And as shown in the table, it is divided into six periods of 9 hours?—(A.) Yes, that is right.

Q. And everything over the 9-hourly period counts as overtime?—(A.) That is so, yes.

Q. Whenever 12 o'clock midnight comes, overtime becomes payable, does it not?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. That is to say, if you take a man on at 9 o'clock at night and he works his tug until 3 o'clock in the morning, the three hours constitutes his 9 hours?—(A.) Yes, his 9 hours period.

Q. And the three subsequent hours are paid at the overtime rate?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Once you take a man on, he continues on pay or overtime until he is stopped, does he not?—(A.) That is so, yes.

Q. In 1919, last year, what was the average number of tows per tug per day?—(A.) Two.

Q. On an average, would that mean more than about 3 hours' actual towing?—(A.) Actual towing, 1 to 6 hours. 1 hour is the lowest job pro-

bably, and the greatest number of hours would be 6.

Q. On an average, what would your two tows per day represent?—(A.) It works out on the average that they were employed actually towing 4 hours out of the 24.

Q. That was in the case which you took out?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In order to ascertain that, did you take your busiest tug?—(A.) We took the two busiest tugs we have.

Q. And you found that the actual time towing per day was 4 hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you prepared a statement which shows the average earnings of the tugmen comparing 1919 with 1914?—(A.) Yes.

(*The statement was put in and marked H.39.)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: There is a typist's error here, my Lord. The figures for March to July, 1914, should read £2 19s. 6d. to £3 11s. 10d., not "and £3 11s. 10d."

Q. Is that a statement showing the minimum and the maximum earnings?—(A.) Yes, the minimum and the maximum of the masters, and as stated on this sheet.

Q. This table shows that in 1914 the earnings of the masters varied from £2 19s. 6d. to £3 11s. 10d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. At present for the same work the earnings vary from £11 14s. 1d. to £14 3s. 0d.?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. SCRUTTON: This is weekly, I suppose?—(A.) Yes.

Sir JOSEPH BROODBANK: It does not say so.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Yes, it should read "Average weekly earnings" at the top.

Q. The average earnings of the boys have gone up from 11s. in 1914 to from £2 14s. 3d. to £3 6s. per week in 1920?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is this increase accounted for by imposing upon this particular industry the 48-hour week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. The effect of the 48-hour week on these men has been, has it not, that they are on overtime pay for long periods when nothing is being done?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Is it correct to state that when a tug has finished a job and the master has been told that the next job will not be until a certain time, he remains upon overtime pay during the whole of the period between those times?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Does it happen that when the men are actually turned in and asleep they are being paid at the overtime rate?—(A.) It frequently does, week after week.

Q. Does it ever happen that the men are actually in their own homes and for that period are being paid overtime?—(A.) That also has occurred.

Q. And the effect of this has been, as your table shows, to bring their earnings up from somewhere about £3 a week to between £11 and £14 a week?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. And that is for the same work in both periods?—(A.) Yes, in both cases.

Q. With regard to work done on Sundays, supposing you bring a tug out to do one job on Sunday which may only last an hour or two, what have you to pay for that?—(A.) If they come out for only two hours they get two days' pay. In fact, if they only come out for one hour it amounts to the same thing: they get two days' pay.

Q. The men on a sea-going tug are paid the rates which are set down by the Maritime Board?—(A.) Yes.

* See Appendix No. 123.

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Q. Has one result of the application of the 48-hour week to tugmen been that you have the greatest difficulty in getting men for sea-going tugs?—(A.) We have the greatest difficulty in getting the tugmen to go to sea.

Q. Because of the very high wages which they earn in the dock?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is this now very popular work at Liverpool?—(A.) Very popular indeed. You could fill the tugs in the dock time and time again.

Q. Do the present rates, coupled with the conditions with regard to the 48-hour week, operate very harshly upon this particular work?—(A.) Yes. The price of towage has had to be increased in order to meet their wages.

Q. In your view, is there any ground for a further increase?—(A.) No, particularly since I think the men are very satisfied. I think they are getting more than they expected.

Q. Are your men permanent?—(A.) Yes. We have engineers who started with us as boys and have been there 30 years, some of them. They are all taken on by the week. It is a permanency altogether, so long as they behave themselves.

Q. Would the cost to the tugowners of conceding the 16s. demand be £33,000 per annum?—(A.) Yes, about £33,000 per annum.

Q. Would it involve an increase of from 5s. to 7s. 6d. per man per week?—(A.) If it is applied the same way as it has been done before.

Q. In addition, would the overtime demand which is made cost you £25,000 a year?—(A.) Yes.

Q. These rates which are now paid were conceded from time to time during the war?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Has the result been that no other worker in the docks at Liverpool is getting anything like the high earnings which these men are getting?—(A.) Yes, that is my opinion.

Q. I think that you did make some attempt to resist the 48-hour arrangement being applied to your industry?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Because you considered it inapplicable?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But you were forced to concede it?—(A.) We were forced to concede it, yes.

Q. Your towage charges have had to be increased to meet the additional payments which have been made?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What has been the result of that?—(A.) We do not do quite as much work. We have had to send boats away to other ports in order to find work for them.

Q. You have had to send boats away to other ports where less onerous conditions prevail?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And the result of that has been a reduction in the number of men employed at Liverpool?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. If a further burden is imposed upon you, will you have to reduce your work in Liverpool still further?—(A.) It looks very like it.

Q. Will that mean still greater reduction?—(A.) Further boats will be laid up and less employment will be found.

Q. These men are not like ordinary labourers, are they?—(A.) No. They have got good boats to live in. The tug boat is practically their home in a great many cases. They have forecables for the men and cabins for the masters, and galleys on board, and cooking utensils.

Q. And sleeping accommodation?—(A.) Yes, sleeping accommodation as well. As soon as a job is done they can go down and rest.

Q. Is the work arduous?—(A.) No, I do not think so. We have got mechanical appliances on board the tug for doing all the hard work that

there is to do, with the exception of the coal, of course.

Q. I am going to ask you about the coal. Do the firemen handle much coal?—(A.) About three tons per day—that is, in the 24 hours.

Q. Do the other members of the crew assist?—(A.) Not in firing the tug, no.

Q. Do they in dealing with the ashes?—(A.) In dealing with the ashes, yes, and sending the refuse ashore.

Q. One additional source of income to the tugmen is that they frequently share in salvage awards, do they not?—(A.) Yes, they have done, very considerably, but that is not included in the statement of wages. That comes over and above that.

Q. Is your view that rather than any increase being conceded to these men, the present conditions should be revised?—(A.) Yes. That last increase was an experimental one, taken for three months, and I think that they should be revised, with a reduction in view.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. Let me follow on the sheet "Procter 1"; where you say the masters got £2 19s. 6d. to £3 11s. 10d., were the masters paid commission then?—(A.) Yes, it is included in that £3 11s. 10d.

Q. How much is the commission in the second pair of figures, £11 14s. 1d. and £14 3s. 0d.? What is the proportion which is commission?—(A.) Of the £2 19s. 6d. to £3 11s. 10d.?

Q. What would be the proportion of that in comparison to the second item? How much commission did they get before the war, and how much do they get now in actual sums? That is what am I trying to get at,—(A.) The rate of commission is increased at the present moment from 2½ per cent. to 3 per cent. It was 2½ per cent. before the war, and now it is 3 per cent.

Q. A tug boatman is practically at your disposal 24 hours a day, is he not?—(A.) At the present time 9 hours.

Q. He cannot go away and leave his tug just at will, and all the rest of it; he has to be on duty, if he is not actually at work every minute?—(A.) That is ascertained every two or three hours, and sometimes more frequently; and they know during the day from 9 o'clock in the morning till 5 o'clock the hours they can go away, and they do go away.

Q. But he is not like an ordinary man who goes to work at 8 o'clock in the morning and finishes at 5 o'clock, and then is clear for the evening, is he?—(A.) No, of course, not; and he does not wheel trucks of cotton all day from 9 to 5 either.

Q. He does not?—(A.) No, he stands on board his tug, catches a heaving line, makes it fast, and then they tow for probably an hour, as I have shown. After he has made the hawser fast on the hook—and it is only a loop which he has to put over the hook—he has nothing more to do until he lets it go.

Q. It is a very nice job for one's health, is it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It is a sort of perennial picnic?—(A.) Yes, judging by the number of people who are seeking jobs they do enjoy it.

Q. I am glad that we have found one enjoyable occupation in dock life; it is very encouraging. Do you think that the wages which you were paying before the war were really satisfactory?—(A.) Yes, I do. They all appeared to be satisfied with what they got before the war.

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Q. But they did not have a 48-hour week then?—(A.) No.

Q. And they did not have the opportunities of going away, you said?—(A.) Yes, they did, just the same as they do now, but they are paid now when they are not working.

Q. But they had no regular sort of existence at all before the war; and do you suggest that for a man who was at your call all those hours, the wages in the first column given as the pre-war basis of wages were satisfactory, having regard to pre-war conditions?—(A.) Having regard to pre-war conditions, yes.

Q. You do?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you think that it would have been satisfactory to you as a standard of life on a weekly basis for all those hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I put it to you that if you are paying all this overtime in the second lot of figures, there must have been a lot of hours done for nothing in pre-war times.—(A.) Yes, and in those wages a good deal of overtime was provided, particularly in the last four years. Every time when an increase was granted they contended that they were working a good deal of overtime, so that that was one of the reasons why an increase was granted to them; but when it came to adjusting the 48 hours, they did not bring that into consideration at all; they forgot all about that.

Q. I want to keep on the pre-war figures for a moment. I put it to you on this question of the pre-war figures that if you are paying a lot of hours of overtime now, then in this pre-war scale of wages there must have been a large number of abnormal hours worked for nothing at all under ordinary conditions. Was not that so?—(A.) It may have been in the case probably of a trimmer or a fireman, but not with everybody else.

Q. When you reduced the hours to 48, how many hours did you argue they would have to be reduced to arrive at your figure?—(A.) I do not follow that.

Q. When you had to arrive at the 48-hour week, what did you tell the workmen's side would be the number of hours you estimated you would have to pay for on overtime having regard to your previous experience? What was the basis of your argument in resisting the 48 hours?—(A.) We thought we would have to pay about five hours a day overtime.

Q. And you based that calculation on five hours a day overtime on the average, on your previous experience?—(A.) About that.

Q. Taking the pre-war conditions it was a seven days week, was it not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. So that was 35 hours per week overtime on your own calculation, which the men did in pre-war days for nothing?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Having regard to those very bad conditions, in order to arrive at a fair comparison in the second column, ought we not to assume that 35 hours' pay ought to be added in the first column, seeing that the men did it for so many years for nothing?—(A.) I do not think they did it so many years for nothing.

Q. You have just admitted that in your calculation, in giving the 48-hour week, there were 35 hours which had to be accounted for?—(A.) When the 48-hour week was discussed, that was only last year; that was not in 1914.

Q. I am coming to that point; but you see in 1914 the 48-hour programme was prepared, and it was about to be launched, and at the request of the Government, in the interests of the country, the Transport Workers' Federation postponed their claim until after the war, which lasted nearly five years. So assuming there had been no war, do you not think it quite possible that the 48 hours

would have been achieved much earlier than it was?—(A.) It is impossible for me to say.

Q. But it is reasonable to assume that we would not have waited five years if there had not been a war?—(A.) I had no notification in 1914 that a 48-hour week was going to be applied to the tugs.

Q. There are a lot of things which you do not know overnight, but which you discover in the morning, you know?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. In the second column do you include Sunday work? Is this the total earnings of the man outside of salvage?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. So that really to arrive at the second column you cut the master out; the master gets commission, and I take it that mates do not get commission?—(A.) No, sailors and firemen do not get commission.

Q. So that the master must be looked upon as rather an exceptional person?—(A.) Along with the engineer.

Q. In comparison with the men?—(A.) Yes. The captain and the engineer almost stand on the same basis. They are the only two people who receive commission.

Q. Both of them receive commission?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But, taking the ordinary seamen, the figures are £5 9s. 8d. to £8 1s., considering that it includes overtime?—(A.) £5 9s. 8d. is mates.

Q. To £8 1s. Then we get £5 7s. 2d. to £6 19s. 9d., and so on downwards, cutting the engineer and the master out of our calculations for the moment, and having regard to the fact that it covers seven days, all hours including overtime, when they are asleep and when they are awake, and when they are at the theatre, and everywhere else, as your Counsel suggests, it does not seem an extraordinary sum, does it?—(A.) Compared with 1914, I think it shows a very good increase indeed.

Q. That is assuming that 1914 was a satisfactory condition, is not it?—(A.) Well, they were found satisfactory in 1914.

Q. I want to put one other question to you: What is your rate of profit now compared to 1914?—(A.) The same.

Q. In per cent.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is it in money compared with 1914?—(A.) The same.

Q. So if you got 10 per cent. in 1914, and 10 per cent. now, in actual Bradbury's, as they have been described, you only get the same number of Bradbury's?—(A.) No; you certainly get the same number of Bradbury's as you would sovereigns at 10 per cent.

Q. Would you?—(A.) I think so. If it were 10 per cent. then, and it is 10 per cent. now, the Bradbury is worth less, is not it?

Q. 10 per cent. on a higher figure may mean much more than 10 per cent. on a lower figure in 1914?—(A.) I do not know where the larger figure comes in.

Q. Do you seriously suggest that in number of pounds per annum of income the profit is only the same as in 1914 on towing?—(A.) Yes, I do.

Q. I am not going to suggest that you are wrong, but—

The CHAIRMAN: I think you are at cross purposes. Mr. Bevin is not asking about percentages. He is asking you about gross amount. I do not know that it matters to this case, but it is what he is after. Your gross amount representing 10 per cent. on a larger turnover would be so much more?—(A.) If we paid 10 per cent., as Mr. Bevin suggests, and we are paying 10 per cent. now the rate still remains the same, does it not?

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Q. Are you paying 10 per cent. on the capital of the company?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: You said salvage figures are excluded from this, did not you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It is not included here?—(A.) It is not included in those wages lists.

Q. I notice Counsel said that the condition of the 48-hour week was imposed upon you. That is to say, the men had to use some sort of persuasion of a strong kind to induce you to agree to the 48 hours?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Is not that rather usual in all wage cases. Is there an exception in the 48-hours case—in your experience as an employer?—(A.) All the other increases were imposed on us just the same.

Q. Is not it your experience, as an employer, that we seldom get anything without—well, fairly reasonable powerful persuasion?—(A.) Not in the case of tugs, because you have had it given without a demand from the men.

Q. Which lot was that?—(A.) Not during the war, of course.

Q. I would like you to give us that example, as an encouragement—when you gave it without asking for it.—(A.) Thank you.

Re-examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You said that in 1914 the conditions were found satisfactory?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Did you have any difficulty in obtaining men for this work?—(A.) No, not at those prices, we had not.

Q. I understand that now the conditions are found uncommonly satisfactory?—(A.) Uncommonly, yes. You can hardly get into the office in the morning for the crowds.

Q. It is hard for you to get into your office in the morning because of the crowds waiting?—(A.) Yes, asking for the job.

Mr. BEVIN: They must be barristers from the mobile battalion.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: They probably find it pays better.

Q. Mr. Bevin put it to you that a tugman is not like a man who goes to work at 9 and leaves at 5, and you agree, do you not?—(A.) I do agree; he is not like them. It is much easier for the tugman than the labourer who works nine hours a day.

Q. But yet conditions which are applicable to men who go to their work at a fixed time and leave their work at a fixed time have been applied to your trade?—(A.) They have.

Q. With regard to 1914, again, they were then classed as seamen, were they not?—(A.) Yes, I think they were, more or less. They considered themselves seamen then.

Q. And all provision is made on board, so that they can be accommodated when they cannot get home?—(A.) Yes, the same as all seamen; a little better in tugs than for ordinary seamen.

Q. It was suggested that the men cannot get away. You have told us that there is, on the average, two tugs per day. What happens when a tug gets to a dock and has finished its job. Do they telephone to you?—(A.) Yes, we have telephones all along the line of docks, and they telephone to us every hour or every two hours, as soon as a job is done, and want to know what is the next work on. If there is nothing for them to do, they are at liberty to go home to their dinner, if it happens to be dinner time, or go away to their tea, if it happens to be tea time in the afternoon. It is really a question of tides.

Q. They can go away?—(A.) Yes.

Q. When they telephone to you, you tell them when their next job will be?—(A.) Yes, and if it is during the period of their nine hours they are at liberty to go away, and do.

Q. So that if a man has finished his job at the end of the first three of his nine hours, and you tell him his next job is three hours forward, he can go away?—(A.) Yes; we leave them the liberty if they want it.

The CHAIRMAN: I want to get on the note something which appears from one of the schedules we have had; it is as to the wage of master tugmen; these before the war were £2 4s. 6d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And the following additions were made; in 1915, 10s. 0d. per week; in 1916, another 10s. 0d. per week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. On February 14, 1917, another 10s. 0d. a week?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. On September 15, 1917, 7s. 6d. per week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. On May 6, 1918, another 9s. 0d. per week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And on October 21, 1918, another 6s. 0d. per week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Now these are large and substantial, and pretty regular additions to the wages?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How did they come about; on whose instructions? Was there a Maritime Board?—(A.) No, it came about in connection with the Employers' Association and the National Union of Dock Labourers, the Port Association.

Q. That was an arrangement made between both parties?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That brings up their wages to £4 17s. 0d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I am asked to put this to you: you mentioned about the sum of £33,000 additional. Is that additional to all tug owners in the port?—(A.) All the tugs in Liverpool; there are about 68 tugs.

Q. And £25,000 in addition for overtime?—(A.) Yes, if it is applied in accordance with their demand or their programme.

Q. Is it the case that you made 10 per cent. pre-war?—(A.) No, it is not. Mr. Bevin put it to me 10 per cent., I understood. He said, "if it was 10 per cent. pre-war and 10 per cent. now, is not that your explanation?" I did not mention the 10 per cent. personally, it was Mr. Bevin.

Mr. BEVIN: How much was it?

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin wants to know how much it was pre-war?—(A.) I understood Mr. Bevin to say if it was 10 per cent. pre-war, what was it now? I said, "The same." Whatever it was pre-war, it remains the same now.

Q. Cannot you tell us what your dividend is now?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How much is it?—(A.) 8 per cent.

Q. And it was 8 per cent. then?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Apparently you are in the position that everybody connected with your business has been getting more and more; but the shareholder has not. Is not that so?—(A.) Our shareholders have not been getting it.

Q. Take the engineers on your tugs; they are skilled engineers, are they?—(A.) No, uncertificated.

Q. They would have to serve an apprenticeship to the engineering, would not they?—(A.) No, they serve no apprenticeship, only on the tugs; they are not certificated engineers.

Q. Then the masters, what are they?—(A.) They have no certificates either—uncertificated men.

Q. Where were they trained?—(A.) On the

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tugs, from boys up—on our own tugs most of them. Join as boys and brought up to masters on our own tugs.

(The witness withdrew.)

Mr. L. A. P. WARNER, *Sworn*.

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. You are the Assistant General Manager of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—(A.) I am.

Q. I think you have held that position since May, 1914?—(A.) Yes, I have.

Q. Before that, were you for 22 years in the service of the London and North-Western Railway Company?—(A.) Yes, I was.

Q. I think for some time you were Out-door Goods Manager for the Northern Division of the London and North-Western Railway Company?—(A.) Yes, I was for the last nine months.

Q. I think from May, 1917, to December, 1918, you were the Director of the Ports Branch of the Ministry of Shipping?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And a Member of the East and West Coast Diversion Committee?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Also a Member of the Port and Transit Executive Committee?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You have been deputed by the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to give the Court all the assistance you can in connection with this present Inquiry?—(A.) I have.

Q. The Mersey Docks Board regard themselves, do they not, as the custodian of the consumers of the North-West of England?—(A.) Yes, that is quite right, and they do all in their power to keep the costs on goods within reasonable limits.

Q. What is their attitude with regard to this particular matter of wages?—(A.) Under the present hours worked, and the output of the dock worker, no further increase in wages is possible unless it is added to the price of necessities to every consumer, but if a further and sufficient output per man can be secured, wages can be raised to the extent of that improvement without burden to the consumer.

Q. Have you prepared for the Court a series of statements which show the number of men in the employ of the Dock Board?—(A.) Yes, I have.

Q. Will you just hand those in to my Lord and the Court all together?

(*Documents H.40 handed in.)

(A.) I should like to add, my Lord, that in handing these in I have substituted, I hope with your permission, two statements for those which were handed in by Sir Alfred Booth, and that, I think, will be readily understood when I tell you why it was done; they are statements which concern some of the semi-skilled men employed by the Mersey Docks Board, on whose wages a recent award has been given by the Industrial Court. The award was dated January 29, and had only just come into effect on that date.

The CHAIRMAN: What classes of men?—(A.) They would be practically the semi-skilled mechanical trades. I have handed those in so as to bring their wages quite up to date.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am going to give your Lordship the facts in a few minutes.—(A.) It is the fourth statement in the list you have.

Q. The fourth statement gives a summary of all the labour, skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled, in the employment of the Board?—(A.) Yes, including the miscellaneous.

*See Appendices Nos. 124, 125, 126, 127, and 128.

Q. To-day, do you pay all those various classes of labour the local Trade Union rates applicable to them in the Mersey District?—(A.) Yes, where the work is comparable with the outside work.

Q. First of all, if you take the skilled labour mentioned on the second sheet of the fourth statement, the net wages per hour vary from 2s. 5d. down to 1s. 6d.?—(A.) Yes, that is right; those are the engineering trades as in opposition to the building trades.

Q. On the second page you get the building trades?—(A.) That is quite right.

Q. And you point out that to-day all those men are below the rates which are claimed under this present application?—(A.) Below or equal to. The building trade is 2s. 0d. for the skilled man, which is equal to the 8s. 0d. per half-day which is claimed.

Q. In your view, is that a most material point?—(A.) Yes, in my view it is a most material point, because the proposal is really to bring the unskilled men up to the rates which are paid to the skilled men.

Q. The same applies, does it not, to the building trade skilled labour. The rate to-day on your table is 2s. per hour, the rate claimed in this present application?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. Now, taking all your semi-skilled men which are shown on your statement, the rates vary there from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 8d.?—(A.) That is right.

Q. The largest number of men I noticed in any class is the 130 hydraulic men?—(A.) Yes, these men are employed in the warehouses looking after the hydraulic machinery.

Q. They receive 1s. 7d. per hour?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But for a warehouseman in this present claim the rate which is asked for is 2s. per hour?—(A.) That is quite right.

Q. In respect of this block of semi-skilled labour, have the rates been fixed following the various awards given in the engineering and ship-repairing trades?—(A.) Yes, in September, 1917, an agreement was arrived at with the Union that the rates of wages then obtaining should be the basis, and that for the future, after that date, the engineering and ship-repairing trades advances should be applied to these men. They also had the 12½ per cent. bonus.

Q. I think so recently as January 29 of this year an award has actually been made in their case by the Industrial Court?—(A.) Yes, that is quite right.

Q. I think you produce a copy of that award for the information of the Court, and it is included in your statement, is it not?—(A.) Yes, that is quite right.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will find in the statement a copy of an award made so recently as January 29 last by the Industrial Court in regard to this block of semi-skilled labour. It is the first printed document.

Q. Just to make the point how the wages of your men vary with the different trades in the Mersey district, would you just give my Lord the history of the claim which led to the award in the Industrial Court of the 29th January, 1920?—(A.) Yes, a claim was put forward really on behalf of the National Amalgamated Union of Enginemen and Firemen for an advance of 12s. a week, in spite of the fact that these men were receiving an advance of 5s. in accordance with the award of the engineers and ship-repairing trades which was dated September 8th, 1919, and that advance they actually received. The main reason underlying this demand was a recent building trade agreement which was entered into by the Liverpool, Birken-

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head and Wirral district Master Builders' Association, under which skilled men in the building trade, bricklayers, received 2s. an hour and the unskilled men, that is the bricklayers' labourers, were to receive 1s. 8d. per hour. In a big concern like the Mersey Dock Board we employ men practically of every trade, both in building and engineering, in one form or another, and this placed the semi-skilled men at a disadvantage compared with the unskilled men. In fact, in a great many cases the semi-skilled man was receiving less than the unskilled man. To quote an instance, the labourer who was actually engaged in our Gladstone Dock Works, new works, as a navy digging, was receiving more money than the man who was handling the crane which lowered the bucket to receive the spoil from the labourer. So it placed the semi-skilled men at a great disadvantage, and they brought forward the demand from the Union to get an equalising effect, or rather to put them in the same position that they were before as regards wages in respect of the difference in the wages.

Q. In respect of these semi-skilled men the Industrial Court readjusted the wages between the unskilled men below and the skilled men above by giving advances of 2s. to 4s. a week?—(A.) That is right; that appears from the award.

Q. Your point is that if once more the wages of the lower skilled men are altered it will react in precisely the same way through the semi-skilled men and the skilled men as before?—(A.) It is bound to.

Q. Now, turning to your statement which gives the list of your unskilled employees, that shows that the rates per hour in their case run up to 1s. 10d. per hour?—(A.) Yes, 1s. 10.8d., nearly 1s. 11d. per hour.

Q. Showing that they are all to a specified extent below the wages of the semi-skilled men in a regular gradation?—(A.) That is right.

Q. The application is expressed to apply to the permanent man?—(A.) That is right.

Q. And do you point out that the only class of men amongst your permanent men whose work is at all similar to that of the dock labourers are the men engaged by the Mersey Board as warehouse labourers?—(A.) Yes; I would not put it quite that way, I think.

Q. Just put it as you would put it with your knowledge of the port?—(A.) The way I should put it is this: that the men engaged in the warehouses of the Dock Board have by agreement with the National Union of Dock Labourers followed the various awards and the rates of wages given to dock labourers. Those are the only men in the Board's employ, numbering about 1,800, who do actually so follow those wages, rates and conditions. Perhaps I might explain further. We do employ a few men discharging the vessels—grain vessels—and those are practically the only dock labourers, pure and simple, in the ordinary sense of the term, we employ as dock labourers loading and discharging vessels.

Q. In your view, would it be a very serious thing if the wage system of all these men other than your dock labourers in your warehouses were to be put upon what I may call the casual labour basis?—(A.) It would be a most serious thing for us in the extent of wages to be paid and the consequent rise in the cost of living.

Q. Although you are not concerned to the same extent as you have mentioned in the actual work of loading and unloading vessels, you are concerned as a Board in the question of portage, because you have to fix the rates for master porters?—(A.) Yes, that is quite right; the master porters' rates, which are arrived at really on the basis of the actual

cost of handling the goods plus a percentage for establishment charges. I think Mr. Boase stated to the Court how they are arrived at—it is a question of observation, observing the various classes of goods dealt with and taking particulars of the number of men employed.

Q. I think you specially desire to direct his Lordship's attention to the exceedingly wide scope of the claim, which is to be extended, as paragraph 11 says, to all employees embraced in existing local agreements and whose unions are affiliated with the National Transport Federation and employed by the various authorities, employers and employers' associations, stated in the terms of application and being in receipt of the above application. The application shall provide for, among others, dock labourers, crane men, warehousemen and all others employed in docks and river traffic, manipulators of machinery and maintenance staffs employed by dock authorities and other employers engaged in the aforementioned class of labour and engaged in the various operations of transport?—(A.) Yes, that is quite right, and I think, my Lord, if you would not mind just glancing through the designations of these various men on that first statement which you have, you will see how the work they are engaged upon differs. They are practically every class of men that you can imagine, as I said before, in the engineering and building trade, together with warehousemen and a certain number of dock labourers.

Q. It may be right or it may be wrong that all those classes of men should follow dock labour conditions, but it is going to be a serious innovation, is it not, so far as Liverpool is concerned?—(A.) A very serious innovation. These wages have been really arrived at through many years: the different grades of wages and the differentiation in the wages have been arrived at by many years of experience. Supposing, for instance, that the dock labourers' wages were to go up to say, 15s. or 16s. a day, that means putting them as I said before, on a par with the skilled labourer or even above the skilled labourer. You can imagine what that will mean in a port like Liverpool, where there are large employers of skilled mechanical labour and semi-skilled mechanical labour, like Harland and Wolff and Cammell Laird. It means revolutionising the wages of all the trades in Liverpool, and when I say Liverpool it means the country, because it will spread very quickly from Liverpool to other ports and other places in the country.

Q. As you have pointed out, the Dock Board itself is applying the systems of wages and the wages awards applicable to the ship repairing and engineering industry to a very large number of their men?—(A.) Yes, so far as their semi-skilled men are concerned.

Q. Apparently the proposal is to put an end to that, and apply for the first time dock labour conditions?—(A.) That is right. In fact, what is really proposed is that you are going to wipe out the unskilled, wipe out the semi-skilled, and put all labour on a par.

Q. Just let us follow that out. Take, for example, the unskilled men which you give on your first statement. Their wages are different amounts per hour up to a maximum, it would appear, of about 1s. 8d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are the differentials which exist between those various classes of workmen the result of long years of experience?—(A.) Yes, they have been built up since time immemorial really.

The CHAIRMAN: Would you mind asking if he can put a general figure per hour? The skilled would be 2s., I gather?—(A.) Roughly. It has to be very roughly.

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Q. I know, subject to here and there a fluctuation. Then the semi-skilled.—(A.) The semi-skilled, I think, would work out between 1s. 7d. and 1s. 8d.

Q. I have marked it at 1s. 7d.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship is very close!—(A.) It is something of that nature.

The CHAIRMAN: And the unskilled?—(A.) In the unskilled I think the figure really is 1s. 5d., or a bit more than that, nearer 1s. 8d.

Q. At present they are levelled up. Semi-skilled and unskilled are pretty well levelled up, are not they?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: What you Lordship will find is that the range of the hourly rate of pay from maximum to minimum in respect of the unskilled first and semi-unskilled second overlap to a certain extent, but beyond the medium there is a considerable number of semi-skilled men enjoying considerably higher rates than the number on the other side of the medium of unskilled men, as your Lordship will see by glancing down the two sheets.

The CHAIRMAN: I just wanted something that would stick in the mind, a general idea of the rates.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Subject to my qualification, the statement of figures that Mr. Warner has given, I think, gives the bird's-eye view. The effect of the claim is to wipe out first of all the differentials between the different classes of the unskilled men?—(A.) That is right.

Q. Secondly, to wipe out all the differentials between the different classes of the semi-skilled men?—(A.) Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not want to interrupt, but I do not want misapprehension. If the workpeople are covered definitely by another agreement, governed by another trade, then in no such negotiation can the Transport Federation ask that this claim should apply, not in a single set of negotiations, and that is understood by the parties instructing Counsel for the other side. It was made perfectly clear to Sir Alfred Booth when the question was put to me at the first meeting. I do not want confusion, which would mislead the people in the docks through the Press.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Shorthand Reporter had better read that observation you have just made. (*Shorthand writer read the preceding remark of Mr. Bevin.*)

The CHAIRMAN: That is a very important statement, and most proper that you should make it, because it may relieve certain anxieties I was going to ask you this now. The witness gives an Award by the Industrial Court of the 29th January, 1920. Would that be upset or would it not? That is practically only the other day.

Mr. BEVIN: My answer to that is this: I do not know anything about this application at all; it is the first time I have seen it. Sir Alfred Booth, I think, used these words. If the men whose wages were influenced by the Award of the Committee on Production of the 2d. and the 1½d. per hour, such as lock-gate men, whose wages were adjusted, Mr. Warner, in relation to that which was given to the dockers—if those men came within that, or sections of them, I should say off-hand, "Yes, a portion of them," but I cannot read all this list through to decide right off-hand—it is too long. I think Mr. Warner will agree with me. But this other list deals with building

trades, engineering trades, and that kind of thing, where the man had been definitely allocated under an agreement, just as, if I may take an illustration, the railwaymen and ourselves; in the railway figures certain amounts have been allocated definitely to wages agreements, and certain amounts definitely to hours. There is a line of demarcation, which I think is well understood by the parties, which can easily be adjusted.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I should be perfectly content if the Court had got in their minds the enormously far-reaching effect of the claim. I will just point out in a moment how little the admission of Mr. Bevin would carry us. (*To the Witness*): You have got the case, Mr. Warner, of your floating-plant men?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are the rates of pay and conditions of work of your floating-plant men set out in the agreement which is included in your statement?—(A.) They are. There is a print attached.

Q. It is in the bundle of statements just put in. Is that an Agreement made on July 28, 1919, between the National Federation of Transport Workers, the Dock, Riverside, and General Workers' Union, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, the Amalgamated Society of Engine-men and Cranemen, and the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board?—(A.) It is.

Q. The men included in that agreement are employees, using the words of the claim, "embraced in existing local agreements, and whose Unions are affiliated with the National Transport Workers' Federation."—(A.) Quite.

Q. By that agreement, if one looked at Clause I, it is admitted that the ships comprising the Board's floating plant must be recognised as ships, and the men engaged thereon as seamen?—(A.) That is quite right.

Q. And, further down, that the hours of the crews of the floating cranes should be reduced from 50 to 47 per week?—(A.) That is quite right.

Q. These men would be brought in under the application?—(A.) I understood they would certainly, but on Mr. Bevin's explanation perhaps they will not.

Q. My friend, Mr. Bevin, says: "Yes, they would get a proportionate advance." That means they would come in under the application?—(A.) Yes, I understand that.

Q. What you desire to point out to the Court is this—using this floating-plant arrangement as an illustration—the disruptive effect upon labour conditions in Liverpool which this claim as presently worded would entail?—(A.) Yes. It embraces every class of man, so far as I can understand, employed by the Mersey Board. There are certain men who, Mr. Bevin states, are governed by other awards.

The CHAIRMAN: There will be some difficulty unless you gentlemen at the Bar can arrange it. I have done my best to clear up what it means, but it is a little complicated.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Quite so, my Lord. All that I am concerned with is this, to the best of my ability to ensure that the Court really appreciates the widespread effect of the claim.

The CHAIRMAN: You are quite within your rights.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to point this out, because again I do not want, through the Press, these very men to be upset and disturbed—that is

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the main thing I have in my mind—and to be misled in consequence. I want, first of all, to say that the claim was not written out for a Court of Inquiry; it was written out as a basis of negotiation, thinking it would be hammered out across a table, which is quite a different way of dealing with the claim than if it was going to be submitted to the Court. There is always in these industrial matters a certain amount of understanding between the parties which, if you try to interpret it in legal formula, leads to a lot of confusion. I make this offer publicly. I am quite prepared to sit down with Sir Lynden and his advisers and my advisers, and to come to a decision as to where the line of demarcation of maintenance men is to be drawn, and to prevent any disturbance at all, because it varies slightly from port to port. I am quite prepared to do that, and I am quite sure that once the principle of wages is decided, subject to any reservations that you may make, that the parties shall provide you with a schedule for your confirmation. It would not take the parties much more than an hour to agree as to exactly what the Court should deal with.

The CHAIRMAN: That is very satisfactory. I have no doubt Sir Lynden will receive it in the same spirit in which it is made. In the meantime, he is within his rights in pointing out that if there were a more rigorous construction applied in the sense that you are referring to, there would be certain consequences, in the witness's opinion, following. That is the length he goes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I want to say this. The proposition as just now made by Mr. Bevin is not to leave maintenance men to be dealt with as they have been dealt with in the past, but to endeavour to agree with him how far the innovation which he seeks to make should go, and at what line it should stop. That is the proposition. There are two distinct things.

Mr. WILLIAMS: May I ask you a question for the purposes of my illustration, Mr. Bevin. Is it your intention, and the intention of those you represent, that where men, although being members of your Federation, have been specifically dealt with under engineering, shipbuilding, or ordinary building trades awards, and those members are content to work under those Awards, although they are members of your Association, you are prepared to allow them to remain so under your awards?

Mr. BEVIN: That is exactly the position. I am not trying to make any innovation, but trying to carry out, to the best of my ability, the practice, with about one exception, which I made in the case that has been dealt with of the weighing men of the Clyde Harbour Trust, with Mr. Spencer in the box. I think that was about the only section of men in the country which would be affected by this decision, other than those who were affected by the decisions of the Awards in the 44-hour week, or arrangements rising out of the 44-hour week, just as this 47-hour week is a sequel to the 44-hour week, but varies the 44-hour week—a sort of compromise between a maritime board and the 44-hour week. But I do respectfully suggest to your Lordship and to both sides (because whatever the decision of this Court is I want to avoid confusion) that we have to live with the men after Counsel has finished with his brief, and it is rather different. I would rather sit down with the parties and try to arrive at exactly how far this thing should go in the manner I have indicated.

The CHAIRMAN: I think that is as far as we can

go to-day on this topic. It is really very far, because there is a spirit of accommodation shown on both sides, to give the Court hope that this thing will be cleared up articulately in a schedule. The general principle has been sketched, and you can clear that up articulately in a schedule by and by, I should hope. But meantime just go on as if you had no troubles at all, Sir Lynden. Mr. Bevin seems to treat poor Sir Lynden as if he represented one interest, whereas he is representing a vast variety of interests and handling it with his usual skill.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If I can rise to that height of imagination I will do my best. We have now brought out what is the most important point.

The CHAIRMAN: You have made your point quite clear.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There is a second point of principle which will have to be decided before any schedule could be prepared, and it is this. Is it really right that the wages of any section of permanent men should be based on the same basis as the wages of casual men?

The CHAIRMAN: You may take it that it is a thing for argument; you know the difference between that, because it has not to be proved as a matter of fact. It is a question of what, reasoning from all the probabilities, is likely to be a sensible conjecture as to the future. Upon that we will be delighted to hear you if you wish to be heard, but you need not keep this worthy Witness in the box to discuss that conjecture.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, my Lord, I am going to ask him this, as the Assistant General Manager of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board. (*To the Witness*): Is there any section, and if so what, of your permanent men whose conditions of employment and wages should not be based upon the conditions of employment and wages of casual men?—(A.) I think every section.

Q. Will you just tell my Lord why?—(A.) The reason is that these men, who are our permanent men, and work regularly for us, have their regular work, and a certain number of these men are on our established list, getting various privileges, such as holidays, uniform, sick pay, etc.

Q. Those are the grounds on which you say they should not be based on the same basis as the casual worker?—(A.) You cannot compare the two, really.

Q. There is superannuation also, is there not?—(A.) Yes, I mentioned that.

Q. I want to take you next to the question of registration, which is the second matter covered in this part of the Court's Inquiry. Is your Board in favour of a scheme of registration being applied to dock labour wherever possible?—(A.) Yes, I think so, generally speaking.

Q. Of course, as the Court know, at Liverpool the scheme has been in existence since 1911?—(A.) That is quite right.

Q. During the latter part of 1918 you were a member of the Central Advisory Port Labour Committee?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Sir Norman Hill was Chairman?—(A.) Yes, and the Committee was composed of employers and Union officials, including some members of your Court, and Mr. Sexton, who, I see, is not here, but Mr. Bevin was a member also.

Q. Was a scheme of registration worked out by that Committee?—(A.) A scheme of registration

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was worked out by that Committee, and a model scheme approved by the Ministry of Labour was circulated to all Port Labour Committees, in order that they might submit concrete proposals, if they could, to the next meeting of the Central Committee. I think we were unanimous at the meeting, as far as I can remember, in agreeing that it would not be possible to adopt one general scheme of registration to cover all ports, on account principally of the fluctuating class of trade which applied to many of the smaller ports and to the bigger ports.

Q. I think that scheme, under cover of an important letter signed by Sir Norman Hill, was sent out to the different ports!—(A.) That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Let me see Sir Norman Hill's letter. . . . Was not that given by Sir Alfred Booth?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, Sir Alfred Booth did not deal with that. I have a copy.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you the date of the letter?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: February 4, 1919.

The WITNESS: I can hand in a copy from here.

(*Document handed to the Court and marked H/40A.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Will you read that letter, because it is a very important letter.

Mr. BEVIN: I was a party to that letter, my Lord.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That does not detract from its importance, I am sure, Mr. Bevin.

Mr. BEVIN: No, but it does avoid the necessity of taking up time when we are agreed about a thing.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I want the Court to know about it, and I want the public to know about it, because it was suggested nothing whatever had been done.

The CHAIRMAN: It is better than discussion. We will just get through it. (*To the Witness*): Will you kindly read it?—(A.) "As Chairman of the Central Advisory (Port Labour) Committee, I wish to commend to the notice of each of the Port Labour Committees the attached notes, giving particulars of registration or tally schemes which have been introduced in some of the ports, and the suggested model scheme prepared by the Department, which is based on the schemes already in operation. The notes were prepared from reports sent in by some of the Committees. They should not be taken as a complete or final record of the scheme. In some cases particulars have not yet been obtained. It will be seen that the general effect of each of the schemes is to protect the port from an influx of unwanted labour, to safeguard the employment of genuine transport workers who left the port for military service, and to secure more regular work by the registered transport workers. These objects can be obtained only by some scheme under which the recognised transport workers are identified for employment, and outside casual labour can be admitted only when all recognised men are fully employed. With regard to the model scheme suggested by the Ministry of Labour, it is fully recognised that the requirements of each port need special treatment, and

* See Appendix No. 128.

that it is not possible to apply a uniform scheme to all the ports. The model scheme was prepared after considering the various schemes which have been introduced successfully in other ports, and it is circulated as a basis for discussion by Committees which have not yet prepared their own scheme, or wish to adapt their present scheme to the new conditions. It is not suggested that the system contained in the model scheme or the systems already in existence are complete or final. The model scheme is intended to provide only the machinery necessary for registration, and makes no reference to such further improvements as surplus stands, notice of labour requirements, clearing houses for payment of wages, or shelters. Once a registration scheme has been introduced, further improvements can be added. The administration of out-of-work donation and any further provision against employment must for the present be considered separately, although they are closely connected with any scheme of decasualisation. The schemes, of which particulars are given, and the suggested model scheme, provide only for the immediate need of some system of registration, and as such are commended to the attention of the Committees."

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Under cover of that letter a model scheme was sent out?—(A.) Yes, a copy of which I think you have, my Lord. I should like to draw attention, if I might, to paragraphs 6, 7 and 8. Shall I read them?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.—(A.) "All tallies to be withdrawn and re-issued at the end of each quarter to avoid fraudulent transfers. On re-issue of tallies registered numbers of transport workers to be changed. In the ports where the labour is definitely specialised into different classes, a special type of tally, that is round, square, triangular, etc., may be issued to each class. Cases of serious misbehaviour or failure to work should be reported to the Port Labour Committee, in order that the Committee may, if after investigation they think it necessary, cancel the registration, and withdraw the tally of the man complained of. Such reports will be signed by one of the principals of the firm (not the foreman) by whom the men had been employed, and it should be understood that it is expected that the reports will be made only after careful inquiry by the firm as to the facts and circumstances of each case."

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: In your view is a registration scheme, based on the broad principles laid down in Sir Norman Hill's model scheme, a proper way of approaching the subject?—(A.) Yes. I should like to say it is my personal opinion that that is so, and it seems to me that any other scheme must fail in some way or another. You cannot adopt one scheme for all ports. Your conditions are different in every port, and it is a thing which should be left really to the local Committees to work out when once they have been set up. It should begin from the bottom—that is, the local Committees should work out their scheme, and any differences, if there are any differences, should be submitted perhaps to a Central Port Labour Committee. I believe they are still constituted, I am not quite sure.

Q. In your opinion it is courting failure to attempt to impose a registration scheme from the top on each local Committee?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. And if there is to be success it must be evolved on careful consideration of local circumstances by the local Committee?—(A.) That is right.

Q. In regard to the maintenance of port labour

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unemployed, in your view, too, must that depend very largely upon the nature of the local scheme of registration?—(A.) Absolutely; it must depend on it.

Q. Must that be evolved in each port according to the local circumstances of that port by the local Committees?—(A.) I can see no other way in which it could be done.

Q. Owing to the great disparity of conditions one port with another?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There are one or two points which have been raised which I want to get your evidence upon. A question has been raised about congestion in the port of Liverpool. In point of fact, is your congestion, as has been suggested, on the quays?—(A.) No. The congestion really takes place in this way. Our Traffic Manager and his assistant have very strict instructions that no vessel is to be allowed to discharge on a congested quay, and no vessel can commence discharging until permission has been given by our Traffic Manager to so do. The consequence of that, of course, is that the cargo gets blocked back on to the ships, and you keep the ships waiting, but you do not get the congestion on the quays. In that way you get a freer discharge of the vessel when she actually comes alongside for discharge.

The CHAIRMAN: What happens to the vessels?—(A.) She has to wait until the quay is ready. It is a quicker discharge because you cannot discharge a vessel quickly on to an already congested quay. You get into trouble with your consignees, and you get your cargo mixed up between one vessel and another. It would make confusion worse confounded if they were allowed to come in just as they liked.

Q. By allowing each ship to unload as and when it came in you would so congest the quays as to make it impossible to get the traffic through for anybody?—(A.) You would be blocked up altogether.

Q. By keeping the ship away from the quay until there is proper room on the quay for the cargo to be unloaded and to be distributed, you secure proper dispatch for such cargo as is in fact unloaded?—(A.) That is right.

Q. Has that been the policy of Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Some questions have been raised about canteens, and you have a map and a list of the canteens which have been erected in Liverpool, for the information of my Lord?—(A.) I have.

The CHAIRMAN: Have the Joint Committee supervised these operations?—(A.) These really started under the Liquor Control Board, during the war. They came down—Mr. Sexton also accompanied us round—and we examined the whole of the dock estate with a view to seeing where extra canteens or additions to existing canteens should be placed. Sir George Newman, a member of the Liquor Control Board, took a great interest in the matter. I went round with him several times.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Would you show my Lord a map indicating the number and position of all these various canteens. (*Map handed to his Lordship.) They are shown marked in dark blue upon that plan, are they not?—(A.) Yes. The canteens on the actual dock estate, which is coloured brown, are shown marked in blue. The red figures outside are refreshment houses and public-houses, licensed houses, on the dock road, just across the road. I have endeavoured to give you in that *type-written return the approximate seating accommodation in these various refreshment rooms, but I

* Not printed.

have refrained from doing so as regards the public-houses because I found it very difficult to get it. I could not give you any information which would be really correct. You will notice, in looking at the map, my Lord, how restricted the land space is. We had very great difficulty in fitting in even the five additional canteens which were put up at the request really of the Liquor Control Board. In connection with those the shipowners using the port subscribed themselves, and produced the capital, for setting up these canteens. My Board gave the ground free of rent for the period of the war, and these canteens—there are five of them in Liverpool and one in Birkenhead—were manned by the Y.M.C.A. These canteens are now handed over to the Y.M.C.A., and are being worked by them since the determination of the war.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My friend, Mr. Bevin, tells me that he does not think this is on the point of wages, but I would only point out this. Of course, all this was opened by Mr. Bevin, and put upon us, the suggestion being that we had not done anything that we ought to have done. So we must put the matter right.

The CHAIRMAN: Oh, yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I only want one figure. What would be the cost to the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board of the Claim?—(A.) Supposing it ran through all the classes of workmen, it would cost about £425,000 additional in wages exclusive of overtime.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. In that figure of £425,000, if there are some grades which have been included in this list which you have submitted, which after examination ought not to be included, that would materially reduce that figure?—(A.) Yes, provided that the men did not apply for an increase consequent on the dockers' increase.

Q. You have brought in the influence upon Harland and Wolff and all the other people. Surely you are aware that the engineering trades' wages for the whole country are at the present moment the subject of negotiation?—(A.) I understand they are.

Q. Is it quite fair to take a comparison of existing wages when you know that there are large claims for wages which are to become the basis of the future wages of these skilled men. You say in your Statement the wages of the skilled men at the moment are 2s. an hour?—(A.) That is for the building trades.

Q. You know that those wages are in the process of change?—(A.) I do not think the building trades are. The building trades' wages have been settled up till May as far as I know. I think in May the full blast of the building trade comes in.

Q. That is just what I had in my mind. It is 2s. an hour now till May?—(A.) No, I think you mistake me. Liverpool has been a bit ahead of the general building trade. The agreement which the Liverpool, Birkenhead and Wirral districts came to was ahead of the general building trade.

Q. Have not all these trades been settled by the respective associations and their workpeople irrespective of one another all the way along?—(A.) Yes, I think they have to some extent, but I wanted to point out how these various trades must bear upon a big establishment like a big dock authority where you have every trade practically employed.

Q. Do not you agree that if you force us into the position that you must not give a docker anything because it is going to have an influence on somebody else, that is going to lead to a state of

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affairs in this country which, as I have put to other people in your position, must mean ultimately a lining up of labour and a lining up of capital, like two armies, and fighting the thing out?—(A.) Give us output, Mr. Bevin.

Q. I am asking you a question on the procedure of negotiations. If we cannot sit down in the textile trade, or the steel trade, or the engineering trade, or the dock industry and argue out our differences, and settle on the merits of our own claims irrespective of other trades—or, in other words, if every employer is saying what you say to-day (and they are); every association we go to say, "We will not settle because it will interfere with someone else"—are not you wise enough to see that that is going to lead to a position in this country which means the lining up of labour against the lining up of capital and a fight to a finish?—(A.) I do not think so. I think it is only an increase of the vicious circle if we are going on as we are to-day.

Q. Let us go to the cost. You have had 20, 30, 40 ships at a time waiting for berths in Liverpool?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Those ships would be worth anything from £300 to £500 a day as a moderate estimate, would they not?—(A.) They might be.

Q. If we can clear the quays, or if, to put it in another way—you read probably Lord Devonport's evidence the other day, in which he said that the consumption of the people was down by 30 per cent.—(A.) I did not see that in his evidence. I have not seen the full print of his evidence. I will take it from you.

Q. I think that was the figure. If the consumption of your workpeople is down 30 per cent.—

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Meat only.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not mind whether it is meat or anything else. If meat is down bread is not up. There is no ratio at the moment which compensates one article for another. I think that can be accepted. (*To the Witness.*) If the consumption of the people is down compared with pre-war anything, which I think will be admitted in dock land was already low, can you expect output until you have got that physical energy put right?—(A.) I do not suppose you can, but are you going the right way to get the physical energy put right?

Q. I think it is a natural assumption that, if we are to hold out and maintain our standing, we must put the fuel in if we are going to get it out?—(A.) I agree with you. Are you putting the fuel in in this application?

Q. Not until we get the 16s. to buy the fuel.—(A.) But what happens to the fuel? Does not the fuel go up correspondingly?

Q. I am suggesting that it need not. You yourself say it need not if you can get output. That is what you say.

The CHAIRMAN: The witness has committed himself to that, and very properly.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to give you your output, but I want to get the human machine in a physical condition to give the output.—(A.) Are you going to guarantee the output?

Q. I can no more guarantee the output at this stage than you can guarantee me the physical machine. I am not responsible for the physical deterioration of our people. That is my point. That is what I am trying to get at, Mr. Warner. Let me put it in another way; if we are both

agreed that output is necessary, and human energy to give the output is necessary, cannot the trade unions sit down to the question of organisation to give output with moral confidence when they know that the wherewithal to get the fuel to give the energy is obtainable?—(A.) I grant you, if it can be obtained in the way you are endeavouring to get it now; that is my trouble the whole way through.

Q. Then let us get to the next point. You will not hold the Trade Unions responsible for lack of output, will you? We are not in control of a single dock, of a single workman, of a single condition of employment other than the regulation of wages, are we? We are not admitted into management at all anywhere, are we?—(A.) I would not agree with you. I think you are.

Q. Where are we?—(A.) What about the Port of London?

Q. On the Port of London we have two representatives out of about twenty or more. Then there is the inner ring?—(A.) I do not know anything about that.

Q. Which decides everything before the labour representatives see it, I think?—(A.) I am not on the Port of London Authority.

Q. That is what the labour representatives tell me. Apart from the actual dock authority, in the actual employment of the men, in the organisation of the men, in suggesting improvement of method or anything, the Trade Union has no status at all, has it?—(A.) Yes, in Liverpool on the Dock Labour Joint Committee.

Q. I put it to you that the Joint Committee does not meet sufficiently frequently to be made an avenue to any very great extent for considering problems other than wages and mere conditions of improvement. Managerially it has really had no power or influence?—(A.) What do you mean by "managerially"?

Q. Supposing I saw that Mr. Warner was making rather a muck of things, and I wanted to raise it on the Joint Committee, it would be ruled out of order, would it not?—(A.) I should rather doubt it.

Q. There are other places where I have been able to, but not on the Joint Committee. Do not you think that if there is to be output it is impossible to get that output on pre-war conditions and methods?—(A.) I agree, and you have not got pre-war conditions and methods to-day.

Q. You do not want to return to them, do you?—(A.) Some I should like to, some I would not like to.

Q. But the old method of the beer money, the old method of the economic fear, is revolting to me as a condition of employment?—(A.) Remember I am not an employer of dock labour in Liverpool.

Q. But you have a lot of experience?—(A.) I understand the beer money question. No, I do not want to revert to that.

Q. Neither do you want to return to the man keeping on the trot because he is afraid he is going to be sent to the office as soon as he stops to get his money. You do not want to return to that?—(A.) We might get output, might we not?

Q. But it is not a good method of getting output?—(A.) Quite right.

Q. You want to get self-control and discipline of the men from methods other than fear, do you not?—(A.) I quite agree.

Q. Then I want to put this to you. If there were a body of men with very wide powers to take into consideration all these problems, do not you think by labour gaining a status on the managerial side, as well as carrying out the requests your Counsel made, we should be merely, to use a

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Trade Union term, a compulsory weapon to do what you cannot do by economic fear. Do not you think if we enter into the managerial side we may achieve better results in industry than has hitherto been accomplished?—(A.) Are you speaking to me as Assistant General Manager of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board in Liverpool?

Q. I do not know that I was. I was rather speaking to you as a man who has a very wide experience in port work both in Government departments and, I think, as a citizen who really wants to see some improvement. I was not speaking to you so much in your official capacity.—(A.) If you speak to me in my official capacity it really does not obtain so far as Liverpool is concerned with the dock labour, because we do not employ them; we employ a very small number of men.

The CHAIRMAN: We have got hold of Mr. Warner, and he is speaking to you as Mr. Warner with all good will and no ill-feeling.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: It has been remarked that you are speaking for the Mersey Board. Please understand that the question is put to you, you being there with all your capacities?—(A.) My own personal feeling is that they would be of assistance in some respects, but I do not think that they would be of great assistance in the principal work which the Port Authorities really have to undertake, which is finance to a very large extent, and the general questions of management.

Mr. BEVIN: In your public experience with the Government during the war did not you find that the labour men were able to contribute in actual organisation and detail of organisation, to assist in the prosecution of the war equal to others who were called to the assistance of the State?—(A.) Certainly, some of them.

Q. There were some inefficients from the other side, were there not?—(A.) Quite, I agree with you.

Q. Then the whole question of the 16s. a day reduces itself to this, does it not? You would not deny, I take it, on the question of the actual amount of money, that it would not give a man too much to live a decent citizen life, £4 8s. a week, would you?—(A.) It is so awfully difficult for me to judge that; it is really very very difficult to judge.

Q. Measured by your own standard, it would not be too much, would it?—(A.) I have lived on a good deal less myself.

Q. Under strenuous conditions of youth, probably?—(A.) Yes. You and I have both done it, I expect.

Q. Assuming it is a reasonable sum, it reduces itself down to whether the industry can be organised so as to prevent those ships laying in the river, to prevent congestion on the quays, or in the sheds, or laying sheds, and so to arrange discharge as to give you per ton per hour near about the pre-war output. Providing that is done you think that this sum can be reasonably made?—(A.) Providing the whole of the distribution and transport is revolutionised from what it is to-day.

Q. But workmen ought not to be asked to suffer while others are preventing revolutionising the transport.—(A.) You are asking me a question. The things must interlock; you cannot help it, and you know it as well as I do, I think.

Q. I put the question to a Witness from Liverpool this morning, to Mr. Pritchard, that even on the coastal trade, if railway rates were fixed per ton per mile instead of the competitive rates

between port and port, the coastal trade could very easily be developed, which would materially reduce the delay to the ocean-going ship. He answered "Yes."

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I do not think he did answer "Yes."

Mr. BEVIN: I am speaking from memory.

The WITNESS: I did not hear it, but, speaking on this particular point, coastwise traffic is most important. It is the most important distributing traffic next, perhaps, to the railways. I think perhaps the railways will come first; coastwise, at any rate, will come second; and until we get the coastwise services reinstated, and the railways working as they used to pre-war, I am afraid we are not going to get output, which we all wish to obtain. That is my opinion.

Re-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSETY.

Q. Mr. Bevin has put to you some questions on comparing wages in one trade with wages in another trade. Have you found, in your experience in Liverpool, that when an increase of wage is given to one trade, it forms the basis for a claim for a similar increase in another trade?—(A.) I gave the Court an instance early on, I think, with regard to that, and that was where the building trade obtained an increase, and the men engaged in the engineering and ship-repairing trade applied for an advance in their wages in order that they might make up the difference in the rate.

Q. Therefore, asking you to refrain from comparing wages for dock labour with wages in other industries is asking you to do something which the men themselves have not done in the past?—(A.) And would not do in the future, as far as one can judge.

Q. This claim, you know, has been put forward as the claim for a fuller life?—(A.) Yes.

Q. All the commodities which come through a great port like Liverpool must necessarily bear their share of the contribution towards a fuller life for dock workers?—(A.) Quite.

Q. That means increased cost to the consumers who buy those commodities, does it not?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. Therefore, if you translate it down to fundamental facts, it means that the consumers contribute towards the fuller life?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is your view this, that as that is really so, the output should be secured, so that that burden is not laid upon the consumers, but is secured by the increased output?—(A.) That is right.

Q. Is that your position?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you are not here to endeavour to restrict the wages of dock labour?—(A.) No, not to any extent.

Q. So far as you have to pay the wages of dock labour, you raise your rates, and you pass it on to the public?—(A.) Absolutely.

Q. But you point out, as a Board, a Trustee for the consumers in the north-west of England, that the fuller life should be secured by increased output as a contribution?—(A.) That is right. As a Board we can make no profit, and as a Board we have to pass on any increase in wages to the consumer.

Q. You point out that of recent years increases of wages have not resulted in increased output, but in reduced output?—(A.) That is right.

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The CHAIRMAN: You mentioned about the congestion, what I call the land congestion, having been avoided by the simple device of declining to berth vessels unless there were facilities for their proper and prompt despatch?—(A.) That is right.

Q. What is the effect with regard to your finances of being compelled to keep ships afloat instead of giving them a prompt berth?—(A.) Very serious effects indeed.

Q. Just explain that.—(A.) It means this, that the vessels will remain longer in port, will not turn round and come back to your port again so quickly. Therefore you are robbed, if I may so put it, of your dues on goods, and your tonnage rates on the vessels, which you would obtain if the vessels had been turned round and came into your port again. The main object in a port is to turn the vessel round as quickly as possible in order to make room for succeeding vessels.

Q. Why have you not been able to do that?—(A.) On account generally of the breakdown, if I may so call it, of the transport facilities, and the reduction in the coastwise service. The railways are taking their goods slower. It is a very long chain; it goes right away back to the man who eventually has to take delivery of the traffic in the up-country district.

Q. Nobody is blaming you for saying that if you had better output that would have the result of letting the consumers get more value ultimately for their money-wage?—(A.) That is right.

Q. The very same thing applies to a more businesslike arrangement of the facilities for transport, so as to avoid that extremely heavy, and, let us hope, unnecessary congestion afloat which you have referred to.—(A.) Quite.

Q. So that the output is one element, but all that business disorganisation arising from causes with which the workmen are not concerned is another element?—(A.) Arising out of the war.

Q. That is quite fair. Can you give us any hope about that?—(A.) I only wish I could.

Q. That lies at the door of a good many people, does not it?—(A.) I agree with you, my Lord, and I have my own personal views on it. My personal views are really these, that the sooner Government control in general is done away with the quicker we shall come back in this country to increased and better transport; you will get your railways working in competition again, anxious to get your traffic again; you will get your coastwise people back into their own trades, and you will generally have a healthy competition.

Q. And the abolition of this restriction upon freedom of transaction in this country by reason of Government control would directly benefit the consuming public as a whole?—(A.) I feel it would. You might have trouble to begin with; you would have increased prices to begin with, I think, but I think they would very soon find their level.

Q. As the ports resumed their normal condition you would have all the tendency to increase the value of money.—(A.) Quite. May I give an example, my Lord.

Q. Certainly.—(A.) I have got a little Statement here showing the number and net register tonnage of cargo vessels using the Liverpool Docks for six months ending the 1st of January, 1914 and 1920, respectively. In 1914, for the six months 2,111 vessels used the docks, with a net register tonnage of 6,387,000 tons. In 1920, for the same six months, we had 1,527 vessels.

Q. A decrease of 600?—(A.) A decrease of 600—and a decrease practically of two million tons in net register tonnage. It gives it you very simply. I did not get out the cargo tonnage, because I

could not compare our figures; I could not give a good comparison; but the net register tonnage will give it you, I think.

Q. So really there is nothing either conjectural or unsubstantial in that view, that the congestion afloat arising from the public causes which you have referred to, apart from the workmen altogether, is such as to impose a serious burden upon our people?—(A.) I think so, without doubt.

Q. And a serious restriction of the prosperity of our ports?—(A.) Yes.

Q. There are one or two things I want to ask you about the labour representation. Had I the pleasure of seeing you when I was in Liverpool?—(A.) No, I was away.

Q. I went down and saw, along with our friend Mr. Gosling, one of these Y.M.C.A. Canteens. How did the Y.M.C.A. get in there?—(A.) I am not quite certain, but I rather believe they offered to work them.

Q. They must have seen the social trouble by reason of the absence of it?—(A.) It was nothing to do with the Y.M.C.A. in that way. It was the Liquor Control Board who originated them. Lord D'Abernon came down with Sir George Newman.

Q. You will not mind my saying that, having seen one or two of these places with my own eyes, I think there is still room for a good deal of improvement?—(A.) They are not mine, my Lord; they are entirely worked by the Y.M.C.A.

Q. They are just one of the things, because the Port of Liverpool Authority has granted the site for them, which inclines me to say that there may be something in the idea of a little further working man representation upon the governing body.—(A.) I would like you to understand this, my Lord. First of all, there is a Witness, who I think is coming after me, who is prepared to talk on labour representation generally for all the ports. He is the convenor of the various Dock Authorities' Associations. But there is this point, which perhaps you would like to have in your mind, and that is that as far as the Dock Board are concerned, our door is always open to any Union official accompanied by our own men or unaccompanied by our own men at any time. They come in to see me regularly. In fact, I had as many as three last Friday.

Q. In short Mr. Warner, am I right in saying that, if there was the confidence in a much greater degree between the employers and the employed, whether they be stevedores or port authorities on the one hand, or this class or that class of labour on the other, you would think that would reflect upon the question of output also?—(A.) One would hope it would.

Q. We must perhaps leave it at that.—(A.) I hope it would.

Q. Of course, if the sound economic view gets right into the heads of the working men—namely, that by increasing the output they are helping their own budget, that would be a help.—(A.) That is the point.

Q. That would help it, but mark you this; you would not penalise the working man by bringing down his wages accordingly, would you?—(A.) I am not proposing to.

Q. I gather that what you want is this. You are pretty much like Lord Devonport. It is not 1s. here or 1s. there; it is output you want?—(A.) Output we want. We all want the same thing, and the country wants it.

(The Witness withdrew.)

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning at half-past ten.)

EIGHTEENTH DAY.

Tuesday, March 9th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON)

Mr. G. H. INCE)

Secretaries.

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, following out your Lordship's suggestion, the Committee representing the Port Labour Employers and Mr. Bevin met last night, and I am glad to say that we have satisfactorily adjusted the question of the men engaged in the general cargo ports upon coal, either bunker or export. The arrangement is this: It has been arranged that the rates of wages and conditions of employment so far as they come within the application before the present Court of Inquiry in relation to men engaged on coaling ships, either bunker or export, in general cargo ports which come within the scope of the inquiry, should be dealt with by the Court of Inquiry without prejudice to the men thereafter proceeding with the whole or part of their application dated February 4, 1920. I think that is a happy solution of the difficulty—it was not a small difficulty—which apart from this arrangement would confront your Lordship's Court. I think Mr. Bevin agrees.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes. The whole thing becomes consequential now really, does it not?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

Mr. BEVIN: That is really what it means.

The CHAIRMAN: I am asked to mention now that the maintenance men are in the application.

Mr. BEVIN: This is coalmen.

The CHAIRMAN: Has there been any arrangement with regard to the maintenance men?

Mr. BEVIN: We did not discuss that.

The CHAIRMAN: Then you might perhaps remember that there were some clean-cut categories, as I might express it, in which there were some definite working arrangements crystallised in agreements. Those, I understand, are still to go on and to be respected, and not to be included in our award. Is that how it stands? You remember the interposition by Mr. Williams yesterday, which secured the assent, I think, of both parties.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am not sure, speaking for myself, that it secured my assent, but I think there ought to be no difficulty. I can put in two minutes the position. An application in precisely the same terms as this application has been presented on two occasions in the past as the basis of a national claim, before the Committee on Production in the first case, and before the Interim Court of Arbitration in the second case. They went very carefully into it, and they arranged a dividing line. That is the dividing line to-day, and my submission is that that dividing line ought to stand for the future.

The CHAIRMAN: That seems to be right enough, but we would like it to be intimated by both parties that you have settled that, and perhaps you would be good enough to address yourselves to that problem. It seems to be capable of an easy and quick solution. However, we will not interpose now.

Mr. BEVIN: My only point upon that is this: I quite agree with Sir Lynden that where the line was drawn by the Court of Arbitration, with one or two exceptions and just a few words, I think, agreed between us, would cover it. I would be

prepared to refer the transference of any set of men from one agreement to another for the sake of smooth working to the parties, after the Court of Inquiry is completed, rather than trying to set it out in the report, and I am prepared to meet Sir Lynden during the adjournment and see if we can arrange some words which express what we both mean, I think.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I should be very pleased to meet Mr. Bevin and discuss that matter, but I would just point out to your Lordship that the whole thing has been disposed of by the Committee on Production in really half a dozen lines, and these are the words: "This Award"—and it was made in respect of a precisely similar claim, that is to say similar in respect of the classes of persons whom the application in terms sought to cover—"does not apply to classes of workpeople whose wages have been regulated by the movements in the wages of men of a similar class employed in trades other than dock labour, nor does it apply to classes whose wages have been dealt with by award or by agreement on the basis of advances given to trades other than dock labour." That has been interpreted and carried into practice, and represents a well-understood line of demarcation to-day.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps you would be able just to enable us in our report to the Minister to make reference to that, and to say, if this be your wish, that the parties desire that that arrangement should continue to be respected. That would be sufficient, would it not?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think so.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: However, Mr. Bevin and I will talk about that later, and see if we cannot arrange a precise form of words.

The CHAIRMAN: Then, Mr. Guedalla, I think you have the field.

Mr. GUEDALLA: If your Lordship pleases.

Sir ARTHUR GOLDFINCH, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. GUEDALLA.

Q. What is your official position, and what more particularly are your duties with regard to wool? —(A.) I have been engaged first under the War Office and then under the Ministry of Munitions for three years as Director of Raw Materials and Director-General of Raw Materials, and amongst other duties I have been charged with superintending the movement of the purchases of Australian and New Zealand wool by the Government during the past three years. I have been responsible for keeping a note of the stocks at every point, both in Australia and New Zealand, and in every European country, and ordering forward the wool and delivering it to the best advantage, according to the requirements of the various countries concerned.

Q. Has your attention been called to a statement made in this Court on the fifth day by Sir Alfred Booth, which, if your Lordship pleases, I will read: "(Q.) This slower turn round is due

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partly to the reduction of hours?—(A.) Partly, and partly to the less efficiency of work, and partly to the extraordinary vagaries of the Government trading that we have got in the ports, which is blocking the ports.” Then a member of the Court interposed and asked the Witness: “With regard to trucks, do you mean?—(A.) Trucks and other things.” Then my learned friend Mr. Bruce Thomas asked: “Will you just explain what you mean by the Government vagaries?—(A.) The Government in trade is not regulated by the ordinary commercial considerations which apply to the private trader. They can bring in wool to London months before anybody wants it, and block up the whole port with it. If any commercial trader did what the Government have done in wool they would have been ruined.” Your attention has been called to that statement?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you any statement to make upon it?—(A.) Yes. As far as regards wool, I would like to traverse it from the first word until the last. So far from not being actuated by the same motives as traders, the control of Government wool has been carried on from the very first for the past three years under the control of commercial men. Nobody but commercial men have been concerned in the matter. I myself have spent the whole of my life in business until I took up this war service, and we have been engaged, myself and my colleagues, in watching the movements of wool with the most anxious desire to serve the interests of the country. We have had all the figures before us, not only every week but every day, and I think we can claim, and I think we can prove, that we have foreseen the requirements of this country and of Europe, and have provided for them beforehand; and so far as the extremely difficult war circumstances would allow, we have carried out that work efficiently. If any mistakes have been made it certainly has not been for want of care, and it has not been for want of conscientious regard for every interest that a trader would look after. As for any trader being ruined, I think any trader would be glad to be ruined in exactly the same degree as the Government would be ruined by these wool operations, which have been very carefully planned and have been carried to a very successful conclusion.

Q. Now I want to come to the narrower matter of the congestion of the Port of London. As to that, has your attention been called to certain statements in evidence before this Court by Lord Devonport on the fourteenth day? I am afraid I have not the print, so that I cannot give his Lordship the page, but the passage to which I wish to refer is this answer by Lord Devonport: “The absolute cause of the congestion proceeds in the practice of the Government in arranging or permitting the arrival of goods in what I may call huge lumps.” Then later on Lord Devonport went on to specify particularly the case of wool.

The CHAIRMAN: It is a pity that you have not the reference to this.

Mr. GUEDALLA: I will endeavour to find it for your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: I have a passage upon page 10 of the fourteenth day.

Mr. GUEDALLA: I was coming to that. The passage which I have just read is on page 9, in column 2, and the passage I was going to read is on page 10, in column 2.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you not kindly begin at

the beginning and give us the passage you are referring to on page 9?

Mr. GUEDALLA: If your Lordship pleases: “(Q.) I want to pass now to another point; considerable question has been raised about the existence of congestion in the Port of London. I think that is a matter on which you may be able to assist the Court. Would you, perhaps, tell the Court in your own words what are the present causes of the existing congestion?—(A.) The absolute cause of the congestion proceeds in the practice of the Government in arranging or permitting the arrival of goods in what I may call huge lumps.” Then the remainder of the answer deals with food, with which I am not concerned to deal. On page 10, in column 2, about half-way down, just after your Lordship had interposed, there is this passage: “(Q.) Just go on, please.—(A.) I come to wool. Wool has been one of the prime causes of congestion. In 1919 there were 2,000,000 bales of wool shipped to London for sale or allocation against about 800,000 bales pre-war. The stock on hand at the end of June last year, 1919, that was the high-water mark of congestion, was nearly 600,000 bales, and that represented 250,000 bales more than we had agreed with the Government to accommodate. I may say this, and this is put in no disparagement, but it is a fact that the Government write and ask us what quantity we can take, and we strain our possible accommodation to the utmost point, and tell them such-and-such a quantity. That has no effect when the time comes for bundling the stuff in. They totally disregard what we have said as regards quantity, they hurl this thing at the docks, and the congestion ensues. That happened with regard to wool.” Then his Lordship went on and gave some picturesque details with which I am not concerned. What do you say generally, first as to that evidence given by Lord Devonport on congestion?—(A.) That it conveys an absolutely false picture of the comparison between the year 1919 and pre-war years, or any normal year. There is no relation between the facts and the statement made by Lord Devonport.

Q. Let us take first the figure given by Lord Devonport for the year 1919. That, in his evidence, is 2,000,000 bales shipped to London for sale or allocation. At the beginning of 1919, I think the problem which faced your department was the problem of re-stocking allied Europe—Western Europe—with Australasian wool?—(A.) That is the case. France and Belgium had been suffering from an absolute famine in wool, and in England, too, the imports of wool had been about one-half of the quantities of any preceding years. There was very great scarcity of wool in England and an absolute famine in France and Belgium, and it was our problem to endeavour as rapidly as possible to bring about the re-establishment of normal conditions. There was a great surplus of wool in Australia and New Zealand, and a very great deficiency of wool in Europe.

Q. I think, also, your department sought to re-instate London in its position as the central wool market of Europe and the world?—(A.) That was one of our subsidiary concerns; it was not our primary concern; but we were concerned in finding the best means of distributing wool through Europe, a very difficult task in view of the condition into which affairs had drifted. We took the very best advice that we could; we consulted individual directors and the managers of the Port of London Authority, and therefore we endeavoured to give London her fair share, which throughout history—throughout the last hundred

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years—I should think, has been a predominant share of the wool business.

Q. To that end, I think, you arranged in January, 1919, a perfectly definite programme of shipments of wool to London, and you arranged it with the Port of London Authority?—(A.) We arranged, or endeavoured to arrange, for total shipments of wool to this country of 2,700,000 bales—that was our programme—which was to be brought forward at the rate of 225,000 bales per month. We knew, of course, that it would be impossible to keep to those precise dates. Even if the dates of shipment were kept to, the dates of arrival would necessarily be different, because steamers come by different routes, they take different lengths of time on the voyage, and no human being can foresee precisely how the dates of arrival will work out; but we did consult with the Port of London Authority as to the circumstances. We specially mentioned and consulted with one of the directors, Mr. William Weddell, whom I am glad to see in this Court, about the technical and practical problems of handling the wool in London; and it was considered that one of the necessities was to have emergency storage. It was considered probable, and in fact certain, that there would be some exceptional agglomeration of wool for two or three months, until the machinery of distribution had begun to work perfectly, and it was agreed, therefore, that the Port of London Authority should hold at our disposal storage up to 1,000,000 bales of wool at one time. We informed them that we did not expect to arrive at a higher figure than 600,000 to 700,000 bales.

Q. Have you ever, in fact, exceeded the 600,000 limit?—(A.) The highest figure was 554,000 bales.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you mean when you say that the highest figure was 554,000 bales?—(A.) The greatest amount that was in store in the various London warehouses at any given moment during the year 1919 was 554,000 bales, which was reached in the month of July.

Mr. GUEDALLA: Now I want to pass to the figure given for the total annual inflow of wool into the Port of London. That is given by Lord Devonport as 2,000,000 bales of wool shipped to London for sales or allocation. What was the total quantity of Australasian wool brought into London by your department in the year 1919?—(A.) 1,558,014 bales.

Q. In addition to that, can you tell the Court whether there was any inflow into London of other wools, imported on private account for which the Government was not responsible, but which may have increased the strain?—(A.) About 248,000 bales, making 1,806,000 in all.

Q. Will you tell the Court whether in being partly responsible for the inflow of either 1,500,000 or 1,800,000 bales into the Port in 1919, your Department was imposing an abnormal strain on the resources of the Port of London?—(A.) We did not think so; we had no reason to think so, in view of the past record, because in the year 1915 the imports into London were over 2,000,000 bales.

Q. Can you find any warrant in the records of your Department in the last, let us say, 40 years for the figure which Lord Devonport gave: "against about 800,000 bales pre-war"?—(A.) No. Lord Devonport must either have been misinformed or misreported, because you can go back for 40 years, I believe, without finding any year in which the imports were anywhere near 800,000 bales. Even as far back as 1890 the actual

amounts of wool passing the wool auctions were nearly 1,600,000 bales.

Q. That was the quantity auctioned?—(A.) Yes, the wool that actually passed through all the formalities of auction.

The CHAIRMAN: In London?—(A.) In London in the year 1890. In the year 1901 a similar figure was reached. These are the two highest figures in the records of London auctions.

Mr. GUEDALLA: I want to pass now from the question of the aggregate annual inflow to the question of the rate per month at which wool was brought into London by the Department.

Q. Have you had prepared from the records of your Department a comparative table showing the arrivals in London month by month for the years 1915 and 1919?—(A.) Yes, I have them in my hand.

Mr. GUEDALLA: I would like to hand that in, if I may, my Lord.

(*Document G.1 handed in.)

The WITNESS: In the year 1919 there were only two months which exceeded 200,000 bales.

Q. I think your arrangement with the Port of London was for 225,000?—(A.) The Port of London Authority were prepared for that quantity, but it was never our intention to bring the whole 2,700,000 bales to London, but the Port of London Authority were warned and prepared for that possibility. The two highest months in 1919 were April, with 206,000 bales, and May, with 277,000 bales. That was the exceptional time, that was the congestion period in 1919 referred to by Lord Devonport.

Q. What was that due to?—(A.) That was due to exceptional circumstances caused by the turning round of ships in Eastern waters. The wool did not come forward in the ships in which it was loaded, but, owing to the necessity of sending back Australian troops from Egypt and Palestine, the ships were turned round in Port Said and Bombay, and various places, and their cargoes were brought forward later, so that wool that ought to have arrived in February and March did, as a matter of fact, arrive in April and May. If it had not been for that circumstance, the regularity of arrival in the Port of London would have been very much greater than ever before. It is recognised by shipowners that there never had been a period in the history of wool when the shipments have been so regular, because under ordinary trade circumstances the shipments were made by seasons, but by the Government they have been made with mechanical regularity throughout the year.

Mr. GUEDALLA: I do not think, my Lord, there is any need to enlarge on the amount; the time, unfortunately was short, but had there been an opportunity, and had it been possible to reduce to the form of a diagram these two years month by month, it would have been better; but your Lordship sees from the figures that the fluctuations would have been far greater for the year 1915 under commercial circumstances.

The CHAIRMAN: We can see it from the table quite well. Does anyone wish to cross-examine Sir Arthur?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I put a few questions, my Lord?

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

* See Appendix No. 47.

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Cross-examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. Would you tell me whether you received a memorandum from the London Woolbrokers in 1917 in which they made certain stipulations as to the procedure which would have to be followed to secure the quick and convenient passage of wool through the Port of London?—(A.) In 1917?

Q. Yes.—(A.) I should not wonder, but I am sorry that I do not remember it at the moment. What was the date, may I ask?

Q. The date was the 17th January, 1919,* I beg your pardon. Do you remember that memorandum?—(A.) I had a great many communications from them. We have been in constant communication with the Committee of London Woolbrokers.

Q. Did that memorandum lay special stress upon the regularity and uniformity of the transmission of wool to the port?—(A.) That is an obvious desideratum.

Q. An obvious desideratum?—(A.) Yes, obvious perfectly.

Q. One of the things you might expect experts like London Woolbrokers to insist upon?—(A.) Yes—almost unnecessary.

Q. On the 3rd February, 1919, did Sir Joseph Broodbank notify you that it would be possible to provide storage in the Port of London for one million bales of wool?—(A.) I do not think it was the 3rd February, but very near to it.

Q. That is to say in the course of the year?—(A.) Yes, quite true.

Q. It was the 3rd February, 1919?—(A.) Yes, I have the letter before me.

The CHAIRMAN: What was the notification?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think this is the letter that Sir Joseph wrote to you: "It has been intimated to the Authority"—that is the Port of London Authority—"by your Department that you wish provision to be made for the possible storage at one time of one million bales of wool in the Port of London in the course of the present year, and I am writing to say that I have no doubt that with the co-operation of the other wool warehousemen and the public wharfingers we shall be able to meet such demand as you may make upon us. It is essential, however, that we should have the earliest available information as to the shipments from the Colonies as they are made; and I am sure you will give such instructions as will ensure this being done." That was the letter, was not it?—(A.) Yes, that is the letter.

Q. Then I think on the 7th February, 1919, you wrote to Sir Joseph: "Dear Sir, I have before me your letter of February 3rd and also the letter of the Assistant Manager dated January 25th, both relating to the storage of wool on account of this Department. We are glad to note that you have no doubt that provision can be made for a possible storage at one time of one million bales. This is very satisfactory, as it will meet the extreme requirements which may possibly arise. I think it well to state, however, that we have no intention of allowing stock to accumulate to any such extent, and we hope the maximum amount of storage required will not in practice exceed 6-700,000 bales" ?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then I think the next step in the story was a meeting at the Ministry of Munitions on the 15th April, 1919, at which the question of the rate of arrival of wool was dealt with. It was a conference at which Mr. Laycock, Mr. Ronald, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Bowen, and Mr. de Souza represented the War Contracts Department, Mr. McKenzie and Mr. Lees represented the Commit-

tee of London Wool Brokers, Mr. Maskall, Mr. White, and Mr. Jennings represented the Port of London Authority. The gist of the business, I think, was this: "Mr. Laycock stated it was at the desire of Mr. Beddington the meeting had been called, but he regretted illness prevented Mr. Beddington's attendance. He was desirous of ascertaining whether the Authority, with the Uptown Warehousekeepers, were in a position to deal with wool to arrive in London for the next eight months at the rate of 225,000 per month, of which number it was hoped to deal with 140,000 per month in sales." Then Mr. Maskall, representing the Port of London Authority: "Pointed out that on 25th January, 1919, the Port of London Authority wrote to the D.R.M. stating that, provided a regular flow of transport was available for receiving and delivery of cargo, they could find storage space in due course for about 700,000 bales at one time, including all imports, whether colonial or foreign." Mr. McKenzie pointed out that on the 17th January the Port of London Authority undertook to find storage space for one million bales, and so it goes on. Then I think you got further details in that memorandum: one very important figure was arranged. Mr. Laycock asked whether the Port of London Authority with the Uptown warehousekeepers were in a position to deal with the wool that arrived at the rate of 225,000 bales per month, of which number it was hoped to deal with 140,000 per month in sales. That would leave, would not it, a balance of 85,000 to be stored?—(A.) Yes, that is so, per month.

Q. And that is the material figure, is it not?—(A.) Yes, quite suitable to me; it fits my case exactly.

Q. You were both pleased with the figure, apparently?—(A.) Entirely.

The CHAIRMAN: 85,000 per month could be stored?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That being the balance between 225,000, being the number to arrive in London per month, and the 140,000 per month to be sold. That leaves a balance of 85,000 to be stored.

Q. Very shortly after that the Port of London began to make complaints, did they not, as to the rate at which the wool was coming in?—(A.) I think we complained rather to the Port of London Authority. I think that was the course of events.

Q. That was the course of events?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It does not appear to be borne out by the correspondence. Let me just put the letter of the 25th April, 1919, written by Mr. Maskall to Mr. Laycock at the Ministry of Munitions: "Dear Sir,—At the conference held at Tothill Street last Tuesday week you informed me there would not be any difficulty in furnishing particulars of wool by arriving steamers and the category, A, B, C, or D, in which they would be placed. For the steamers which have arrived in London since that date I have only just been able to obtain particulars for some of the vessels, with the result about eight cargoes have been held up." The particulars would be particulars obtained from your Department?—(A.) Yes.

Q. He says: "For the steamers which have arrived in London since that date I have only just been able to obtain particulars for some of the vessels, with the result about eight cargoes have been held up. Several of the shipments have been landed and quay accommodation charge has been incurred. I am sure you appreciate that the

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absence of the particulars causes congestion and prevents the wool being dealt with as it should be. I pointed out to you that for the Authority to provide suitable storage accommodation for the large quantities of wool to arrive in London it was essential this information should be promptly furnished."—(A.) I think that is a separate question.

Q. It may be.—(A.) The particulars, I mean. We have particulars as far as total quantities are concerned by telegram. There never was any difficulty in supplying the quantities of wool coming to London by a particular steamer except during that short transshipment period when everything was upset, but the particulars referred to in that letter are the actual dates, bills of lading, and so on, and it is unfortunately the case that the course of post was not re-established quite correctly, and that there were times when the bills of lading arrived after the steamer. That is an unfortunate fact.

The CHAIRMAN: Did you read these particulars in the sense of particulars in the bills of lading?—(A.) That is what that letter means.

Q. I rather think what we want to get at is; you would surely as a Department have some general notion of how much was coming along—(A.) We had not only a general notion, but the exact number of bales in each steamer when the steamer brought forward its own cargo; we knew the exact number of bales, and I have lists here showing that at any particular time we knew the name of every steamer and of the bales upon it.

Q. The point put to you by Sir Lynden, I understand to be this: if you knew how much was coming along why did not you or someone tell them?—(A.) We did.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You appreciate that what the Port of London Authority wanted to know from your department was this: firstly, is the wool for sale, or if not for sale is it for temporary storage or is it for dead storage; and without knowing under which category the wool came, they would not know where to put it?—(A.) That is an absolute impossibility.

Q. But you undertook to do that at the Conference?—(A.) No. To give that quite accurately at any time was not possible.

The CHAIRMAN: What was Mr. Matthews complaining about?—(A.) In some respects the bills of lading ought, in the proper course of business—

Q. We have got past that?—(A.) That was one of the things he was complaining about, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: What was the answer to Mr. Matthews' letter of April 25?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I have only just got a few letters after the date, and it is perhaps premature to look for the reply. I am told there was no reply.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what I am rather anxious to get. We have had Mr. Matthews here, and a more practical man never trod in this world than Mr. Matthews.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is Mr. Maskall, my Lord, not Mr. Matthews. He is in Court, and can be called.

The CHAIRMAN: I am told he has just as good

qualifications. He writes you, Sir Arthur, a practical letter complaining that the real knowledge of the arrival of these cargoes was given, not by you, but by the fact that the vessel was there with it. What did you answer to that practical complaint?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That is the question, my Lord, I want to get an answer to.—(A.) I have in my hand the kind of information we possessed, and it was always at the disposal of the Port of London Authority, giving the name of every steamer, the port of origin, the date of sailing, and the number of bales that it contained.

Q. But, Sir Arthur, the point is that Mr. Maskall wrote to your Department pointing out the great difficulty that arose because of the difficulty in getting the particulars from your Department as to what was to be done with the wool, whether it was to be put in the sale, temporary storage, or dead storage?—(A.) That is a difficulty which lies in the nature of the case, my Lord. It is nobody's fault, it lies in the nature of the case. Wool is an immensely varied article. We had practically no stocks, or very small stocks, in January and February, we were bringing this stuff forward and the wool brokers were trying to catalogue the stuff for the sales on the arrival of the goods. We could not catalogue it before the invoices came. The wool brokers could not begin to do their work until they received the invoices and specifications. The very moment that those arrived they set to work to make out their catalogues, and to draft the wool into the exhibition warehouses for sale. It is a matter of absolute impossibility; nobody could think of doing it.

Q. Who had the information as to whether the wool came under Category A., B., C., or D., your Department?—(A.) Our Department received all the invoices and particulars, and they gave general directions to the Committee of London Wool Brokers, and the Committee of London Wool Brokers did the cataloguing.

Q. I notice that letter I read was on the 25th April, in which it was stated that these eight cargoes had been held up. Now I go on to the 15th May, and I see there is a further letter from Mr. Maskall to your Department: "Dear Sir,—Referring to our conversation about a week ago, regarding the immediate forwardings of wool, which you promised to arrange to re-introduce, I have not yet received any delivery orders for bales by arriving steamers. I had hoped it would have been possible it carry out my suggestion, and thus ease the position created by the abnormal quantity of bales being received."—(A.) We were struggling to do much more than our share of the contract. We were endeavouring to relieve the Port of London Authority by getting warehouses elsewhere from the Ministry of Munitions, and trying to send them away from London in order to help the Port of London Authority through their trouble. That is the whole story.

Q. You appreciate the great difficulty the Port of London was put into through the absence of instructions from the only Department responsible and capable of giving instruction?—(A.) I do not agree to that at all. There was no difficulty about it. If the storage had existed, as promised, they would not have needed any instructions from us. We agreed that storage should be provided up to 1,000,000 bales, and it was the intention of the Department to draw from the wool in that storage. We never contracted, or intended to give specific orders for the wool before it reached the docks. The trouble was that the storage did not exist. The storage did not exist, and therefore we were

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endeavouring to do more than we had ever intended to do.

Q. Your contention is the Port of London Authority should have put the wool in any storage there was vacant, whether it was A., B., C., or D.?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. Then why did not you say that at the time when they were pressing you for instructions?—(A.) My Departmental officers had instructions not to carry on a wrangle with the Port of London Authority, but to do their very utmost to help. That is what they were doing. They were doing their very utmost to help.

Q. They were asking you for instructions as to whether it was A., B., C., or D. You say you could not give them, but the proper course for the Port of London Authority was to put the wool in any storage available, whether it was A., B., C., or D. My question is when you say that now, why did not you say that in answer to any of these two or three letters?—(A.) Because we were not engaged in making out a case for ourselves; we were engaged in other things for carrying out the practical business of the moment, and we knew perfectly well the storage did not exist. Our men were on the spot, you must remember. They were on the docks looking at the work, and they knew the storage did not exist, therefore, what was the good of giving orders that could not be carried out?

Q. I need not take you through a large number of letters, but they all proceed on the same lines. I want to put this question to you. You say that the wool was not arriving in gluts from time to time?—(A.) It was arriving much more regularly than ever was the case in the ordinary course of trade, much more regularly.

Q. My difficulty is that when complaints of irregular consignments of wool are made from time to time by the Port of London Authority to your Department, it was never said to them: You have no cause for complaint, the wool is arriving more regularly than it did in pre-war days. Why did not you say that at the time?—(A.) Am I entitled to read what we did say?

Q. Certainly.

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly, that is what we want to get at!—(A.) There was a letter of July 4 from Sir Joseph Broodbank.

The CHAIRMAN: Read Sir Joseph Broodbank's letter of July 4.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSETY: It is a little bit long, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: If there is anything bearing on this, read it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSETY: This was July, after the trouble was over. May and June were the troublesome months, were they not? I see in one of the paragraphs in Sir Joseph Broodbank's letter he says this: "Your Department has been repeatedly informed both by letter and interview that unless a better and more regular flow of traffic was maintained, congestion was inevitable." Do you see that paragraph? And he also says, in a later paragraph: "I would point out that, notwithstanding the fact that the congestion is the direct result of the non-fulfilment of practically all the essential conditions upon which the estimates of storage capacity were categorically stated to depend, the Authority has set itself to do everything in its power to remedy the situation."

The CHAIRMAN: You did send an answer to that?—(A.) My first letter was on June 25. The letter of July 4 is in between. On June 25 I write: "I have to remind you that express arrangements were made beforehand with the Port of London Authority to store up to 1,000,000 bales of wool in London, and it was on the strength of these arrangements that the large shipments now being received were ordered forward. The quantity of wool stored in your warehouses and the uptown warehouses taken together is less than one-half of the total quantity which you undertook to accommodate. In consequence of this default, the Directorate have done everything that is possible to ease the situation, including arrangements for sending wool to interior warehouses, which would involve the payment of double handling and double transport charges. It has been very difficult to induce the Railway Companies to undertake the carriage of the wool on a short haul knowing that it will have to be carried again to the point of consumption, and delays necessarily occurring in getting the wool sent off. So far as it is sent off, it causes a relief to you and a diminution of the storage work which you have undertaken and are failing to do so. We are not prepared to be held to account as responsible for impeding the free flow of traffic through the Port when we are simply trying to avoid some of the consequences of your default." These are not the answers that were given by the subordinate officials, who were asked not to carry on such a controversy, but from time to time I intervened in the matter myself.

Q. There is an important point to observe in the figures you have just read. The figure is 1,000,000 storage?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That was at the rate of 225,000 bales per month, 140,000 to go to the sales, 85,000 to go to the store?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Those are the old figures?—(A.) I do not quite catch that.

Q. What was the excess at the date of that letter?—(A.) What was the excess?

Q. The actual stock at the date of that letter, the end of June, 1919, had reached 590,000 bales?—(A.) I cannot quite make that agree. The figures I have are: on the 7th June, 476,000; on the 5th July, 526,000.

Q. I put it to you that on the 30th June, 1919, by the actual records of the Port of London the stock was 590,000 bales, that is an excess of 250,000 above the quantity which it was estimated would have to be warehoused by the Port of London.

Mr. GUEDALLA: Is that all Government wool?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSETY: That was all Government wool.—(A.) There is an arithmetical error there; 85,000 a month is the rate of accumulation, according to your view of the case, which is not mine. If you multiply 85,000 by 4 you have 340,000 bales; if you add that to 190,000, which was the stock on February 3, you have 530,000 bales, and, according to my figures, we never reached 530,000.

Q. But the whole idea was progressive storage at the rate of 85,000 a month?—(A.) Excuse me; I have just given the figures. I have gone through the arithmetical calculation, and I will go through it again. On February 3, when the arrangement was made, there were 190,000 bales in store, according to my figures. Four months' accumulations at the rate of 85,000 bales is 340,000 bales. If you add 340,000 to 190,000 it is 530,000, and that figure of 530,000 was never reached.

Q. You are giving what is the arithmetical calculation. Our whole complaint is that the arith-

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metrical calculation was in fact exceeded, and by the 30th June, 1919, by actual record the stock was 590,000 bales?—(A.) I do not know whether I am entitled to ask questions, but I have got our records; they may be kept slightly differently, and it may be easy to explain. If I were entitled to ask a question I would ask what, according to the records of the Port of London, was the position on the 7th February. My figures are 195,507 bales. In order to make the addition sum, you have to have a starting point.

Q. There is only one other point. You have traversed Lord Devonport's figure of two million bales of wool?—(A.) Yes, and his figure of 800,000.

Q. I notice in the *Times* of the 14th May, 1919, there are these figures emanating from your Department:—"The Director of Raw Materials estimates that after shipment to this country of 225,000 bales of wool per month from Australia and New Zealand during the six months March to September of this year 793,626 bales will remain available for shipment on September 30, 1919. The 1919-20 crop is excluded from these figures, and the estimate assumes that this year's clip will amount in Australia to 2,000,000 bales and in New Zealand to 6,000,000 bales, and that 100,000 bales will be retained for domestic consumption in the Commonwealth and Dominion."—(A.) Yes.

Q. Those were right figures, were they not?—(A.) They are not comparable in any way; there is nothing about London in those figures. Those figures do not refer to London in the smallest degree.

SIR LYNDEN MACASSEY: There is a strange inconsistency in the announcement if that is so. I think that is all I want to ask you.

The CHAIRMAN: You are entitled to put any questions you like, Mr. Bevin, so as to clear this up if it is humanly possible.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I want to ask a question from another point of view. Your Department, you say, was controlled by all business men?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Do you agree that the problem of Europe could only be met at that period by national importation?—(A.) With regard to wool I think so, yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Arthur, you understand we are only anxious to get the truth on the issue we have to determine; I do not care about any question between Lord Devonport and yourself, but there are some elementary questions I want to ask you. In the first place, was there a congestion of wool in London?—(A.) There was a congestion of everything, my Lord, yes.

Q. Now, will you answer my question, please, was there a congestion of wool in London?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Whose fault was that?—(A.) I do not think anybody's, my Lord.

Q. You have put in this sheet comparing 1915 with 1919. You have put that in as helpful to this Court, have you?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You must be aware, are you not, that 1915 was a year, and particularly a spring, of extreme congestion; is not that so?—(A.) I do not think anything like so great as 1919.

Q. Was it, and I now again repeat the question: are you not aware that 1915 was a year, and particularly a spring, of extreme congestion?—(A.) I should not have thought, my Lord, that it was extreme—I did not think so.

Q. Do you take 1915 as a normal year?—(A.) No, I would not.

Q. It was abnormal?—(A.) It was tending in the direction of congestion, yes.

Q. Abnormal in being congested?—(A.) Yes, more congested than usual.

Q. So that without there being extreme congestion, it was a congested year?—(A.) I think so, my Lord.

Q. Do you really think that it is helpful to us to compare one congested year, 1915, with another congested year, 1919?—(A.) I think that the statements of the witnesses to which my attention has been called were intended to show that Government intervention had produced congestion; in the year 1915 there was no Government intervention. From that point of view I take it that it is strictly relevant.

Q. Again I put it to you: do you think it is helpful to us to compare a year of congestion with another year of congestion?—(A.) Yes, my Lord. I think it is helpful as showing that the information given by some witnesses is entirely false.

Q. Is not it a fact that a Committee was appointed in the early part of 1915 to deal with the congestion of wool at the Port of London, among other things, which congestion of wool was worse than it had ever been known?—(A.) I do not remember the exact facts.

Q. I will remind you that that subject of congestion was brought before a Committee, of which Lord Inchcape was Chairman, and Sir Joseph Broodbank was a member. That is the very year, 1915, which you have put in your Table to compare with 1919. That is pretty hard upon London, is it not?—(A.) I have no case to make against London, my Lord.

Q. I suggest to you that we might have had a schedule applicable to 1912 or 1913 instead of 1915, a congested year. That would have been, on the whole, better, would it not, if you had thought of it?—(A.) I have had very short notice, 24 hours notice.

Q. I quite appreciate that. You do not mind my just asking you to look at the figures of 1915. Observe that in 1915, in February, there came into London 266,000 bales, followed in March by 286,000 bales, and followed in April by 243,000 bales. There has never been a three months like that, so far as I know, in the history of the Port. Is not that so?—(A.) I believe that to be so.

Q. That is one thing that I wanted to ask you. There are only two other matters. Looking back on it, Sir Arthur, would not it have been far better that a businesslike letter, such as was written to you by Sir Joseph Broodbank on the 25th of April, should have had an immediate answer?—(A.) My Lord, that is only one out of a great number of letters which have been written. There was correspondence going on between us every day.

Q. I know, but that was a very important letter. If you and the Port of London could have come to a reasonable arrangement about the subject of that complaint the whole consuming public of this country would have been benefited?—(A.) My Lord, the wool was all afloat at that time; there was absolutely nothing we could have done.

Q. I have given you the opportunity; I will not repeat it. The other thing that I want to ask you is this. Do not you think it is a reasonable interpretation of the arrangement as to the supplies to be afforded by the London storage, that they would do their best to take 85,000 a month into store. That seems to me, not being a business man, to be a sort of plain result of the correspondence?—(A.) There were antecedents, my Lord.

Q. I know, but just look at it from that point

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of view. If it is 85,000 a month that is just exactly 1,000,000 per annum, is not it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That just exactly squares with the extreme accommodation of 1,000,000, at the rate of 85,000 a month. Did you send forward more demands for store than 85,000 a month?—(A.) Not in the first four months on the average, my Lord.

Q. I am taking any month?—(A.) Yes. In April and May the arrivals were more.

Q. They were very much more than 85,000 a month?—(A.) Not very much more, my Lord; they were somewhat more. On the four months it was exactly right, but in the two months it was too much.

Q. I would just like to wind up by asking you again: with all your experience, can you give this Court no help upon the problem of how that congestion could be avoided? You have already sworn that in your opinion it was unavoidable. Notwithstanding all your experience, do you still say so?—(A.) I am not an expert in these matters, my Lord.

Q. The alternative, you see, Sir Arthur, is this: If it is unavoidable there must be an enormous expense incurred in extra storage. If it is avoidable there need not be that expense incurred, but there will be a free circulation. The point that I want to get at through you, as a Government officer of great experience, is this. Notwithstanding all the experience and all the knowledge that you have, do you suggest that nothing could have been done to ease that situation? Is that your position?—(A.) I suggest, my Lord, that in April and May it was altogether unavoidable, but I do suggest that we have overcome it as regards wool already, and we have no intention of its recurring.

Q. I am glad to hear that. You are the owners of the wool, are not you?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. You have overcome it. How have you overcome it?—(A.) We have overcome it because the machinery of distribution, which had been out of use for several years, of necessity worked clumsily in the first month.

Q. By "the machinery of distribution" what do you refer to?—(A.) I refer to the distribution through the London auction sales, which had been interrupted for several years.

Q. Do not you refer to something much more material than that?—(A.) Well, I would not like to say that transport difficulties have been overcome, because I do not think they have; but the actual local problem of the handling of the wool has been considerably improved. Since April and May, which were the typical months, there has been a considerable improvement in the handling of wool in London.

Q. That is by the auction sales resuming?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. This was your wool?—(A.) It was our wool.

Q. And it was your duty to get it distributed, if possible, to the people of this country or to other buyers?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

Q. Do you represent to us that you, as a Government, and owning the stuff, were prevented from free distribution because you had not the apparatus of auction sales?—(A.) The policy of the Government, my Lord, right or wrong, was to revert to the ordinary commercial means of distribution; and the means of distribution to which we returned in April, 1919, were precisely those which existed in 1913. They were rusty; they were out of gear.

Q. During this tremendous congestion you kept it up, because you wanted to resume auction sales?—(A.) Yes, we did.

Q. I do not ask you to pass any judgment upon

that, but it would occur to me that, if the stuff was used, and the ordinary machinery was not there for getting it sold, you should have sold it yourself.—(A.) It was not the opinion of the wool trade, my Lord.

Q. Then it is the wool trade's fault, is it?—(A.) No, I do not say that. I do not wish to put the blame on anyone. I think it was our duty to hear the opinion of the experts.

Q. And, of course, you quite admit that it was also your duty to take all means to dispose of the stuff when you had it, and the people wanted it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I am asked to ask you this. Is there any resumption of direct shipments to France?—(A.) We have three steamers on the way to Dunkirk at present.

Q. Are direct shipments to the United States now permitted?—(A.) There have been five or six cargoes to the United States in the last two or three months.

Q. You are getting started?—(A.) Two hundred or 300 bales have been sent in that direction, and to Antwerp also—we have regular shipments to Antwerp at the rate of about 40,000 bales a month.

Q. I suppose, when this stuff came in, you think that it ought to have been accommodated?—(A.) My Lord, we made our arrangements after very careful consultation with the Port of London Authority—and I see one of them is present—and they thought so.

Q. It all comes back to this, that you were sending them more than 85,000 a month sometimes, and that they could not do it?—(A.) Yes. In two months that happened, owing to the transshipment of troops.

The CHAIRMAN: Well, I have tried to get to the bottom of it, but I am not sure.

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord, I would like this question put, in view of one of the Witness' answers. (*To the Witness*): If it had not been for Government policy, which insisted upon the reversion to the old method of the auction sales, would it not have been comparatively easy for your Department to have worked out an entirely new method of distribution, and so have avoided the delay?—(A.) It might have been done, but it would have been a matter of the most immense difficulty.

The CHAIRMAN: The Witness has already committed himself to the fact that it was the policy of wishing to revert to the old system that retarded any new method being employed. (*To the Witness*): We are much obliged for your coming, Sir Arthur.

(*The Witness withdrew.*)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I propose to call one witness to deal with the Port of Manchester. I shall conclude all my evidence to-night.

The CHAIRMAN: I am very glad to hear it.

MR. A. LATIMER, *Sworn.*

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. You are the managing director, are you not, of the Manchester Ship Canal Company?—(A.) I am.

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Q. The Canal Company is the Port Authority of the Port of Manchester?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think in point of value of imports and exports Manchester is the third port in the United Kingdom?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Under a special Act of Parliament, the Ship Canal Company's Act of 1885, the right of loading and discharging ships and handling goods on wharves and quays and performances of other labour services in respect of cargo is vested in your company?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think you perform that work very generally by casually employed labour?—(A.) That is so.

Q. For the greater part all the work which is done is on a time and not a piece basis?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think it is not unimportant to notice that the work of Manchester is considerably more regular than would appear to be the case in many other ports?—(A.) I think it is.

Q. You have got a special system in Manchester by which you book on your men three times daily at two stands?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Again, at the Manchester Docks a very large amount of up-to-date machinery has been installed?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And is the work in great part work which is capable of being performed on a piecework basis or on some such system of payment by results?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The total number of men you employ, I think, is 4,500?—(A.) For handling goods.

Q. I mean only for handling goods. In addition to that you have a considerable number of men on your Maintenance Staff?—(A.) Yes, men generally employed by the company other than the Bridgewater Department number over 8,000.

Q. That is in addition to the 4,500 men engaged in handling cargo?—(A.) That is the total number; 4,500 handling cargo and about 3,500 doing other work.

Q. To take it shortly, your rates of pay are as follows, are they not; 12s. a day, or 6s. per half-day, for discharging general cargo?—(A.) That is so.

Q. For loading general cargo, 12s. 6d.; for discharging deals, 13s. 6d.; for shovelling ores, 16s. 3d.; for discharging bulk grain, 15s. 6d.?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Quay labourers handling general cargo 12s., and carrying deals, etc., 14s. 4d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. I think all your men who are engaged by the week receive the usual privileges—a week's holiday with pay, pay for all Bank Holidays, and things of that sort?—(A.) That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the minimum figure?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The minimum pay is 12s. a day, which is for quay labourers and for the men who are engaged in discharging general cargo. (To the Witness.) Just to get the broad figure, because I want to take it shortly, your minimum rate at the outbreak of war was 5s. per day, was it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The increase of 5s. up to 12s. represents an increase of 140 per cent.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. On one or two occasions, have you made proposals to your men and to their Union officials whereby the increased cost of living could be met on the basis of a sliding scale?—(A.) We did so in the summer of 1916.

Q. You used every effort to secure the acceptance of such a principle?—(A.) That was so.

Q. I think that was refused?—(A.) It was.

Q. I think also you proposed to consider excep-

tionally during the war extra allowances to men with families?—(A.) That was so. On one occasion, where the deputation of the men represented that a man with a very large family was seriously prejudiced, one of the deputation said he had twelve children. The meeting was adjourned. At the next meeting I said the Directors during the war would willingly give extra allowances to men with large families, and that those men would be preferred in employment over men without families whether they were married or single, and I met with no encouragement at all. I was told it was quite impossible to consider such an arrangement.

Q. I only just want to get the fact from you. Have you found, notwithstanding the wage advances during the war, a serious diminution in output?—(A.) Yes.

Q. We will not go into great detail if you will just give me the broad figure at which you have arrived?—(A.) Roughly, it amounts to from 20 to 25 per cent. per hour of the men engaged. I have not put in Tables; we have had so many, but it might be taken that that is a very careful resumé. It is not owing to the shortened day at all. It is that per gang per hour there has been a reduced output of upwards of 20 per cent.

Q. The other questions of overtime and night-work are left for a future occasion: but, having regard to the decreased output, did you endeavour to secure the introduction of a system of payment by way of bonus on output?—(A.) That was so.

Q. Looking to the interests of the port, and to the extent to which the port is behind other ports in respect to piecework, is the introduction of some such system, in your view, a vital necessity?—(A.) I think so.

Q. It means that you would secure the output, the public would get the benefit, and the men would receive greater earnings?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Have you any doubt whatever that, following the practice in other ports, if both sides met with the will of pushing it through it could be arranged?—(A.) I am sure it could.

Q. I think you take strongly the opinion that the public will not secure the benefit of increased output by merely raising the day wage?—(A.) That is my opinion.

Q. Again, at Manchester, do you find the greatest possible difficulty, owing to the absence of any local machinery, in disposing of difficulties and disputes, and things of that sort?—(A.) That has been a difficulty which the local Union have not made any serious attempt to alter, although definite proposals were made to them by the Company, on the last occasion in a letter which I sent the District Secretary in August, 1919.

Q. You have urged, have you not, upon the Unions at least the creation of proper local machinery, as in other ports, for disposing of these petty difficulties and these small frictions that ultimately lead to such great trouble?—(A.) That is so—the co-ordination in a Committee of the men and the Union Officials and the officers of the Company charged with the duty of maintaining or increasing the flow of traffic through the port and eliminating what you might call ship-side strikes. I have got one on now: to-day I have got a strike on because the Union officials do not observe the machinery arranged, and before there was a stop making application to the Company in respect of an extra demand for the men.

The CHAIRMAN: Have they such machinery in Manchester as you would desire?—(A.) I think they have. This matter has already been fully discussed with the Federation. I have a letter from Mr. Robert Williams of 18 months ago, pointing

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out locally that this matter was vital, and it has not had attention.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Therefore, your great difficulty in Manchester appears to be this, that something which you agree is necessary, and something which the Transport Workers' Federation agree is necessary, is not in point of fact put into operation?—(A.) Exactly.

Q. You are most anxious, in the interests of the port and the public, that it should be put into operation at the earliest possible moment?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. There is one other matter you desire to press upon the Court, and that is that the question of the maintenance men should be dealt with by his Lordship's Court on precisely the same basis as the Committee on Production have on two occasions dealt with them?—(A.) I think so.

Q. You heard what I said to my Lord this morning on the matter. As representing an Authority with a large number of maintenance men, you would desire to press the urgency of that course being followed very strongly upon the Court?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: On the same footing as—?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: On the same footing as the Committee on Production on two occasions.

The WITNESS: Perhaps I might explain. There are over 3,000 workers of the company to-day who are being paid their increased wages in the terms of Awards given by the Committee on Production. Those wages cannot be altered by the company, and should, of course, not be observed by the men up to September of this year, under the Act of Parliament which governs the formation of the Court of Arbitration. I have copies of the Awards with me now. They relate to men employed on dredgers, men employed working the lock-gates and the swing-bridges, and, generally, utility men in connection with the movement of traffic in a port. The directors also observe, for their repairing ships, their craftsmen, all the district agreements come to separately by employers or employed, or, again, by Awards of the Committee on Production. All that machinery, my Lord, is absolutely on foot to-day, and, following what Mr. Bevin said yesterday, I think it is essential with a port like Manchester—and, if I may say so, a port like Liverpool and a port like Glasgow—that when you give your settlement of this question, my Lord, there should be laid down very, very clearly for the guidance of the employers and the Federation the observance of what is in force to-day, leaving the machinery, which is there to-day to be put in movement by the men if the maintenance men think anything more is due to them. May I just state a case? Take our dredging men. If our dredging men want anything more they only have to say so, and if we cannot settle it over the table we go before the Court of Arbitration and the thing is dealt with at once. If you were to give X to the casual workers there is no reason at all why that should apply to a weekly man who is paid under entirely different conditions. The minimum for a casual worker has nothing to do with the job of a man who is there week after week, month after month, year after year, and who has machinery, if he cares to move it and put it in force, to get all he can by an impartial hearing before the Court of Arbitration. That machinery is all on foot, and I am sure Mr. Bevin will agree with me that it

is extremely important that there should be no confusion.

The CHAIRMAN: I think you are all working towards that end. (A.) I think so; I hope so.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Therefore your concrete proposal is, No. 1, that the line drawn by the Committee on Production in their two Awards should be followed, subject to such modification as may be necessary owing to the recent arrangements made between the Railway Executive, the National Union of Railwaymen, and the National Transport Workers' Federation in regard to the division of men between railway conditions and transport conditions in the various ports?—(A.) Quite. I might say we always observe with our railway workers—there are 400 of them—the arrangements come to by the Government with the main line railways. We give the same conditions and the same rates of pay as those arranged by the Government. That has kept us quite clear on that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think we are all agreed now that is the right line to follow.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, but Mr. Latimer has put it very clearly and in a business-like way.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There are just one or two other points. Without unduly emphasising it, you have a great mass of correspondence with the Unions in respect of the unsatisfactory local conditions of Manchester, owing to the absence of anything in the nature of co-ordination or conciliation machinery?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I do not want to take you into it in detail. I think your Directors have already been considering the question of unemployment insurance?—(A.) That is so.

Q. In connection with the appeal now pending in Parliament?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think your Company is perfectly prepared to co-operate in arranging a supplementary scheme or a special scheme outside the provisions of that Act?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think your view is that that is the right course to adopt?—(A.) If anything can be done to steady employment of even the casual dock worker it should be done, and the Directors are most anxious, with the help of the Federation and the Dock Workers' Union, of which Mr. Tillet is the permanent secretary, that any steps that can be taken to improve that condition should be done.

Q. All questions of overtime we will deal with later?—(A.) Yes.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. Let me ask you first of all with regard to the Joint Committee. I think one of the troubles was, was it not, that you were a little bit premature in your discussion as to the functions and powers of the Joint Committee when you called the parties together?—(A.) I do not think so.

Q. Did you not rather stagger the men at what you proposed?—(A.) I never heard that I did.

Q. If we start again, and start on rather different lines, we may achieve the desired result, may we not?—(A.) I hope we shall.

Q. We are agreed upon that point?—(A.) Quite. I have been waiting since August.

Q. Would you be agreeable if I drew up the agenda instead of you?—(A.) If you will draw up an agenda I will discuss it with you within twenty-four hours of seeing it.

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Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Will you accept the offer?

Mr. BEVIN: Quite.

The WITNESS: I will accept it at once.

Q. Was not the trouble rather this, that you drew up the agenda without the twenty-four hours to consider it by the other side?—(A.) No, I did not. May I read you a letter which I sent to Mr. Blundell?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think you need.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not think it is necessary.

The CHAIRMAN: There has been some little misunderstanding about it, but you and Mr. Bevin have shaken hands now.

Mr. BEVIN: Many times, my Lord.

Q. I want to ask you about unemployed insurance. Do you not think it would be rather a mistake to have a multifarious number of schemes of maintenance for port workers; or, in other words, while there may be a variable method of unemployed insurance, will it not be necessary as far as possible to make it a part of, or subsidiary to, one great national scheme for all ports?—(A.) May I remind you that when you and I discussed this some time ago—

Q. I hope you are not going to remind the Court of all the things that we have discussed.—(A.) Only one. When you put that point to me, my reply was this: "Theory is very good; a little bit of practice by business people is very much better than theory." I said, "Let us, if we can, get a scheme working at Manchester; then, perhaps, other ports may follow, and in due time the Government, perhaps, will have time to deal with the matter, if it is so decided, by legislation."

Q. Can you imagine Glasgow following Manchester, or even Ardrossan?—(A.) Our associations with Glasgow are quite intimate. As Scotchmen we appreciate them very much, my Lord. I happen to be an Irishman myself. There is not anything the matter with Glasgow.

Q. I want to take you to the minimum wage. I think you will agree that in most of the ports it will be a wise method, in order to get rid of all this talk about competition between port and port, if a definite standard minimum is fixed?—(A.) That is a very big order. As one of the young ports, of course, we have the information at other ports. The condition at one port is entirely different from the condition at another port. It does not follow that if at Manchester we were paying 12s. that is a proper rate to pay, perhaps, at a small out-port, where the conditions of employment are very different.

Q. Keep your mind on Liverpool and Manchester, for instance.—(A.) We are very close together in Liverpool and Manchester; there is practically nothing in it. There is about 4d. per day, I think, and that is all: we are 12s., and, I think, they are 11s. 8d. and 12s.

Q. Let us keep a few big ports in our mind. There is Manchester, there is Liverpool, there are Glasgow, Leith, Hull, London, Southampton, Bristol, and the Bristol Channel Ports. You would say, at least, that they ought not to be paying less than one another?—(A.) They are very close together now, except Glasgow; Glasgow is about 2s. per day more, but there are other conditions at Glasgow which are out of line with those at Liverpool, Manchester, and London, and some effort should be made to reconcile those difficulties before you establish a flat rule which ignores the

circumstances at the different ports. Then you have the men also to consider. In Glasgow they will not have a registration scheme. They have it at Liverpool, and we have a well-understood one at Manchester. It is for you, Mr. Bevin, when you have finished with the Court, to put some of your organising ability on to this thing, and probably you will get it. I should think you would get it just as soon by discussion as you will by attempting to come to the Court and have it made a rule as to which there is no deviation. Those rules may easily bring about stoppages at the ports, because you know better than I do that the docker is a man who loves his liberty, and will have it.

Q. And the manager?—(A.) I am only talking of the docker; I am not talking of the manager. We all love our liberty, of course.

Q. Especially Irishmen?—(A.) I agree.

Q. Therefore, you will admit that the Federation in submitting this claim did intend discussing it across the table with a view to arriving at a settlement?—(A.) I quite agree.

Q. You will agree that it was the employers who forced us to the Court of Inquiry?—(A.) Invited you, I think.

Q. It was a choice between that and a strike, was it not?—(A.) I think it was an invitation: it was not force.

Q. Would you not rather describe it as force when your application is rejected without discussion?—(A.) I thought it was discussed.

Q. No, there was no discussion.—(A.) I am sorry; I thought it was discussed.

Q. The important part of this case is that it has never been discussed. We have made our statement, and they considered it and told us that they could do nothing: "Go to the Court of Inquiry." That was the employers' decision.—(A.) I was not on that Committee, and I cannot answer those questions.

Q. I quite agree. From my experience of you I think it would have been discussed if you had been.—(A.) I can return the compliment, you know.

Q. Do you think, in your judgment of the whole position and from your inquiries from port to port, there would be any serious difficulty of working out a national basis for the different ports of like with like, once the minimum is fixed?—(A.) No, I do not think there would be. For instance, at the ports of Liverpool and Manchester we entirely deal with the import of cotton into the country. In Glasgow they have different trades; in London they have different trades; and those are matters which would have to be very carefully balanced. You have men who, in a place like London, Liverpool, or Manchester will perhaps spend three or four days at the docks engaged in other work. All these are matters which do not admit of simply getting the ruler and ruling across the paper, and dealing with it in that way. I agree with you, Mr. Bevin, that by discussion we can get probably a better system than we have had up to the present, but let me remind you that the Port Labour Employers formed an association quite recently—within the past six or seven months—and the Committee which is dealing with this Inquiry before you, my Lord, is the first activity of this Association. There is machinery by which, if people are reasonable on each side, business men on each side can come to some well-considered arrangement which will avoid friction.

Q. But you will not suggest that on the fundamental minimum, leaving conditions out, there is any serious difference in the great ports of the country in the minimum standard of life, will you

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—coming right down to the standard of existence?

—(A.) Do you mean that it costs as much to live in Liverpool and Manchester as it does to live in London—is that what you mean?

Q. Practically.—(A.) It costs more, of course.

Q. Where?—(A.) In London, than it does in Liverpool or Manchester.

Q. So that we are really benefiting London if we are only asking them to pay the same as Manchester?—(A.) That is not a matter which I am arguing with you now. I am not giving evidence for London; I am giving evidence for Manchester.

Q. Do you not think that if this question upon which the men have set their minds—because I think you will agree that the whole of the dockers of the country have set their minds on this 16s. 0d.—is settled, and if this is granted, it will smooth the way to discuss the other great problems of machinery, output, and the other problems associated with dock life, if we can secure satisfaction upon this minimum question?—(A.) I think you would be reversing business methods to adopt such a scheme. To-day at all the ports, arising out of two awards by the Committee on Production, certain advances were given for war wages. Following that last award, which was in October, 1918, in the early part of 1919, you remember, the Federation took up the first big principle of what was a proper working day or a proper working week, and that was settled across the table, after considerable discussion, because it was a very important thing. It was merely settled in a formula, and all the port committees went away—the employers, the employed, and the union officials—and they put in force between a date in March and April 22, with very little friction, a proper working arrangement. If to-day, taking that line, the cost of living in this country has appreciably gone up over what it was in October, 1918, the date of the last award by the Committee on Production—if it has—there was machinery for that matter to be dealt with. That does not touch the wider programme of the Federation for what are called social amenities, I quite agree, but one would have thought that you would have first adjusted what was necessary for that increased cost of living, and then, if the Federation admitted that production had gone down, machinery for improving the output through the ports could have been arranged for, and extra payment would have been part of that arrangement. That is our case at Manchester absolutely, and I am impressing it, my Lord—

The CHAIRMAN: Try to bring this to a point, please.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to ask you whether it is not a fact that before we went to the ports to settle all these problems arising out of the 44 hours we first agreed on a principle? We did, did we not?—(A.) Yes, and it has not been quite observed.

Q. I am not talking about the effects of it.—(A.) But I am. They are the effects we are suffering from to-day.

Q. Let us follow it. Before we could have local negotiations on the other problems we first agreed on a principle?—(A.) I agree.

Q. Supposing we apply that in this case, that there is the principle of a minimum wage, and then the other questions arising out of it are discussed in the same manner, will that not help towards a solution?—(A.) But you have got a minimum wage to-day at all ports. There is not a port in the country which has not got one.

Q. Do not evade the question.—(A.) I am not evading it at all.

Q. Will you come to the point. I do not want to press you to answer if you do not want to answer—I do not want to waste the time of the Court—but I want to get an answer to that one point. The 44 hours was not a national agreement, was it? It was a formula drawn up by the employers upon which local negotiations should proceed, and to avoid a strike we tried to do what you asked.—(A.) It was drawn up jointly.

Q. Will you please utilise your memory to the full. It was a formula which never had a word inserted by the workmen.—(A.) I cannot agree with that.

Q. Do you remember Sir Alfred Booth being with Sir David Shackleton and ourselves and yourself?—(A.) Extremely well.

Q. And I appealed with all the sincerity at my command that we should sit down and draft a national agreement, but Sir Alfred Booth, speaking in the name of the whole of you, refused a national agreement and would only have a formula?—(A.) I quite agree. That was so.

Q. We have got to a point of agreement upon that; and on that formula local negotiations proceeded?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Which resulted in considerable difficulty in giving effect to the national desire by the Federation; or, in other words, the fact that there was not a central agreement but only a formula took the greatest power of control over the thing out of the hands of the central body, did it not?—(A.) I do not think so. I do not agree with you at all upon that.

Q. Speaking for the Federation, I say that we would have had ten times, and a hundred times, more power to have dealt with the difficulties out of the 44-hour agreement had it been a national agreement with the Federation, than we had by merely having to deal with a formula, to satisfy the whims of the employers at the different ports.—(A.) If that is your opinion I have nothing more to say.

Q. As to the 16s. minimum, I am suggesting, and I want your opinion upon it, that if the Court decrees for a 16s. minimum as a basis, that will in itself do away with an enormous amount of bickering on the part of the employers who meet the workpeople and say: "If we give you this in Manchester, what about other places?" You have said many times yourself: "I cannot do what I want in Manchester because it is not being done in Liverpool." If we cut that ground from under your feet by the decision of the Court, will it not be possible then to build up the improved conditions which you profess to desire upon that decision?—(A.) I have not used the argument to which you refer for the last five or six years. When I used it I urged that these matters should be dealt with, if possible, by a uniform basis under the like conditions. It is no good taking a little port and putting it into competition with a big port, but if you could get, as nearly as you can, uniformity with the large ports dealing, if possible, with like kinds of traffic, obviously for the Federation it would be very much easier for you to control, of course. Wages were determined through the war on a purely subsistence basis, because in the last two awards of the Committee on Production, the 1½d. and the 2d., they were precluded by statute and agreement from dealing with wages other than on conditions arising out of the war.

Q. That is in their Award?—(A.) That is so, and that obtains to-day.

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Q. If that was the limitation in the presentation of the case which we could present owing to the statute under which we went to arbitration, is it not right for this Court, in fixing a minimum wage, to have regard to cultural and other conditions which ought to enter into a workman's life, but which were excluded from the reference to the Court of Arbitration?—(A.) It is not for me to express an opinion as to what should or should not influence this Court. I can only say this, that having listened to some of the evidence, and having read all the evidence, I am impressed with this point, that since there have been increases in the margin of subsistence arising from the war, there has for a perhaps unexplained reason been a drop in output. That drop in output, in my opinion, does not arise in the slightest degree from the condition of the men who have returned from the Front; I believe it arises entirely from this, that in many cases single men, men with less responsibilities obviously than a man with a wife and children, are now receiving minimum rates of pay which give them a liberty. They have not realised their duty to the State. A man at the Port of Manchester to-day who has no responsibilities can, by working 44 hours a week, go away with £3 6s. His position is entirely different from that of a man who has a wife and three or four children. Why should that man to-day, who is able to draw £3 6s., be able to set the pace to the port in production? And that is what he is doing, and that is a danger, if I may put it to the Court, which lies in this problem. We want production, and if we can get production at something like the rates which we are obtaining to-day by the payment of bonus or premium, where production might be speeded up, say, 20 or 25 per cent., then you have solved the problem as regards that.

Q. I do not want to pursue that any further, but I will remind you of just this one point: You drew up a budget a few years ago?—(A.) I did?

Q. At least you submitted it to our people in 1916.—(A.) Shall I explain the circumstances of that budget?

Q. I only wanted to remind you—(A.) You need not remind me. If you want to put in that budget, I would like to explain to the Court exactly—

Q. I am not going to put it in.—(A.) You must let me express myself, please. That has not gone in in my examination in chief, but I should like to explain this, my Lord, if you will permit me. In 1916 there has been two advances in war wages at the Manchester Docks; the first took place in February, 1915, and the second took place in October, 1915; and the men came in about May of 1916 asking for a further advance much in excess of the cost of living. I could not get from Mr. Robert Blundell and the men who came to me any details of their living expenses. We adjourned the meeting, and they came to me a couple of days afterwards and I was no further forward. In the meantime I had been diligent. My wife and children—one of my daughters—had been busy with the widows and the wives of those who were at the Front, and I ventured to put across the table to the other side: "As far as we could measure, if you got before the war 27s. 3d. that is about what you did with it, and on the two previous occasions when you have had war advances, that is about what you could do with it. Now, for goodness sake, give us something so that instead of wasting your time and ours, as the cost of living goes up, and if Lord Kitchener is right that it will be a long war, you need not come and have a discussion; we

will have a standard, and as it goes up you will go up"; and then most unfairly—

The CHAIRMAN: No, there is nothing unfair, but it was a shot in Mr. Bevin's locker.—(A.) I do not think it has done him any good.

Q. It is rather a damp fusee. We will not say any more about that.—(A.) It was an effort on my part to provide machinery.

Mr. BEVIN: That is all I ask.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you any questions to ask in re-examination, Sir Lynden?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No.

The CHAIRMAN: Just tell me this: Your real anxiety is this output?—(A.) Exactly. That is the whole case.

Q. Listen to this, please: Am I right in saying that the burden of your evidence to-day is that there is a loss in the Manchester Port of no less than 20 to 25 per cent.?—(A.) In actual output per hour worked; but there is a bigger loss because of the reduction to 44 hours from 49 hours, and the restriction in overtime. You have to add that.

Q. What I want to know is this: Uncomplicated by any question of reducing your hours, or anything of that sort, that is the loss per gang per hour. Compared with that, a shilling or even a couple of shillings in wages is relatively a smaller question?—(A.) Very small. It need never be considered.

Q. Do you see any way of getting over this?—(A.) I do.

Q. Your suggestion is a bonus?—(A.) Yes; not piecework.

Q. A bonus on output?—(A.) Quite.

Q. Apart from that, there is the contract for 14 hours?—(A.) Yes.

Q. When that is broken, unless, of course, in exceptional cases and ill-health or excessive strain, or anything of that sort, it comes to be rather a question of right and wrong; it should not be done by people who have made a bargain. Now that largely may be caused—I do not say for a moment that it is justified, but it may be caused—from a sense somehow or other of loss of confidence between employer and employed?—(A.) I quite agree that there is great suspicion against the employer. That is the prime difficulty.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, have you anything to say upon this subject? It is a severe trial to us all. We recognise absolutely the spirit in which you have approached the Inquiry, and I should like to hear whether you have anything to say?

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to say this: It is not a question of restoring confidence, it is a question of creating confidence. We have never had confidence. We have to substitute something in the place of the method by which output was obtained in the old days. Output was obtained, as I have indicated in this Court, by economic fear. In every port there was some sort of method which they had of driving the men. That had gone. I am prepared to say this in a word; and do not think, my Lord, that I am making a threat, as you indicated the other day, because I want to make my position perfectly clear. If you want to create confidence and to make the discussion of this problem possible in the proper atmosphere, there must be the establishment of what the men believe, with very good reason, is just; and I am satisfied conscientiously that the 16s. minimum wage is just. On that assumption, having built

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all our future development upon that basis, if it is conceded—I want to put this point clearly, since you ask me. You see, if I had to go to the men with 14s. or 15s. my task would be this: My time and my colleagues' time would be taken up in trying to get them to accept something that they did not believe gave them justice. That is one of my chief difficulties, which I want you to appreciate, and I do not want you to look upon it as a threat that I am making to the Court. I am making a clear statement, I hope, of my position. If the 16s. minimum, therefore, was granted, I can say on behalf of the Federation that we have no desire to preach reduction of output. I think the speeches I have made over the week-end have made that perfectly clear publicly; but I will never be a party to returning to the old methods of getting output; but consistently with the protection of the physical welfare of the men and preventing strain, and that kind of thing, which I need not go into—consistently with proper human conditions, if I may use that term—I am not only prepared to sit down and discuss that with the employers, and try to arrive at a basis, but I am further prepared to go to the men after and try to the best that I am capable of, with my colleagues, to give effect to proper service being given in return for the granting of what we have now asked. I think I have put it in as clear terms as I possibly can as to the policy and attitude of the Federation on the problem raised.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, the Court is very much obliged to you. You will forgive my just asking whether I am correct in saying this: You are prepared to go to the men after, you say, to give effect to the bargain?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Does that mean that you will substantially and actively do your very best to discountenance the breaking of the bargain with regard to hours and the decrease consequently of the output in the country?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord. I have done so up to now.

The CHAIRMAN: I know you have, and we very much appreciate the spirit in which you have addressed us; and that, I think, is practical. It is not in the negative fashion, that you say that you have no desire to preach a reduction of output. Subject to these human conditions to which you have referred being conserved, all of which I thoroughly appreciate, your object—and it is a thoroughly straight and correct attitude—will be to discountenance the adoption of an incorrect attitude and to discountenance a breach of contract, and therefore to see that the output shall be given?

Mr. BEVIN: Let me make this one reservation, if I may, because I do not want to mislead anybody. I have heard complaints in this Court of men engaged upon very heavy, and what I may term gruelling, work, such as iron ore, and grain in some cases—dusty and difficult work. Those are the points which I mean that I say I should like to discuss with the other side. Subject to that, where it is ordinary normal employment, then the 8 hours ought to be given, and I will do what I can to see that that bargain is honoured; but there are certain exceptions to which Counsel has called attention. If a man went into a cargo of spathic ore, you cannot ask that man to remain in that

cargo of calcine spathic ore—my friends know what it is like; they are experts in the trade—for 4 hours, sometimes at 100 or 110 or 120 degrees of heat. I have seen them come out with their noses bleeding and their eyes bleeding in consequence. In those conditions I do not think I ought to be held; but for ordinary normal work I would do my best to see that the full 8 hours, subject to any reservation of that sort that I have made, was worked.

The CHAIRMAN: You will observe that I so far appreciated that, that the hypothesis of my question to you, if you remember, when this happy discussion was introduced, was, subject to exceptions arising from the nature of the work, the illness of the workman, or the like. I also had in view those exceptions to which you have just alluded.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes; so that I can answer in the affirmative quite candidly to the question which you have asked.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do not want Mr. Bevin to put upon the employers any such suggestion. They have not made it, they do not make it. Men engaged in unloading spathic ore—

Mr. BEVIN: I took that as a typical case.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I know, but that was not the case which I put.

The CHAIRMAN: Then it comes to this, that not only from the Bench, but from both sides there comes to be a practical consensus of opinion as to how this should operate. We shall not trouble you further, thank you, Mr. Latimer. That will also probably bear upon another, but quite minor, point, although important enough, namely, that you will have your local committee, let us hope, to adjust all those points which make a case exceptional or do not make it exceptional.

(The Witness withdrew.)

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord, I think I ought to add to the answer which I gave to your Lordship's question this morning just before the adjournment, the statement that of course the minimum granted of 16s. would carry with it the preparation of the schedule to which I referred your Lordship as to the grades. Naturally that should apply. So I ought to make that quite clear.

The CHAIRMAN: There is good reason to hope that such a schedule will be arranged.

Mr. BEVIN: I am quite prepared to go into it when I know the position.

MR. DAVID HOWITT ALLEN, *Sworn.*

Examined by Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY.

Q. You are a chartered accountant?—(A.) I am.

Q. You have been asked to prepare and to submit to the Court statistics relating mainly to the

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volume of traffic handled at the different docks?—(A.) I have.

Q. I think you have been interested in the statistics of shipping and of port traffic for a considerable number of years before the war?—(A.) I have.

Q. Through assisting Sir Norman Hill, the well-known chairman of the Port and Transit Committee?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you established in London?—(A.) I am.

Q. And you have been asked by Sir Lynden Macassey's clients to prepare these schedules?—(A.) I have.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think you found out that before the war the money values of imports and exports as published by the Board of Trade, even when rectified by price index numbers, were not a reliable guide to the volume of traffic through the different ports?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And it is the volume of imports which strains the ports, is it not?—(A.) It is.

Q. I think as a result of special investigation you have made a standard for comparison so far as imports are concerned in the various ports?—(A.) Yes, by extracting from the Board of Trade returns, and making the necessary calculations to get at the tonnage of all articles in respect of which weights are shown in the Board of Trade returns. May I explain that there are many articles for which weights are shown in all units of weights, from tons down to ounces. To arrive at a total in one unit of weight it became necessary to convert all these various units from tons to ounces into tons. I found that when all the articles for which weights are shown had been so converted, I had accounted for 88 per cent. of the total money value of the imports, and that was such a large proportion, and was so uniform from month to month, that I found I had thereby obtained a reliable basis for comparison.

The CHAIRMAN: I must congratulate you on your courage. That is a terrific undertaking.—(A.) No, it is only detail—clerks' work. I started, and somebody else did it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think in the early days of the war Sir Norman Hill used your figures for the various Committees and Commissions upon which he was engaged?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Then, later, on the formation of the Port and Transit Committee, your statistics were placed at their disposal and used by them?—(A.) Yes, and were continued through the war.

Q. So that, although I should not put the question to you, they are statistics of, shall I say, exceptional value for the purposes of this Court's consideration?—(A.) They are useful, I think.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a very modest adverb.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I will hand in the Witness's tables.

(*The same were handed in and Marked H.41.)

Q. To deal with your tables, I think your Statement No. 1 gives the ships on the Register at December 31, 1913?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And it shows, does it not, that of the total number of 8,236 vessels, only 3,675 of those vessels were over 1,000 tons net?—(A.) That is so, and also may I add that those 3,675 vessels account for

10,000,000 tons net out of the total of 11,000,000 tons for the whole 8,236 vessels.

Q. And it is on that number of 3,675 vessels that the nation depends for its ocean overseas supplies?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think even that figure of 3,675 overseas vessels requires further reduction?—(A.) It does.

Q. What is the reduction?—(A.) The reduction arises from the necessity of eliminating from it the number of ships which in pre-war times were engaged in inter-foreign trade. There are no statistics published which directly give that information, but some years ago I assisted Sir Norman Hill in an investigation into various statistics to endeavour to arrive at the proportion which those ships engaged in inter-foreign trade bore to the total; and as the result of various lines of inquiry, we came to the conclusion that 40 per cent. of such ships were engaged in inter-foreign trade, so that only 60 per cent. of those ships were engaged in direct foreign trade with the United Kingdom; and this proportion Sir Norman has used in many reports, and before many Committees since. That would reduce the 3,675 vessels to somewhere about 2,200 vessels of over 1,000 tons net in the direct overseas trade of the United Kingdom.

Q. We now pass to Statement No. II. That shows, does it not, the entrances of ships from foreign countries with cargoes for each month of 1913, compared with each month of 1919?—(A.) That is so, and that has been taken direct from the Board of Trade Returns.

Q. That shows, does it not, a decrease of 19 million tons odd in entrances of ships in 1919, as compared with 1913?—(A.) Yes, that is so, and that decrease is equal to a decrease of 39 per cent.

Q. Broadly speaking, the ports are congested, and the ships lie waiting for berths?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think if the comparison be limited to November and December of 1913 and 1919, the decrease is 30 per cent.?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And comparing January, 1920, with January, 1914, the decrease is 29.6 per cent.?—(A.) That is so. That does not appear in the table because the January Return has been published since the table was completed.

Q. Then you give certain figures which may be of importance in a later stage of the Inquiry with regard to the percentage by which the highest month is above the average and under the average?—(A.) Those figures are used in a later Statement.

Q. At the bottom of that Statement you show the proportions of British and Foreign tonnage which enter the United Kingdom ports with cargo?—(A.) That is so.

Q. In 1913 the foreign tonnage represented 34 per cent., and in 1919 only 25 per cent.?—(A.) That is so. In the intervening years it had fallen very much lower. The submarine campaign drove off the foreign ships, but in 1919 they were returning into their former position.

Q. The diminution in the number of foreign ships entering the ports is a material figure?—(A.) I think so. It is certainly one of the factors to be taken into consideration.

Q. In Statement No. III. you give the arrivals and departures of vessels with cargoes in the coasting trade?—(A.) Yes.

Q. 1919 shows a decrease of 43 per cent. compared with 1913?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Of course, the Court have heard from other witnesses the importance of the coasting trade. Now, the next aspect of the matter is the cargoes which the ships carried, and that you deal with,

* See Appendices Nos. 129-131.

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do you not, in Statement No. 4?—(A.) Yes. Statement No. 4 shows at the top of the page the money values of the imports, exports, and re-exports in each year from 1913 to 1919. That is put in partly for completeness, because being money values and prices having jumped as they have, they are not a direct help on the matter of the cargo handled. The second and third parts of that page may be useful regarding the entrepôt trade or re-export trade, the importance of which has been emphasised by previous witnesses. It will be noticed at the bottom of the page that about 60 per cent. of the whole of the entrepôt trade of the country is done in London, and from 20 to 24 per cent. in Liverpool, so that we have roughly 84 per cent. of that trade centred in two ports.

Q. London and Liverpool?—(A.) Yes, that is the point upon that.

Q. Then very far behind those two ports come the next ports, Southampton and Hull?—(A.) Yes, and those are larger than any of the others.

Q. Then your next statement No. 5, gives the volume of traffic in imports in the United Kingdom?—(A.) Yes. So far as articles representing 88 per cent. of the money value—

Q. That is the 88 per cent., the ascertainment of which you have just mentioned?—(A.) Yes. You will observe that in 1913 the total was 52,413,012 tons, and in 1919 36,525,907 tons.

Q. Showing that there has been a decrease of 30 per cent. in the weights of imports mentioned upon that table?—(A.) That is so.

Q. At the bottom part of that table you compare the tons of cargo carried per hundred tons of net shipping from 1913 up to 1919?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Showing a very large increase in the weight of cargo per 100 tons of shipping in 1919, as compared with 1913?—(A.) That is so. During the war the ships carried substantially more cargo per ton of shipping; I think probably due to two main causes: First, ships were no doubt laden to the full capacity, and, secondly, I think probably there would be a larger proportion of bulk cargo during the war, of which they would carry more tons.

Q. Statement No. 6 is the next statement, and that gives the volume of traffic in imports month by month.—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: With the same result?—(A.) With the same result. It also shows this, that if you limit the comparison to November and December, 1919, the decrease was 20 per cent. as compared with 1913, so that there is an important difference there. I now carry it one month later, and give you the figures for January, 1920. They were only 16.8 per cent. less than January, 1914.

Sir JOSEPH BRODBANK: They are gradually catching up?—(A.) Yes, they are catching up.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: At the bottom of your Statement No. 6 you show the quantities of some of the principal classes of goods imported in 1913 and 1919?—(A.) I do.

Q. There it is significant to notice that the decrease in grain and flour is 4 million tons in 1919 as compared with 1913?—(A.) That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Timber is tremendously down?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. Give us the figure of decrease?—(A.) It is 4,600,000 tons down.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Just to get the figures on the Notes: in 1913 the import of timber was 11,490,178 tons, and in 1919 it was down to 6,866,151 tons?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. In the same way iron ore is very much down?—(A.) Yes, it is down by 2 million tons.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, those figures are very significant.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, indeed they are.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Then Statement No. 7, your next Statement, shows the volume of traffic in exports of British produce and manufactures from the United Kingdom?—(A.) That is so. Taken from the Board of Trade Journal of January 29, 1920.

Q. I think this is the first occasion, is it not, so far as we know, when the Board of Trade had published figures of the weight of exports?—(A.) Of all exports that is so. So far as ordinary returns are concerned, the very large bulk of the export trade is shown in quantities, for example, yards of cotton and other units—units other than weight.

The CHAIRMAN: This is a tonnage return?—(A.) This is tonnage.

Q. They have taken a hint from your excellent statistics, and they have done it themselves?—(A.) I could not have done this for myself. I was very grateful to them for doing it. You will observe that the tonnage for 1919 is 50 per cent. under the tonnage for 1913.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The total weight of exports in 1913 was 91,172,000 tons, and in 1919 it was only 46,104,000 tons?—(A.) Yes.

Q. For example, the export of coal is down from 76,687,000 tons to 38,465,000 tons?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And iron and steel are down very nearly five million tons to just over two million tons?—(A.) That is so.

Q. In Statement No. 8 you give an estimate of the total weight of traffic handled in the ports?—(A.) I do.

Q. You collected there the weights of the imports, exports, re-exports and coasting trade in order to show the total volume of goods passing through the ports in 1913 and 1919?—(A.) I do.

Q. Whereas the total weight of traffic handled in the ports in 1913 was 220 million tons, in 1919 it is only 127 million tons?—(A.) That is so—a decrease of 42 per cent.

Q. Yet we know that of course very considerable congestion exists in many ports?—(A.) Quite. I think, perhaps, I should point out to his Lordship the degree to which the figures in that statement are estimates.

Q. Certainly.—(A.) The first line, the 52,413,012 tons in 1913 and the 36,525,907 tons in 1919, I think, may be deemed to be practically accurate figures. On the next line I have estimated the 12 per cent. That, I think, we may take it, is very near, because my total is 56 million tons—

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, you can take that.—(A.) For exports I have taken the Board of Trade figures. With regard to re-exports, there, again, I believe my estimate to be very near the actual figure. I arrived at it from the money value by taking the average value per ton, the amount of

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which I could arrive at by taking the Board of Trade figures for the other exports, excluding coal; so that I believe that to be sound. The figure upon that statement as to which there is most doubt is that coasting trade figure, which is a very large figure. There are no statistics collected, and therefore not published in this country, of the weight of cargoes in the coasting trade. It has been rather a blank in our statistics for years. Some years ago I know that a special investigation was made in certain Government Departments into the matter, and the result of their investigation was to show that, on an average, the coasting trade carried a little over one ton of cargo per one ton net of shipping. During the war there was further information got on sectional aspects of the question, and the general conclusion which Sir Norman Hill came to at the end of the Port and Transit Committee was that the average of ton per ton was a fair measure of the coasting trade, so that these figures which are given here as the weight therefore are based on the Board of Trade figures of the net tonnage of the ships which took the cargoes.

The CHAIRMAN: On the footing of one ton—
(A.) On the footing of one ton of cargo to one ton net of shipping; and, of course, in so far as ships were carrying coal they certainly would carry very much more than one ton.

The CHAIRMAN: Then, putting that figure in, the total is?—(A.) 220,000,000 tons in 1913, and 127,000,000 tons in 1919, a decrease of 42 per cent.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship will see the enormous diminution in the volume of the traffic being handled in ports to-day compared with 1913.—(A.) Quite so; even if it were thought that ton per ton was not an accurate measure, and it can only be an estimate, it is pretty fair to assume that the proportions between the two figures are right, because the proportion is fixed by the tonnage of the ships which arrived with cargoes, therefore the proportion, I should say, must be right.

Q. Anyhow, you have taken the same ratio for the two years, and that does not affect the proportion?—(A.) That is my point.

Q. In Statement No. 9 you give the imports and exports through individual ports, measured in money value?—(A.) Yes, in money value.

Q. If you look, for example, at 1913, you find that London handles 29 per cent. in value of the total imports, exports, and re-exports of the country?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And Liverpool 26 per cent?—(A.) That is so, and if you take the twelve ports, of which the names are shown, they account for 83½ per cent. of the whole oversea trade in money value.

Q. Again, if you look down to the position in 1918, you find that London handled 20 per cent., Liverpool 26 per cent., and those ports you give handled a total of 65 per cent?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then there is the final figure, that whereas all the other ports only handled 16 per cent. in 1913, in 1918 they handled 34 per cent.?—(A.) Yes. The 1919 figures are not yet published for all the ports.

Q. It is significant to see the amount which is now being handled by the smaller ports?—(A.) Yes. I do not think I should say "now."

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I mean in 1918; I am much obliged. Your Statement No. 10 gives the weight in tons of imports handled in the

different ports in 1918, compared with 1913?—
(A.) Yes, the weight of imports.

Q. Statement No. 11 gives the volume of traffic in imports under all the different headings through the different ports?—(A.) Yes. I thought that might be helpful to the Court in showing the varied character of the trade in individual ports, and as perhaps emphasising in figures some points which have been mentioned in evidence before; for example, that London and Liverpool deal with 75 per cent. of the whole imported meat of the country; that they deal with 70 per cent. of the wool, and only 5 per cent is dealt with at Hull. To take another example, oil-seed: at Hull it is 37 per cent., as compared with 45 per cent. in London and Liverpool.

Q. That table shows the very special nature of the trade which is handled at each of the individual ports?—(A.) That was my intention in making that table.

Q. Table No. 12 gives the value of the principal and total exports of the twelve principal ports?—
(A.) I only mention that a statement with regard to exports must necessarily be put in money value instead of weight.

Q. There again, it shows that each port seems to deal largely in a special kind of traffic, taking a broad view?—(A.) Yes.

Q. In Statement No. 13 you give the total volume of traffic in imports which make up your 88 per cent.?—(A.) Yes, for 1918. Statements Nos. 13 and 14 are exactly similar to 11 and 12, but they give the figures for 1918.

Q. There again showing the special local circumstances, so far as traffic is concerned, of the different ports?—(A.) That is so.

Q. In Statement No. 15 you have prepared figures to show the fluctuations in the volume of traffic in different ports in various months of the year, based on the figures of 1913?—(A.) I have.

Q. You have given the month when the traffic is highest?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you give the month when the traffic is lowest?—(A.) I do.

Q. It will be noticed, will it not, that the peak and the dip do not coincide in the different ports?—
(A.) That is so.

Q. It will also be noticed that the extent to which the peak is over the median, or the dip is below the median, differs substantially in the different ports?—(A.) It does.

Q. This is a very important table in regard to the question of the fringe of casual labour?—(A.) Quite. Of course, it can only attempt to deal with that question from the very broadest aspect. It is, perhaps, a very small contribution to the problem.

Q. It will serve to show the Court what variations exist in the amount of traffic at the different ports at different times of the year. On Statement No. 16 you have prepared a table which shows in respect of workers the rates of pay at different ports in 1914, their present rates of pay, the increase of the present rate of pay over 1914, and the increase of the present claim over 1914?—(A.) Quite so. All previous Statements have been based on Board of Trade returns. This Statement is based on returns received by the Secretary from the various ports.

Q. You give only in Statement 16 the workers who are on the minimum rates in the different ports?—(A.) So far as I could fix the minimum rates; in some cases it was a little difficult to know which ought to be included, because there were some men, possibly very few, in London who

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seemed at what were specially low rates. Take London, for example; all through the Inquiry the minimum men have been spoken of as P.L.A. men and dockers and stevedores employed by shipowners; amongst different classes I saw watchmen employed by master lightermen, and I put them in because they were on the return and were paid the minimum rates. There may be some quite small classes of men in some cases; in Ardrossan there are some rope-runners, and in Middlesbrough there are hatchway men on river wharves.

Q. However, you have taken from the returns the workers at the minimum rates in the ports mentioned on your list?—(A.) I have.

Q. In Statement 17 you give a statement of the present rates per hours of overtime for workers at minimum time rates, with notes as to the conditions?—(A.) This is in a very condensed form with regard to the notes about conditions, but the condensation has been made in the ports themselves, so it should be accurate.

Q. That will become relevant at a later stage. In Statement 18 you give figures which were prepared at my Lord's desire, which show in respect of minimum rates the rate of pay per working hour in 1914, the rate of pay per working hour at the present time, the present increase over 1914 in amount and percentage, and the amount of the claim over 1914 in amount and percentage?—(A.) I do.

Q. You have prepared, have you not, two other Statements?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Is Statement 19 a statement which gives the number of vessels, and their tonnage, which arrived with cargoes from foreign countries, British possessions, and coastwise at different ports?—(A.) That is so, as shown in the Board of Trade returns.

Q. Then you have another Statement, which gives the details of the ports which are called "other ports" on your Statement 19?—(A.) Yes. In Statement 19 you will perhaps observe that on the last line, under the general heading "England and Wales," you have one entry, "other ports." In Statement 20 you have the composition of that figure.

Q. Your Statement No. 20 gives a long list of all the small ports which are grouped together under the term "other ports" on your Statement 19?—(A.) That is so.

Mr. BEVIN: You have not got Peterborough. I ask no questions, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you any light to throw on the question whether there has been a recovery?—(A.) Yes, I think the figures show a decrease in imports for the year 1919 of 30 per cent., for the last two months of the year only 20 per cent., and for January, 1920, 16.8 per cent. I think we have very definite indications of improvement.

Q. The volume of trade has increased as the number of bottoms has increased?—(A.) Yes, it should do so, certainly.

Q. If shipbuilding comes along and gives us the benefit of the ships made, our trade may recover?—(A.) That is so; so long as we can improve our distributive facilities so that the ships can become discharged and get turned round.

Q. In short, you want the present confusion reduced to some kind of order?—(A.) That is so, my Lord.

Q. Was the load line altered during that period?—(A.) I am not sure, my Lord.

Q. I am told it was altered?—(A.) That might

partly explain the increase in average carrying power.

Q. Do you include the value of cargo imported by His Majesty's Government?—(A.) In so far as it is included in the Board of Trade Returns, my Lord. I have looked through those returns to try and see what I could make of that. There are very large totals included there for cargoes which were obviously war cargoes, arms, aeroplanes, ammunition, and so forth. That certainly would be included. So far as I know, everything was included except possibly during the war the cargoes brought in ships under the control of the Admiralty. But as my comparison is limited, as your Lordship knows, to between 1913 and 1919, I do not think that factor should affect the comparison.

Q. You mean your later figure is beyond the period of the Armistice?—(A.) Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: We are very much obliged to you.

Mr. BEVIN: I was wondering whether in the Board of Trade Returns war material passing through the ports is accounted for—that is, for instance, taking the stuff being brought back from France at the moment, the disused war material, and the stuff going out. In the period of 1919 there was a very big volume of war material still passing to Russia, and other places, which had to be handled through the ports. That is not accounted for at all, is it, in the Board of Trade Returns?—(A.) If it was handled in purely Admiralty ships I do not think it would be included. If it went through ordinary ships carrying other cargo, then I think it would be.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a point I wanted to get at. Supposing this case: that the Admiralty carried a lot of stuff not on a war-boat at all, but in a boat specially chartered for Admiralty purposes. Would that be included?—(A.) I do not think so, my Lord—not specially chartered.

Q. And of course that bears upon the other question that I put to you: the moment orders of that kind cease, the ship would be relieved accordingly for regular traffic?—(A.) That is so.

Q. It would enter the statistics and help the volume of trade? (A.) Exactly.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Now, my Lord, I propose to call a representative from the Port of Leith.

The CHAIRMAN: Is there any use for that?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think Leith think there is. They are most anxious to be heard. I am told, my Lord, that the Leith Commissioners feel they ought to put their case before your Lordship's Court.

The CHAIRMAN: Quite right. Who have you from Leith?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Mr. Malcolm Macdonald.

The CHAIRMAN: I think his name is a guarantee. Anyway, Mr. Macdonald will not keep us very long, I am sure.

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MR. MALCOLM MACDONALD, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BRUCE THOMAS.

Q. You are the Honorary Secretary of the Leith Dock Labour Employers' Association?—(A.) I am.

Q. And you come here to give evidence in that capacity?—(A.) I do.

Q. I think that Leith is second only to Glasgow as a Port in Scotland?—(A.) That is so.

Q. I think you have not got at Leith any Joint Committee of Employers and Workmen for settling disputes?—(A.) We have not.

Q. But I think you have got ample machinery for settling disputes with an Arbitration provision, in your Conditions of Dock Labour, which is the agreement made with the Union?—(A.) That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: At what date was that made?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It is dated the first of November, 1916, but it is brought up to date from time to time, and I think the last amendment was made on the 12th of January, 1920. As altered on that date the agreement now stands, and it has a provision for settling any disputes, and if they are unable to arrive at an agreement there is a provision to go to Sir George Askwith; I think he has another name now. However, there is a provision for Arbitration.

The CHAIRMAN: Between whom was that arrangement made?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The arrangement is signed by Mr. Macdonald and by Mr. James Currie, on behalf of the Leith Dock Labour Employers' Association, and for the National Union of Dock Labourers and River Side Workers and the men, by Mr. John McKay and Mr. George Kibble, being President and Secretary of the Leith Branch.

Q. There are one or two general questions I want to put to you before we come to the rates of wages at Leith. I think in normal times Leith may be regarded as a regular Port?—(A.) That is so.

Q. What does the seasonal traffic amount to?—(A.) It is comparatively small, so small as almost to be negligible.

Q. Is it fair to say that for nine months in the year all the men presenting themselves for employment at Leith can get a full week's work?—(A.) Every man willing to work for nine months in the year, or more, can get a full week's work.

Q. And during the remaining three months can all the men presenting themselves for work get from 4 to 5 days per week on the average?—(A.) Not less than that.

Q. I think you have been closely identified with the working people at Leith in various capacities for very many years?—(A.) That is so.

Q. In your view is the casual question a very serious one at Leith?—(A.) It is anything but serious, it is almost negligible; and when it occurs, as his Lordship knows quite well, in the immediate vicinity of Leith there are a number of works, such as the Paraffin Oil Works, Chemical Manufacturing Works, the Gas Works at Granton, and other large public undertakings, which in the late autumn and winter and early spring months are at their busiest, and the casual man finds employment, if he wants it, in that way.

Q. Just to get one other point out of the way, we are not dealing direct with overtime, but I

think you wish to draw attention to a provision in your arrangement with Labour at Leith as to the terms under which overtime may be worked. You know Mr. Bevin has suggested that it is most unreasonable that a man, just at the end of his day, should be called upon to work overtime and so spoil any arrangements he may have made for a free evening?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You provide for that in Leith, do you not?—(A.) I make free to say that I was surprised at some of the statements which Mr. Bevin, doubtless on absolutely indefeasible evidence, although it was not produced, made about men being forced to work overtime when they did not want to.

Q. In Leith overtime is not systematic, is it?—(A.) It is not systematic by any means, but from time to time it is absolutely necessary.

Q. And you have a provision in your agreement that when men start on a job they shall finish the day if required by the foreman unless the job is finished sooner. Any man commencing work in working hours and desiring not to work any overtime, or not to work overtime beyond a certain hour, shall, not less than two hours before the commencement of overtime, give notice of his desire to the foreman; and any man commencing work in overtime hours, and desiring not to work beyond a certain hour, shall before commencing work intimate his desire to the foreman. Those are the arrangements you have in force for the working of overtime?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That enables a man to map out his day?—(A.) He can if he likes. Perhaps I may point out with regard to the first sentence you read, which says that when men start on a job they shall finish the day if required by the foreman, that means a day ending in ordinary hours—that is to say, five o'clock now. He is free to go then. There is no compulsion in any shape or form. If, there being overtime to be worked on that ship, he says two hours before five o'clock he wants not to work overtime, that gives the foreman an opportunity of filling up his gangs.

Q. You have prepared three Statements?—(A.) Yes.

(*The Statement H.42 handed in.)

Q. The first Statement shows the standard rates of wages of dock labourers at Leith and Granton from 1912 to 1920?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The pre-war rate was 7d. per hour, was it not?—(A.) That is so.

Q. And you show the successive increases up to 1919-20?—(A.) Up to the present time indeed.

Q. And per hour it has gone up from 7d. to 19½d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. But there has been a reduction in hours?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The present daily rate is 13s. 2d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What are the rents in Leith? What is the average rent paid by dock labourers?—(A.) Well, from £10 or ten guineas per annum up to perhaps as much as £14 per annum.

Q. Does that include rates and taxes?—(A.) That includes all rates and taxes.

Q. On the second table you have shown the dock labourer's wage on a five and a half day basis, and you have set out below the wages of men working in other industries—men that you consider can fairly be compared to the dock labourers?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It shows that the dock work, 44-hour week, comes to £3 12s. 5d.; flour milling, £3; the timber trade, 3 guineas; rope manufacturers, who work only 40 hours, £2 12s. 11d.; engineering and

* See Appendix No. 132.

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ship-building—these are labourers, are they not?—(A.) These are unskilled labourers.

Q. 47 hours, £3 6s. 7d.; chemical manure manufacturing, £3 5s. 7d.; and then carters, £2 17s. to £2 19s. ?—(A.) That is so.

Q. They have a 48-hour week. In Leith you do practically no piece-work, except pig-iron, I think ?—(A.) Yes; that is a very small thing—a very few thousand tons per annum.

Q. I think you have made an estimate of the cost of conceding these demands at Leith. I think the cost arrived at both for cargo workers and the port authorities' employees is £168,362 10s. ?—(A.) That is so; to which should be added this explanation—that when the port authorities' employees themselves—the officials—went into the figures, they made mine rather less than theirs. They went beyond my figures slightly. When this was made up it was more or less an estimate; they were able to follow with the precise figure for 1919, when ascertained, and they went beyond this a bit so far as the port authority employees are concerned.

Q. So that this figure is inside the mark ?—(A.) Yes; I have no hesitation in saying that.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that exclusive of overtime ?—(A.) That is inclusive of overtime.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: You have considered the question of output at Leith ?—(A.) I have, considerably.

Q. Have you compiled from the books of the shipping company having in pre-war times considerably the largest volume of trade at the port a statement which shows the time taken in discharging and loading cargoes, and the respective costs for the last quarter in 1913 and 1919 ?—(A.) I have prepared such a statement.

Q. Your examination extended over 350 different cargoes, did it not, or different ships ?—(A.) Different cargoes.

Q. For varying reasons you have discarded about seventy of those cargoes as not being absolutely on a par ?—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: You selected those ?—(A.) I disregarded seventy, leaving 276, to which reference has been made.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: You examined 350, and you put seventy aside, because you came to the conclusion there was not a fair comparison to make. That left you with 276 cargoes ?—(A.) That is so.

Q. The effect of your examination of those 276 cargoes comparing the last quarter of 1919 with the last quarter of 1913 was this, was it not: in 1913, for each 100 tons of cargo handled the steamer was in Leith 6.91 hours ?—(A.) That is so.

Q. In 1919, for each 100 tons handled the steamer was in Leith 11.46 hours ?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Then you turned to the cost, I think ?—(A.) I did.

Q. And you found that in 1913 100 tons of cargo handled cost £4 0s. 5d ?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. And in 1919 it cost £16 6s. 11d. ?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. That left a difference between those two dates of £12 6s. 6d. ?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Between 1913 and 1919 your additions to wages were 182 per cent. ?—(A.) That is so, not 118 per cent., as Mr. Bevin's statement had it. The rise is 182 per cent.

Q. So that that increase in your wages would account for £7 6s. 5d. of the £12 6s. 6d. that I have already mentioned ?—(A.) That is correct.

Q. The reduction in working hours from 56 to 44 accounts for £2 9s. 4d., does it not ?—(A.) That and some other alterations made in April of last year.

Q. Leaving unaccounted for per 100 tons £2 10s. 9d. ?—(A.) £2 10s. 9d. unaccounted for.

Q. Is there any explanation that you can see that can be given to account for that £2 10s. 9d. except less work on the part of the men ?—(A.) The establishment and extension of the ca' canny principle, and perhaps I should add, which perhaps you do not know, that when I got at this result I convened a meeting, an unofficial meeting, of the stevedores and some members of the Ship Owners' Association, and put forward the result I had arrived at, and not one man could give any other explanation, and each man was satisfied that that fully explained the difference.

Q. I think you got some information from a firm doing the greater part of the work, one of the shipping firms. Did you ascertain that the reduced output, a part of which is accounted for by the reduction in hours, meant that on certain services three steamers had to be put on where two only were required formerly ?—(A.) I learned that from one firm in particular who are in a position to judge; and since that statement was drawn up, namely ten days ago, the annual report of the Leith Chamber of Commerce, a very important commercial body, was issued. I am a member, but I have no relation with the Chamber beyond that; and there is a paragraph in their annual report dealing with that point.

Q. Do you have difficulty in getting overtime worked in Leith ?—(A.) Occasionally, but not generally.

Q. Have you any congestion in Leith ?—(A.) I am not aware, since the war began, of any goods being detained in Leith by reason of congestion for thirty-six hours after arrival. That obtains to-day, and has obtained practically all through.

The CHAIRMAN: That means there is no congestion ?—(A.) There is no congestion.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I understand, I do not want to go into it in detail, but is it correct that you have had a fair number of difficulties at Leith owing to the men not adopting the machinery that is provided for settling disputes ?—(A.) From time to time there are such difficulties. Perhaps I might add, but for the very excellent relations which exist between the men's representatives and the employers' representatives at Leith these might have been frequent and acute.

Q. You find that you can arrange matters satisfactorily with the representatives of the men, but the men do not always follow what is arranged ?—(A.) That is exactly the position.

Q. Do you know anything about Grangemouth ?—(A.) I am authorised to speak also on behalf of the Grangemouth Dock Labour Employers' Association, of which I am also a member.

Q. The rates are slightly higher at Grangemouth, are they not ?—(A.) They have the appearance of being higher, but that arises from this. In Leith our rate is 13s. 2d. per day, but in addition there are certain allowances, spoken of popularly as "dirty money." If traffic is very disagreeable or dirty to handle, an allowance, which may be as much as 1s. 6d. a day, is made to the men for this. At Grangemouth they have no such

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allowances. Then at Leith we have special classes of traffic—loam and silver sand is one; they are all in the agreement here—for which extra payment again is made, and that does not exist at Grangemouth.

Q. They have a higher rate, but none of these special allowances?—(A.) That is so. The earnings at Grangemouth appear to be a little higher than at Leith, but in fact it is not so.

Q. Are you able to express any view as to whether the Grangemouth men are very jealous of the difference which exists in their favour?—(A.) I think they would insist upon the differential being retained if the minimum is fixed.

Q. You heard it stated or suggested here that the docker is not much good after—I forget the age—40 or 45?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What is your view upon that, having regard to Leith?—(A.) When I heard the statement made here this occurred to me—

Q. I do not think we will go into this in detail, if you do not mind. What is the age of your best men?—(A.) Naturally I should think from 35 to 45, but there are many under and many over. I have records in front of me here of men 67 years of age, and 65 and 64 and 61, working a full day's work the same as any other man.

Q. Are they able?—(A.) We arrange it like this. We have no difference between ship work and quay work in Leith, but the quay work usually, wheeling barrows and that sort of thing, is lighter than working in the holds. The employers and the representatives of the men consider these matters, and try to make it reasonably light for the older men.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I want first to ask you whether it is not a fact that there is a good number of the dockers in Leith who have to live in apartment houses?—(A.) I do not quite understand the expression "Apartment houses." Will you explain?

Q. I understand that a good many of them in Leith have to live in one or two rooms?—(A.) Yes; it is quite possible that a good many of them live in two-roomed houses.

Q. Two-roomed houses?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Would that be the rent of the two-roomed houses which you quoted?—(A.) The £10 or £11 or £12 that I spoke of?

Q. Yes.—(A.) That would be about the rent.

Q. For a two-roomed house?—(A.) For a two-roomed house?

Q. What is the other accommodation of a two-roomed house?—(A.) Sanitary accommodation and that sort of thing.

Q. It is not the sort of Eldorado that a ship-owner would live in, is it? It is not a place where you would like to live in and regard as satisfactory?—(A.) I was brought up in one of the three-roomed houses referred to, Mr. Bevin.

Q. But when you got sufficiently wealthy you shifted. I ask you that quite seriously?—(A.) I do not answer it in that way at all. In other words, "No" is the answer, if you like it in that way.

Q. Directly you could afford to get out of it you got out of it?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. Is not it the natural ambition to get out of it?—(A.) Yes; and I sympathise with it thoroughly.

Q. Is that why you oppose the increase of wages, because of that sympathy?—(A.) Certainly not.

Q. You said that the increase was 182 per cent. I think!—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is counting hour for hour, is not it?—(A.) That is counting the rate per hour the men are getting.

Q. But having regard to the conditions of the grant of the 44 hours, that the man should have the same in the shorter working week as he did in the longer working week—on that basis of a weekly income the increase is 125 per cent., I think?—(A.) But we do not agree, Mr. Bevin, so far as I know, that it should be a weekly wage at all. It was a daily wage, and the increase between the one day and the other is 182 per cent.

Q. Take the daily wage. Your daily wage before the war was 5s. 10d., was not it?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Your daily wage now is 13s. 2d.?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is not 182 per cent., is it? I see in the previous witness's sworn statement, handed in before you went into the box, it is given as 125 per cent. day against day?—(A.) I did not see or hear that statement. I am stating that the rate per hour was raised by 182 per cent.

Q. We are agreed about that, but I am pointing out that on the day, if you take the same day's wages that the man would get at the end of the day for his longer hours, assuming he was working eight hours in 1914 for 5s. 10d., and he was working eight hours now, his increase would be 125 per cent.—5s. 10d. as against 13s. 2d.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is quite correct.

THE WITNESS: Yes, on that calculation.

Mr. BEVIN: The point I am making is that it was a very definite condition under which the 44 hours was granted. You said that there was very little casual labour at Leith, I think? You know Mr. Kibble, do not you?—(A.) Very well indeed. He is a good friend of mine, and I hope I am a good friend of his.

Q. You would not suggest he would send me a wrong statement. You know him very well?—(A.) Very well.

Q. He suggests that for the last three months we have had 400 to 500 men left idle every day—roughly, about 20 per cent. This has just come into my hands as we were informed you were going into the box.—(A.) What is the date of that?

Q. It is passed on to me from the Federation on March 8; it arrived there the same day. It is addressed from 32, Commercial Street, Leith, March 6.—(A.) Yes; I am free to say that the last eight or nine weeks have been abnormally slack in Leith. These figures which Mr. Kibble gives now I am quite prepared to accept; but that is not at all a normal state of affairs.

Q. I put this to you. If these men have to go sometimes for two or three months during an abnormal period of unemployment, how long do you think it is with a fairly normal period before they can, as it were, get their conditions of home life straight again on the wages you are paying in Leith?—(A.) This is an absolutely abnormal time and state of affairs.

Q. I would like to get that point, if you do not mind. We have got your statement that it is abnormal. Supposing I am out of work as a docker, or in very slack work, and very low income for two or three months, and then a fairly normal run comes along, say, for six months if you like, how long on the present state of affairs would it take a workman to get out of debt and difficulty which he had accumulated in the three months he had been in this bad abnormal period?—(A.) If it would not take up the time of the Court too long,

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I would put the matter like this, Mr. Bevin. Suppose that Mr. Kibble's figures are taken as correct, and that during the last two months there has been 20 per cent. of unemployment; that means to say that the earnings of the men, taking them in a lump, are down 20 per cent.; 20 per cent. on a normal week of 72s. 6d.—72s. 5d. to be precise—is about 12s.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: 14s.—(A.) Yes; 14s. Well, I think it is not too much to say that on the present level of things in Leith—and the whole question of dockers and their employment and their unemployment has given me consideration, Mr. Bevin, for twenty-five years, at any rate—I will not go further than that—from my knowledge an average docker could save probably out of his earnings 12s. a week; so that he goes back 1s., 2s., 3s., or 4s. if you like, during these two months of unemployment, of shorter employment. Accordingly, he has got to fall back, if he can, upon what he may have saved already, and he may have to get a pound or two into debt. I think that he would make up any shortage inside of a month, if that is not taking up too much time of the Court.

Mr. BEVIN: You have read the evidence very carefully, and you have seen Professor Bowley's budget, have you not?—(A.) Yes, I heard him give the evidence; I have been in Court.

Q. You saw and heard and possibly appreciated the amount of food to maintain sustenance and physical efficiency that was allowed in that budget, did not you?—(A.) I did; I heard all that was said.

Q. I think you would agree that a docker to carry on his work could live on less food than Professor Bowley has shown in his budget?—(A.) I am afraid I cannot express an opinion about that.

Q. Assuming that to be correct—and he is one of your science witnesses, and it is a minimum budget—your men would not be able to save 12s. a week and live even on that meagre standard, would they?—(A.) From the knowledge I have obtained in many different ways, I think that a docker could live in Leith in very considerable comfort at the present time, with things as they are, and the average family as it will be, on say £3 a week.

Q. You are only human like the workman, are not you?

The CHAIRMAN: I know that you are as much disturbed as I am by these interruptions, Mr. Bevin.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes; I have asked for it to be quiet; I do not want it.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope those behind you will respect your wishes.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to look at it as one human to the other.

(A.) Welcome.

Q. I put it to you that on £3 a week, with the present condition of things, there cannot be very much joy in a workman's life, or the very difficult struggle of the workman's wife from Saturday to Saturday must keep her in a state of absolute anxiety. I put that to you as man to man, and ask you whether you do not think that that would be in the actual position on the figure you have quoted?—(A.) There is no one more to be sympathised with—

Q. I would like you to answer my question.—(A.) I am coming to it—than the working man's

wife in these times when there is an uncertainty about his earnings. No one can share more fully than I do with those anxieties, but I think, as I have already said, that with 60s. a week in the present circumstances a docker and his family could get along.

Q. Do you think we ought to be content with just getting along in the 20th century, with no other outlook upon life at all?—(A.) But it is the abnormal unemployment time we are dealing with just now. We all have to go through times of stress and strain, you know.

Q. Really do you think that rich people, ship-owners and others, go through anything like the time of stress and strain that a Leith docker's wife would have to go through on £3 a week?—(A.) It is not easy, Mr. Bevin, with the utmost sympathy, to put oneself precisely in the position of another person feeling the pinch; but, on reconsideration during the moments that you have afforded me, I have no modification to make to the expression of opinion I have given.

Q. All this is assuming that the workman's wife is most assiduous, careful, she has to ply with her needle, and toil to look after her family, and in the end just get along. You think that is satisfactory?—(A.) I said get along during the present abnormal unemployment time.

Q. Would you say that in Leith, with three months' abnormal period, and only a possible nine months' normal period, the average of the dockers would be much over £3 on present wages?—(A.) The average would be a bit higher than that, I feel quite certain. I got the largest firm of stevedores—master-stevedores, as you call them here—to go into their figures for me all last year, and they gave me a written statement. They employed probably a larger proportion of casual men than most of the employers in Leith, and their earnings for the men worked out at 81s. 1d. per week for twelve months.

Q. That includes overtime and all?—(A.) That is so; I said "the earnings."

Q. Is there any very great encouragement to workmen to put their best into any industry when the average wage, having regard to its present value, for overtime, for other dirty money, every little excess of every kind, only gives him just about £4 a week, which is about 37s. before the war. Is there anything in that to bring out any ambition of the man to feel he has got any part in the industry at all? I ask you.—(A.) I am quite prepared to admit, Mr. Bevin, that that is not a fat thing—let us be clear about it—but economic conditions are conditions that cannot arbitrarily be set aside. I understand that it is one of the conditions laid down about this Inquiry for your side that any additional charge upon the industry is not to be passed on. I do not see how, things being as they are, it is possible to go very far in the way of increasing the earnings of the men without passing that on to the consumer.

Q. I do not think I have said that. What I have said is, I think—to be quite clear—that I do not believe the necessity exists to pass it on.—(A.) That is putting it in another way. Yes, I accept it in that way.

The CHAIRMAN: The Scandinavian trade is a pretty important part of the Leith business, is it not?—(A.) Fairly, yes, but, indeed, since the war it has been not nearly on such a large scale as previously, my Lord.

Q. That is what I was meaning. We know, of course, about the mines in the North Sea, and so on. That has had an effect on the Port of Leith?—

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(A.) That is so. There has not been a ship, for example, let me say, between the Russian Baltic ports and Leith since the war began. That is a fairly substantial thing.

Q. I was thinking rather of the Swedish and Norwegian trade. Was that affected during the war?—(A.) It was very materially affected.

Q. I am interested in this arrangement which you speak of about the arbitration between the employers' side and the workmen's side. Have you found that that arrangement is conducted harmoniously?—(A.) It has worked so harmoniously that we have not once had to call in an arbitrator.

Q. I think that is best of all. One thing struck me in your evidence, and that was about the notice being given a couple of hours before the men strike off the overtime?—(A.) Before the end of the working time and commencing overtime.

Q. That is a most sensible thing, so far as getting on with the work is concerned, but do the men take advantage of that?—(A.) They do not often intimate their intention not to work overtime.

Q. And when they do not they go on working?—(A.) They go on working—of course the meal-time being afforded them.

Q. So far as not doing the agreed upon hours is concerned, you do not seem to be troubled with that. That would be a breach of contract. Do you follow what I mean?—(A.) No.

Q. Assume that they have to work on till 12 o'clock and then knock off, and assume they have to work on then from 1 o'clock to 5 o'clock and then knock off; in Leith has there been the practice which has been spoken to in regard to other places for them to go away before their time?—(A.) Yes. You know Leith pretty well, I am sure.

Q. I have heard of such a place.—(A.) I have seen this scores and scores of times happening; you would find the men ten minutes' walk away from their working place at five and ten minutes before they should stop; that is to say, at five or ten minutes to twelve I have seen hundreds of them at a time ten minutes' walk from where they should have been working. I have letters of explanation from the people —

Q. I can only tell you that if that was all the quarrel we should not have heard much about it in this Court. As to the rents, I think you and I know what is called a but and ben house, that is to say, a house that has a room and a kitchen which is also a living room?—(A.) That is so, my Lord.

Q. Then there are the closet arrangements in addition?—(A.) Yes. I own some of those myself, and they are kept, I hope, in the very best possible condition.

Q. That is the £10 to £14 house that you referred to?—(A.) That would be £10 to £12, and then, with an additional apartment, giving a third sleeping place, you would add £2 or £2 10s. to that; the £15 house would have three apartments and sanitary and other accommodation.

Q. What kind of steamers were those that you referred to. Was that the Scandinavian trade?—(A.) No, that is more the Dutch and the Belgian trade, which is opening up again—the short sea trade, as I say, to Antwerp, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and other places in that quarter.

Q. That has a serious effect on the trade and the interests of the people as a whole?—(A.) It is a very serious matter. I was examined about the financial effect of the ca'canny policy, whereby in the statement it is shown that on this

very point it is taking 11½ hours to do what pre-war was done in seven hours, the effect of which is this, that the steamer is not making as many voyages per annum. She cannot do it. Accordingly, that is practically a shortage of tonnage, and that means to the employer that he is having three times the capital —

Q. All that has to be reasoned out. Just one word on this casual question?—(A.) Yes, I am in earnest about that.

Q. Do not you think some arrangement should be made under which they should be registered, and under which some arrangement should be made for casual labour?—(A.) Those are two points. We will take the registering first. In February last year, at the instance of one of the Ministries here, the Port Labour Committee—perhaps I made a slip of the tongue.

Q. No. You are just expressing what we feel, that we do not know which Ministry it is.—(A.) That is just my point. They approached us with a view to registration. I have been a member since it was formed of the Port Labour Committee, and convener of the sub-Committee by which the detail work is done. We selected all the men—a painful duty—when they were called up for service and so on. They approached us, and asked us if we would institute a registration scheme. A meeting was convened of the principal shipowners and master stevedores on the one side and representatives of the men upon the other. I am speaking of February of last year. The representative from the Ministry explained fully his scheme, and it was put to the men's representatives. The men's representatives said it would not be entertained by those they represented.

Q. There would be no registration?—(A.) There would be no registration. When you come to the second point in your question, about allowance when unemployment is on, I have, speaking personally, the heartiest sympathy with any such endeavours as would reduce the anxiety to which Mr. Bevin has very properly referred. But there is this consideration. Leith is a transit port. Between two-thirds and three-fourths of the goods which pass to and fro through Leith are not for Leith or its immediate vicinity. They are taken to Liverpool, Limerick, and all sorts of places, and they come from Lerwick, Glasgow, Galashiels, and all such places. I submit that such a consideration as is now before the Court is a national consideration, and that the people of Leith should not be taxed when a thing like that occurs, and that any such allowance should come out of a general fund created as you may please, and not be wholly borne by any class of the community, whether shipowners or merchants, or any others who may be simply servants of the whole public.

Q. I rather took it that you sympathised with the idea of the workman looking upon himself as a man whose year was divided into nine months of employment and, possibly, three months of loss of employment.—(A.) Can I put it in this way, nine months of full employment and three months of casual employment.

Q. Three months of broken employment, of under-employment?—(A.) Yes.

Q. It was in that view that you thought he should be laying something by?—(A.) I think so.

Q. That shows, does not it, that you think he ought to get a wage which would enable something to be laid by?—(A.) I quite agree.

Q. And that puts you up against Mr. Bevin's figures very strongly, because you must thereby make a provision during all the time of employ-

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ment for the lean season. Do not you think that it is 6 and half a dozen; either you must give him larger wages to let him be his own banker and provider, or you must give him a less allowance of wages but a guarantee that his casual under-employment will be reckoned in his favour?—(A.) My suggestion is a State arrangement.

Q. I know. You are wanting the industry to bear it in the one case if he is his own banker, but you want the State to bear it if he is not his own banker. I do not quite follow that. However, you may be right. I just wanted to get your view.—(A.) That is my personal view.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Before the Witness goes, there was one Statement I ought to have drawn attention to. It is the third of those that were handed in by Mr. Macdonald. It gives the rates of pay of the men in the employment of the Leith Dock Commissioners.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, we have just seen that Statement.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: I thought I ought just to call attention to it.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, that is all the evidence that we on this side intend to offer to the Court.

Mr. ABADY: My Lord, I am sorry, after that observation of Mr. Bruce Thomas, to make an endeavour to prolong the evidence, but if your Lordship grants the application which has been suspended I think that the time occupied will be very short. The Witness, I beg to remind you, whose evidence I would like to give to the Court, is Mr. Alfred Brooks, on behalf of the London Waterside Manufacturers. In my view, his evidence would be of assistance to the Court, because he can speak on specific points which I have not observed have been exactly touched upon by any witness.

The CHAIRMAN: Is he your only Witness, Mr. Abady?

Mr. ABADY: Yes, my Lord, he is my only Witness for the London Waterside Manufacturers. Now, with respect to the London Chamber of Commerce, the position is this, that the London Chamber who instruct me have observed what happened to the application the other day, and have instructed me to respectfully urge upon the Court the desirability of the Court, before closing the evidence at this stage, hearing evidence given by the Chamber of Commerce as to the probable effects of the increased port charges on the trade and commerce of the Port of London. Obviously that might mean a little and it might mean a lot in quantity of evidence, but two gentlemen are here, one representative of the Australasian trade, and the other representative of the cattle food trade, which, of course, is an article of commerce which percolates right through our whole life, and affects cost of living in many ways. If your Lordship will permit me, I do not think they would be in the box very many minutes.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well. Put your Waterside Manufacturers' Witness in, and we will see whether that bargain is kept.

MR. ALFRED BROOKS, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. ABADY.

Q. You are a member of the Council of the London Waterside Manufacturers' Association?—(A.) I am.

Q. You are a member of the Medway Conservancy Board?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Are you Chairman of the Incorporated Association of Kent and Essex Authorities, Owners, and Traders?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You are a member of the Council of the Gravesend and Dartford Chamber of Commerce, of the London Chamber of Commerce, and I think you are one of the managing directors of the Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers, Ltd., also of the British Portland Cement Manufacturers, and several other similar companies?—(A.) Yes, I am.

Q. I think that the Waterside Manufacturers are an important body, whose aggregate capital is about 100 million pounds sterling, and who carry on business in and about the Thames?—(A.) That is so.

Q. With respect to your own Companies, you manufacture cement?—(A.) Yes.

Q. That is the largest industry on the Thames and the Medway, is it not?—(A.) Yes, the largest individual industry.

Q. You have works scattered up and down the riverside, and you handle a large quantity of materials of various kinds?—(A.) That is so. We handle about 300 million tons per annum at the present rate.

Q. Do you employ about 1,200 transport workers, that is to say men engaged in warehouses and wharves filling and loading cement and unloading coal on tubs, barges, and lighters?—(A.) That is so.

Q. You have got about 6,000 other workmen, I think?—(A.) Yes, at the present time.

Q. Will you tell the Court very briefly what was the relative position of yourselves as employers of labour with the labour employed in the docks by the Harbour Authorities before the war?—(A.) Do you mean the numbers?

Q. No, the relative position with respect to the earnings and so on?—(A.) Before the war we paid an average wage to the ordinary unskilled labourer of 5d. to 5½d. an hour. That was slightly lower than the dock rate. We never had any difficulty in getting the number of men we required, because our work was constant and regular, whereas the rate in the dock had to be somewhat higher because of its irregular character.

Q. What is the relative position now?—(A.) The position now is that we cannot get the number that we require. We have been using every endeavour to get up since the Armistice to our pre-war output, and at the present time we have only succeeded in getting it up to 49 per cent.

Q. Your wages are, of course, not on anything like the same level as they were before the war?—(A.) Oh, no. The ordinary unskilled labourer has risen from an average of 5½d. to 1s. 1½d. per hour; the semi-skilled labour has gone up from 6½d. to 1s. 3½d.; the skilled labour from 9d. to 1s. 9½d. per hour. Piecework (and a great deal of our work is done piecework), which averaged from 6d. to 8d. per hour before the war, is now 1s. 6d. to 1s. 9d., and in many cases 2s.

Q. Have you taken out or had taken out particulars of the average weekly earnings of representative men, men who represent the average in

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your different works!—(A.) I have had it taken out in two of our largest works, which are close to Tilbury works.

The CHAIRMAN: We will take it from Mr. Brooks that the skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled men have the wages that he mentions. Do you want to go further than that?

Mr. ABADY: I rather wanted to get from Mr. Brooks something with regard to the regularity of labour. (*To the Witness*) Is it a fact that, with regular employment and piecework conditions, men working at those rates, which are about the same rates as the dock rates, do, as a fact, earn substantial weekly wages?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Those are the figures I wanted you to put before the Court?—(A.) I have had this taken out for the last four weeks to see really whether the figures actually bore out the impression that it had produced on my own mind. We have reduced, by agreement with the Unions, the working time to 48 hours per week, paying them the same rate for the 48 hours as we had previously paid for the 54 hours. I have taken out on one of the statements here the actual hours employed. The other one, unfortunately, has not got it on, but the work is similar, and the earnings are similar, and therefore I think one may assume that the hours are similar. It shows that there is very little overtime. The men are earning on an average, I should say, about £4 7s. per week.

The CHAIRMAN: Take the man who is up to 1s. 1½d. per hour.—(A.) Those are piece-work earnings. Those are the actual transport workers, who are working at loading and unloading vessels at our wharves. We are paying them at piece-work rates, which produce for a 48-hour week about 90s., and yet we have a difficulty in maintaining sufficient men at that work to do all that we are prepared to do and have the material to do if we could get the labour to do it.

Q. If they were at time-rate, what would they be getting?—(A.) They were paid by the ton, but it works out at about the 1s. 9d. which I have given you.

Q. I was wanting the 1s. 1½d.—(A.) That is the unskilled men.

Q. That is the minimum man whom we are wanting to investigate.

Mr. ABADY: I wanted Mr. Brooks to put in these figures, because I think they show as a fact that very few of the men actually are rated on the minimum basis, but work on piece-work. I think Mr. Brooks wanted to suggest to the Court that it is in the direction of getting permanent employment for the men in the docks—that is to say, instead of casuals—

The CHAIRMAN: I gather what Mr. Brooks's view is. What I was anxious about—however, do not let me interrupt you, please; let Mr. Brooks give any statement he likes.

Mr. ABADY: I will just hand those in. I do not want to make any further comment upon them.

The WITNESS: What I wished to say was this: I chose these men as being men comparable with the dock labourer. They are similar men. They are stevedores, and they are sometimes working for us and sometimes for the Port Authority; and the men are more or less interchangeable. But I want to show from our experience the danger

which we see in materially increasing the wage which has been paid, for we are finding already that men with such earnings as these are not disposed even to work the 48 hours per week, and that there is an increasing practice of keeping "St. Monday" and, unfortunately, "St. Saturday" as well; and we fear if the wage is greatly increased, assuming conditions to remain the same as they are, that tendency will increase, and instead of getting more work done we shall get less.

The CHAIRMAN: Is that the point, or is there any other point?

Mr. ABADY: Yes; the next point is this: The increases which have been granted since the beginning of the war have caused the dock authorities to increase their charges by 85 per cent., have they not?—(A.) I believe so.

Q. Can you give the Court the effect of that upon the article that you deal in, which is a staple article, and one which can be taken, I understand, as representative of other classes of goods?—(A.) I have taken out the effect.

Q. Just give us it shortly. There is the direct result, and there is the indirect result.—(A.) The cost of lighterage, for instance, has gone up already through the rises that have taken place in the wages in the port since 1914—that is to say, the cost of handling staves, which is a commodity which we handle a good many of, has gone up from 10s. to 24s. per standard, an increase of 140 per cent. The cost of loading into craft and lighterage and unloading of coal has gone up from 1s. 7d. per ton to 3s. 4d. per ton, an increase of 110 per cent.; the cost of loading and lighterage of cement has gone up from 1s. 3d. to 2s. 10d., an increase of 126 per cent. The increased wages already given to our workmen have had the result of sending up the cost of labour per ton of cement manufactured from 3s. 4d. to 13s. 7d. per ton, which is an increase of 9s. 3d. I have not worked out the percentage in that case.

Q. Supposing the minimum wage of 16s. were granted, and that it had just the same effect on output as the increases already granted, have you calculated what further increase that would mean in the cost of commodities?—(A.) I have estimated that the actual cost to us of the direct increase in the dock labour of the goods of ours which pass over wharves and quays, not handled by us but handled for us, would be 1s. per ton extra; that our lightermen's wages would go up and cost us 11d. per ton extra; the increased cost of packages about 8d. per ton; and I have assumed that if we had to give this 42 per cent. to the lightermen and to the stevedores and that it would be the same as is asked for by the dock labourers, then we might calculate that the cost of our labour would probably be affected to the extent of 30 per cent.; and if that assumption is correct that would add another 4s. 8d., which would make the increased cost of cement, through this action of increasing the dock labour, another 7s. 3d. per ton.

Q. That is added to the increase already of 9s. 3d.—(A.) Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: That would be 20s. 10d.?

Mr. ABADY: No, 16s. 6d.—(A.) The increase in wages has already been 9s. 3d., and this would be a further 7s. 3d., which would make 16s. 6d.

Q. What bearing has that upon the export of cement. Will you just explain that briefly. First of all, tell the Court what the importance of the export of cement is?—(A.) The export of cement from the Port of London (which is the largest manufacturing centre in the United King-

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dom for cement) in pre-war times was about 600,000 to 700,000 tons per annum. It was a very important feature of the port, because it was a very suitable material for the stiffening of ships, and we know from shipowners that they would be very sorry to lose the cement, which is one of the few things which are to be readily obtained in the Port of London for such relative positions in the cargo. In all our previous experience prior to the war, the foreign trade has always been done at a cut price, and if you greatly increase the cost of production of cement in the Port of London, when times again become normal we fear that we shall entirely lose the export trade.

Q. Already are you being under-cut by the United States, for instance.—(A.) We had a very large market in the Argentine and in Brazil, but shortly after the Armistice the Americans poured huge quantities of cement both into the Argentine and into Brazil, and those markets for the present are closed. The Americans put it in there at a price which we could not touch. Of course, at the moment there is such a world shortage that there are other markets opened, but when things become normal and the vacuum which was caused by the war is filled up, we look very seriously upon the situation of the export trade.

Q. You have given the estimated effect of the demand upon the cost of cement and upon wages generally. Assuming that on the statistics placed before the Court the average earnings of men working in the docks are not commensurate with the cost of living, what do you think the remedy is? Have you any remedy to suggest to the Court; because your evidence is rather leading to the conclusion that you do not favour that the basic rate should be increased. Have you any other alternative practical suggestions to make?—(A.) I think that steps should be taken to get rid of the casual nature of the labour there, either by registration, or some scheme that would regularise the employment.

Q. Do you favour piecework?—(A.) Yes, I favour piecework. My experience is that if you attempt to fix a guaranteed earning, you will cut down the efficiency of your labour as far as its result is concerned. Unfortunately, during the war, circumstances have been so abnormal that we have had to give what is called make-up money.

Mr. ABADY: Yes, that is a point which I wanted to elicit. If I may interrupt my witness for a moment, my Lord, I think this would be interesting to you, because it bears upon suggestions which have been made about maintenance money to avoid casual labour.

The CHAIRMAN: The witness will explain his view.—(A.) During the extraordinary difficulties of the war we had a certain amount of labour sent to us by Government Departments because of the urgency. Control was taken over by the Army Council; they insisted that they must have cement, and they had to endeavour to find labour for us. A good deal of the labour which was sent to us was not accustomed to our class of work, and was very inefficient, and we then began a system of making up the men's earnings. Unfortunately, in the circumstances of the war, we could not discontinue that when we had once started it, and it was the subject of conversation and agreement between us and the Union leaders that this was a vicious scheme, and that its results were not satisfactory. We found that the men were not disposed to put their backs into the work. I have had it said to me by men whom I have known for years:—

“Look here, master, we are accustomed to the work and can earn good money at piecework. Here are gangs working alongside of us who are having this make-up money, and they are getting nearly as much as we are without a wet shirt”; and we found that the men would not work if the guarantee money is sufficient to meet their needs; they will not put their backs into it, and we cannot get the work done.

Mr. ABADY: My Lord, there was just one other topic, but I do not know whether it is relevant to this part of the inquiry. I understand from my instructions that Mr. Brooks thinks that the rigidity of the conditions, that is to say, the fixation of the hours of work, is very hampering.

The CHAIRMAN: That is another point.

Mr. ABADY: Yes, but I did not know whether you would like him to say anything about that while he was in the box.

The CHAIRMAN: Not at this stage.

Mr. ABADY: Then that is all I wish to ask.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You complain that you cannot get sufficient men at the present moment?—(A.) That is so.

Q. That is in the transport section?—(A.) Not only in the transport section, but in all sections.

Q. But you are particularly short in the transport section, are you not?—(A.) We are particularly short in the filling and loading.

Q. Do they come within this scheme?—(A.) As soon as you served notice for this 16s. per day we immediately had similar applications from our own men.

Q. But have you received a letter for these men from Mr. Robert Williams, of the Transport Workers' Federation?—(A.) We got our demands through the General Federation of Labour.

Q. Then you are merely advertising your own troubles in advance, are you not? You have not received an application?—(A.) We have received it for our lightermen and for our tug hands.

Q. I am asking about the men inside, the men you were referring to where you were short?—(A.) We have received applications from our stevedores' gangs to have a similar increase, and to have the 16s. per day.

Q. That is agreed between us; but you were saying that you were short-handed in the factory?—(A.) Yes.

Q. This application has nothing to do with your factory, has it?—(A.) No, but my opinion is this. The whole of the manufacturers in the port employ to such a large extent similar labour to what is employed at the docks, and it has always been more or less interchangeable, that if those men have 2s. per hour there, we shall get a demand which at any rate will be equal to a 30 per cent. advance as against the 42 per cent. for which they are asking.

Q. Is there any reason at all why your stevedores at the moment should not be paid what every other stevedore is paid in London?—(A.) I do not quite follow.

Q. You are not at the present moment paying your stevedores and others exactly the same rates that the Transport Workers conditions imply in London. are you?—(A.) We are paying them the

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rates agreed with the Union at negotiations with us.

Q. That is not answering my question. I do not think that we want to evade one another!—
(A.) No.

Q. We just want to get at the facts.—(A.) I am trying to answer.

Q. You are not paying the same rates of wages as, say, the Allan Line, or the other big ship-owners of London are paying, are you?—(A.) We pay by the ton. I do not know how they do it; but our stevedores earn over 2s. per hour.

Q. You are not paying the same time rates on any time work on the cement, are you?—(A.) We do not do any loading by time work.

Q. Do you pay your lightermen the same wages as the London lightermen's conditions lay down?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You observe them? (A.) Yes.

Q. Then is there any reason why the tariffs of London which the other people have been able to agree about should not apply to your people?—(A.) As far as I know there is no disagreement whatever between us and the men upon the rates that we are paying.

Q. But are your transport workers working 48 hours or 44 hours?—(A.) 48 hours.

Q. Then why are you not under the 44 hours' week the same as the rest of the port of London for your transport workers?—(A.) Because our transport workers are governed by an Award given by the Committee on Production which fixes it at 48 hours, and that was agreed to by both sides.

Q. An Award which was given by the Committee on Production rather indicates that there must have been disagreement, or you would have not gone to the Committee on Production, would you? (A.) We went to the Committee on Production on certain portions of the matters which were being discussed between us, and it was an agreed point, to shorten the matter before the Court, that we were prepared to give a 48-hour week and a week's full pay on holiday, and those matters were merely made part of the Award by consent of both sides.

Q. Does that apply to your transport workers?—(A.) It did to these men who came under the award. The lightermen do not come under the award. We work under the Lord Brassey Award, and the variations which have come into operation.

Q. Do you not think that if you want work done on ship in stowing and discharging and things of that kind, if you came absolutely within the Port of London conditions for dock workers, you would get the men you require for your transport workers?—(A.) I do not think so. We never had any difficulty before the war.

Q. But was it not a fact that before the war, in 1913, we had a million and a-half unemployed, and was it not the great economic pressure which had driven the men to sell their souls to firms like yours at a miserable sweated wage such as that which you have quoted at that time of 5½d. per hour?—(A.) I said that 5½d. per hour was the rate at which we started the unskilled men, but that the bulk of our wages were on piece-work, and we paid much more.

Q. In 1914 there was not a sweated rate fixed by any Trade Board in this country as low as you were paying in your great combine. That is absolutely sweated work.—(A.) I say this, that we have always had the reputation of being men who have stood in the front rank of employers of labour, and we have endeavoured always sympathetically to consider the workmen's side of the

question as well as the other, and we have never had any difficulty in times of slackness or in times of pressure until now in getting ample labour; and men were anxious to get employment with us because of the opportunity which it gave them to earn good wages.

Q. I submit to you that you were classified by the labour movement as a sweating institution at that time, and every rate which you have quoted to-day for one of the most arduous and objectionable industries in this country was one of the lowest paid. Now, I want to ask you another question. You have quoted the increase in labour; what was the price of cement in 1914?—
(A.) The average wholesale price was about 25s.

Q. What is it now?—(A.) About 62s.

Q. What is that percentage?—(A.) Somewhere about 140 per cent., perhaps, is it not? I have not run it out.

Q. It is 140 per cent. that your commodity has gone up?—(A.) Yes.

Q. How much on labour?—(A.) Of that I showed you that the cost in labour had gone up 9s. 3d.

Q. The cost has gone up from 25s. to 62s., and of that labour has accounted for 9s. 3d. on your own figures?—(A.) Yes.

Q. What was the cost of labour per ton of cement before the war?—(A.) 3s. 4d.

Q. What is it now?—(A.) 13s. 7d.

Q. What is the percentage?—(A.) I say that I have not worked that out, but 3s. 4d. to 13s. 7d. is about three times, is it not?

Q. What is the percentage of the total cost which you get per ton? You had 3s. 4d. to 25s., and now you have 13s. to 62s.—(A.) I have some figures here to do with the matter, all of which I am prepared to give before the Profiteering Committee, and if I may just look at this I think, perhaps, I can answer that question.

Q. I know that you have been there; I am on that Committee as well.—(A.) It may interest you to know that we are not making as much profit per ton on our home trade now as we were before the war.

Q. That just brings me to my point. Did not your Company always argue in the past that owing to your low rate of profit before the war cement ought to be treated as a specially low class of goods? Were not those the instructions to all your agents—to put up that argument to us?—(A.) I do not quite follow.

Q. Take your cement being delivered from the Thames to Bristol, coastwise; or take any other port. Were not your directions to your agents to raise every objection to every advance or change of conditions for the dockers, on the ground that there was no profit on the home-distributed cement?—(A.) I know nothing one way or the other; it would not come before me, and I never had anything to do with issuing any such instructions, and I am not aware that any such were issued.

Q. I have listened to the argument so many times that it has no weight with me. Supposing it can be shown that on the human needs, the basic wage upon which the men could live should be the figure which should be guaranteed to a man or paid to a man to maintain his family, can you show any justifiable reason why it should not be paid?—(A.) Certainly if it can be shown that a man requires a certain sum to maintain himself and family in health, the industries of the country ought to provide such a wage.

Q. And if we can satisfy this Court that the amount which the dockers have asked is at least

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the minimum which ought to be established to give the docker a decent life, and to develop decent citizenship, then you think it ought to be paid?—

(A.) If you can establish the fact that it is necessary for a man to have a wage such as you stated, then I say it is the duty of the Court to give it to him.

Q. Thank you.—(A.) But my view is this: that there must be something wrong in your estimate, because we find that men who have the opportunity of earning something like the figure you are asking for do not make use of that opportunity; so that I think there is something wrong in your calculation.

Q. I put it to you that one of the reasons why men cannot follow your piecework system for six days in the week is because they have to go at such a tremendous speed to earn any wages at all that it is impossible for them to keep up the physical energy to carry on week after week?—(A.) They did it for years, and looked healthy and well on it.

Mr. BEVIN: Then they must have drawn the calories out of the cement.

Re-examined by Mr. ABADY.

Q. With respect to the rates, base rates are more or less nominal, are they not? All your work is carried on on piecework, is it not?—(A.) Practically so; or with semi-skilled or skilled work, of course.

Q. Is it not a fact that according to these tables the average wages of the men run at about £4 per week?—(A.) Yes.

Q. With respect to the allegation that yours is a sweated trade, and that there are bad conditions, do you not work under a Whitley Council? Is there not a Whitley Council for your trade?—(A.) There is a Whitley Council for the cement trade. Ours was the fiftieth which was set up.

Q. And you meet the men there on the Council and amicably discuss questions which interest you both?—(A.) Certainly.

Mr. ABADY: I think that is all I want to ask you.

Mr. BEVIN: There is an application in now.

The CHAIRMAN: Has your firm paid Excess Profits?—(A.) No, we have still a deficiency to make up.

Q. I gather that your view is this, is it not: that if this increase is granted it will naturally be demanded by your men doing a similar class of labour?—(A.) Yes, the whole of the men are all mixed up together; they are all interchangeable.

Q. What is your view about this increase? Are you against any increase, or if not, how much do you say it should be?—(A.) One's views, of course, are altered by the bread matter which is in the paper to-day. I think that obviously there must be something to make up that price of bread.

Q. You have come here, taking a boat of your own, so to speak. You will not be content with the conduct of the employers' case who have skilled counsel, but you choose a line of your own. In your own vessel, from your own standpoint, you not being companioned by the rest of the great body of port employers, is it your view, or is it not, that there should be a substantial increase of wages in the Port of London?—(A.) My view is that to increase the dock labourer to 16s., that is,

to 2s. per hour, would be an unwise step in the interests of the Port of London.

Q. May I repeat my question to you for the third time: is it your view that there should be should not be a substantial increase of wages to the dock labourer in London?—(A.) Well, my Lord, if we really knew what were the actual earnings of the men, I think you would be in a better position. I have been in the Court several times. We have had brought before us the information about the 11s. 8d. being the earnings, but I live in the neighbourhood, and have done all my life, and our experience is that you cannot get even bricklayers and plasterers to work at their trade because they can do so well at the docks working as dock labourers.

Q. I do not feel inclined to ask you a fourth time— (A.) I am sorry, my Lord.

Q. I do not feel inclined to ask you a fourth time, but you are nearer an answer this last time than you were before, so I give you a fourth chance: is it your view, or is it not your view, that there should be a substantial increase in the wages of the dock labourer in London?—(A.) If the men, working the eight hours—

Q. I do not ask you to put any hypothesis at all; I am asking you a plain question, but if you think your previous answers are sufficient, I shall not press you.—(A.) I am most anxious to answer your question, frankly and fairly.

Q. Why can you not say so?—(A.) Because I agree that if a man was only earning 11s. 8d. there should be an increase, but I say that the actual wages they are earning do not warrant an increase.

Q. You know that we are investigating the case of a minimum wage, particularly a minimum wage for timeworkers in the Port of London. Can you apply my question to that situation? Are you of opinion that there should or should not be a substantial increase in the minimum wage paid to timeworkers in the Port of London?—(A.) I think there should be no such increase as would vastly increase the actual earnings of the men, because I believe that the earnings which they are getting now, with really a very short period of overtime, are so high that they materially interfere with the industry of the port.

Q. All that we can make of it is that your answer is nearer no than yes?—(A.) Yes, that is so.

Q. I think you said that there were bricklayers and plasterers working for less.—(A.) I said there were bricklayers and plasterers preferring to work as labourers in the dock because of the wage they would earn there, rather than work at their skilled trades.

Q. Can you give us any instance of bricklayers in that position?—(A.) Yes.

Q. If so, who were their masters?—(A.) I have a letter here from one of the largest builders in Gravesend. I asked him if he would mind putting into writing what he had told me on the telephone, and he said: "With reference to our conversation on Thursday last"—this is a letter dated February 14—"we have not had time to get much actual proof as to the mechanics who go across from this side of the water"—that is, the Kent side of the water—"to work as dock labourers, but it is our opinion that certainly over 50 per cent. of the bricklayers and plasterers who were at work in Gravesend in 1914 are now at work at Tilbury as dock labourers, and will not return to their trade owing to the high rate of wages they are getting.—W. H. Archer and Son."

Q. Is that what you rely upon?—(A.) That is

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one statement I rely upon. The Chairman of the Builders' Employers on the Essex side had made a similar statement to me.

Q. Have you any lack of output?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Compared with pre-war?—(A.) We are only producing 49 per cent. of what we were before the war.

Q. What is the reason of that?—(A.) Shortage of labour and shortage of coal. When we can get coal, we have not been able to get additional labour. Now we have got a little additional labour we cannot get coal.

Q. Is the shortage of labour accounted for by the men thinking that they will do better in other employment?—(A.) They will do better at the docks than they do with us.

Q. So that of course it is as plain as a pikestaff, is it not, that if the men at the docks do still better, you will be still worse?—(A.) The reason I quoted our figures was to show that with our wages apparently higher than the nominal wage at the dock, and our men earning from £4 to £5 per week, the men were evidently able to do so much better at the dock that they could get their thousands and we could not get them.

Q. On paper the attractions look all in favour of the men coming to you?—(A.) That is so.

Q. But in fact the attractions seem to be elsewhere?—(A.) In fact they earn such high money at the docks that they can earn in about three or four days so much that they do not work any more.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Mr. BEVIN: I should like to say in regard to this bricklayers' business, that if a bricklayer goes to work on the dock he has to transfer from one union to another. We represent about 40,000 men in London, and in our experience we have transferred no members of the Bricklayers' Society to our organisation.

The CHAIRMAN: Have you any official of the Bricklayers' Union here?

Mr. BEVIN: Not in Court, no; but I can get one before the case is over, my Lord, if you desire it. But I have my own District Secretary from London, through whom transfers would have to pass, and Alderman Devenay, the Mayor of West Ham—I see he has gone now—who was the previous District Secretary, a member of the Port of London Authority; and in neither case have we any knowledge of taking any bricklayers into our society.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Matthews, would you mind considering yourself still on oath in this case?

Mr. MORRISON MATTHEWS: With pleasure, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it the case that the dock labour under your able management attracts away from the bricklayers' trade large numbers of men?

Mr. MATTHEWS: I have no evidence in regard to Tilbury Dock, my Lord, but I have evidence in regard to the Victoria and Albert Dock in that respect, but the degree I am not sure of. That is to say, I have taken depositions from casual men recently employed in the Victoria and Albert Dock, and I find amongst them bricklayers and joiners, and of course practically every other known calling, even up to the semi-professional class. There is the same sort of thing happening at Tilbury, but the question of degree I have no information about.

The CHAIRMAN: There was a letter read to us to the effect that you were taking away half of one firm's workers. Had you ever heard such a suggestion until to-day?

Mr. MATTHEWS: No, I never have. It certainly does not happen with the Port Authority.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Matthews. I saw you there, and I thought we would take advantage of your presence.

Mr. MATTHEWS: Thank you, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Abady, is that your case?

Mr. ABADY: That is the only witness for the London Waterside Manufacturers. I do not know whether you desire to hear the witnesses for the London Chamber of Commerce?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, well?

Mr. ABADY: They are quite short, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: I am afraid we will have to ask you to be here to-morrow morning at half-past ten. It is, I may say, somewhat inconvenient to everybody. We are taking it from you that, representing the London Chamber of Commerce, you think their importance demands that they should have a separate representation, and that you are able to assure us that the evidence will be very brief.

Mr. ABADY: It will be brief, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well, at half past ten to-morrow.

(Adjourned till to-morrow morning at half past ten.)

NINETEENTH DAY.

Wednesday, March 10th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair)

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. BEN TILLET M.P.

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON

Mr. G. H. INCE

} Secretaries.

TRANSPORT WORKERS: COURT OF INQUIRY.

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord, I would like permission this morning, if I may, to call one witness just to give evidence as to the inquiry made in the Port of London this morning into the statement made by the last witness last evening as to the employment of skilled tradesmen in the docks.

Mr. ABADY: If I may be allowed to make this observation, I would point out that Mr. Bevin had an opportunity of cross-examining Mr. Brooks yesterday. You yourself kindly put questions to him, and you addressed Mr. Matthews, who was in Court, and obtained confirmation in a general sense of what Mr. Brooks said.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Brooks has given evidence, and we do not feel that we could exclude the evidence of this witness on a specific point. If Mr. Matthews had been able to give us specific evidence, we would have held that sufficient, but he was not able to do so.

Mr. FREDERICK THOMPSON, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. You are the District Secretary of the Dockers' Union for the London district?—(A.) Yes.

Q. As a result of the statement made in the Court yesterday you organised for this morning an examination of what we describe as show tickets, or at least an examination of the men employed in certain of the docks throughout London?—(A.) Yes, a thorough examination.

Q. What docks did you send to?—(A.) The main docks: the Tilbury Dock, the Victoria Dock, and Albert Dock.

Q. Did you in your examination of the cards, or your officers from whom you have taken the reports, put questions to the men as to whether they were members of other trades?—(A.) Yes. In the show cards they have had 36 men engaged altogether. Every card has been examined of every man that went to work at the respective docks.

The CHAIRMAN: Last night?—(A.) This morning.

Mr. BEVIN: How many bricklayers, joiners, and other tradesmen have you found?—(A.) We have not been able to find one. The only statement we could get in any way substantiating the statement which was made in the box yesterday by Mr. Brooks was that two men who are bricklayers, one named Nichols, left their employment 14 years ago because they were not paid trade union rates.

Q. Those are the only two men you found?—(A.) Those are the only two men I found. I have written statements which have been put together by the men.

Q. That is the result of the work of 36 representatives of the Union this morning?—(A.) That is so.

Cross-examined by Mr. ABADY.

Q. Did the examination extend to every man who was booked on at these respective docks?—(A.) The examination so far as the Tilbury Dock was concerned took place before the men went in, and no man was taken on without his Trade Union card this morning. In the Albert and Victoria

Docks the men went to 17 calling-on places altogether in those docks. Every man was examined for the primary purpose of ascertaining whether the statement made in the box yesterday was true or not.

Q. When you say "every card," what card do you mean?—(A.) Every Trade Union card.

Q. Does the Port of London Authority insist that all men employed by them should have the Dockers' Union card?—(A.) They do not insist on that at all.

Q. The 17 stands which you devoted your attention to do not cover the whole of the stands where the men are engaged?—(A.) Yes; practically the whole. I can give you a detailed list.

Q. With respect to the substantial part of your evidence, assuming that each of the men had their Trade Union card, I take it that your evidence is that their Trade Union card was a Dockers' Union card?—(A.) There was a Dockers' Union card, or that of another union affiliated to the Transport Workers' Federation.

Q. You do not know, of course, that they might not have been bricklayers and bricklayers' labourers who have left that employment and joined your union and obtained the card?—(A.) Yes. Special inquiries have been made from the men concerned by the individual representatives. Each representative who inspected the cards was given this instruction, which I dictated last night: "A statement has been made by one of the employers' witnesses at the Inquiry that there are a number of bricklayers, carpenters, joiners, and other tradesmen working in the docks on account of the alleged high rate of wages prevailing for transport work. Kindly ascertain the number of men engaged at the separate calling on places who are, or have been, working as bricklayers, carpenters, etc.; also ascertain the rate for these trades payable in the district." They have enquired on those lines from each individual man who has come through the respective stands, and they have not been able to get any. Further than that, I can say that if a bricklayer or other tradesman came into the dock he would have to transfer from his union, and we should have a record of it on the books, and it would show upon his card if it was recent.

Q. That is so far as the control of which your union could exercise is concerned; that is not so far as the Port of London requirements are concerned?—(A.) The Port of London is no different from any other employer.

Q. Will you listen to this: Mr. Matthews said yesterday: "I have taken depositions from casual men recently employed in the Victoria and Albert Docks, and I find amongst them bricklayers and joiners—of course, practically every other known calling, even up to the semi-professional class." Is your evidence that what Mr. Matthews says is untrue?—(A.) We have had inspectors at K Warehouse, and L Warehouse, the Western Depot of the Port of London Authority, and we have been unable to find any corroboration of that statement.

Q. You would not say that Mr. Matthews would make such a statement. He says he has taken depositions himself, and he finds that there are those people. Do you say he is inaccurate?—(A.) I know Mr. Matthews perfectly well, and I should not like to say that he has willingly given evidence which is untrue.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Have you any evidence to call, Mr. Abady?

Mr. ABADY: Yes, quite short, my Lord.

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MR. EDWIN TREDWEN, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. ABADY.

Q. You are the senior partner in the firm of Gilbert McCaul and Company, I think?—(A.) Yes.

Q. You are Chairman of the Merchants' Committee in the Australasian Section of the London Chamber of Commerce, and also of the Australian Merchants' Association?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And you have a big knowledge of both import, export, and entrepot business?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. The application which is the subject of this Inquiry is the application for an increase for a minimum wage of 16s. a day. Is it your view that if such an application were granted it would mean an increase in the transport charges by the Port Authorities?

The CHAIRMAN: Surely you are not asking elementary questions of that kind of this Witness? We are now on the 19th day. The question you are now asking has been threshed out and is threadbare; both parties have given their evidence about it, and why should we have Mr. Tredwen dealing with a matter which has been the subject of very arduous and keen contention for 19 days?

Mr. ABADY: So far as my instructions are concerned, and Mr. Tredwen's proof, it is to the effect that these transport charges will have a tendency to decrease our export trade, to decrease the entrepot trade, and to increase the cost of imports, which contribute to the cost of living, and the London Chamber of Commerce, who have instructed me, are not parties to this Inquiry. That is why, of course, they have not the assistance of my learned friend, not being under his representation. They are anxious that from the point of view of the general commerce of the country, their views should be placed before you.

The CHAIRMAN: You certainly represent a very important body, but a body which has, so far as we are concerned, declined to be definitely associated with the other important bodies in the country in instructing learned Counsel to put forward their case. I thought that you put Mr. Tredwen into the Box to speak of something which had not been handled by somebody. However, you are in possession of our views, and no doubt you will exercise wise discretion.

Mr. ABADY: On that question of representation, your Lordship referred to that yesterday. What I would respectfully point out is this, that the London Chamber of Commerce are not parties to this because they are not parties to the demand. They are not the Port Authorities, and it is the Port Authorities and those upon whom the demand is made who are represented.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not going to exclude you, and I am not going to make any further comments upon it. You will bear in mind that it must be fresh matter, not repetition.

Mr. ABADY: I feel very sensitively the responsibility not to be the means of further protracting these proceedings.

The CHAIRMAN: You certainly also have a duty to your clients.

Mr. ABADY: Quite.

Q. With respect to the entrepot trade, are they also in your own personal experience in very keen competition with Continental ports?—(A.) Certainly, very keen.

Q. Is it your experience that we are already losing entrepot business through increases in dock charges already levied by the Port of London Authority?—(A.) That is so, because we as merchants direct our goods directly to the Continental ports in order to avoid the heavy charges in the Port of London.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a new point.

Mr. ABADY: Could you give us a specific example to show the sort of difference there is in, say, charges at Antwerp and charges in London? No doubt my Lord will allow me to lead you—(A.) There is one case where we were importing jams and transshipping them to the Continent. We found the charges very heavy, so we sent the jams direct to Antwerp, and the charges for handling in London were 23s. to 24s. per ton, and usually about 30 per cent. of demurrage added on to that, whereas the charge in Antwerp was only 9s. to 10s. per ton.

Q. Are you aware of a letter written by the Indian Tea Association to the London Chamber of Commerce?—(A.) Might I add one word to that previous evidence that some of the jam we actually transhipped from Antwerp to London, making Antwerp the entrepot instead of London.

Q. With respect to tea, are you aware of a letter written to the London Chamber of Commerce by the Indian Tea Association?—(A.) That is so, and naturally the increase of charges here causes that work of blending tea which was a speciality of the Port of London to be done where it can be done cheaper and distributed direct to the ultimate destination instead of passing through London and making the entrepot trade at this port.

Q. Is it the fact that the increased charges already made by the Port of London Authority have already led to the establishment of blending places in Calcutta?—(A.) That is so.

Q. So that tea is already being diverted instead of coming to London?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Now I will pass to the question of imports of produce. Are you aware of a letter received by the London Chamber of Commerce from the Home and Foreign Produce Exchange, who are distributors of provisions, bacon, and various foodstuffs?—(A.) Yes.

Q. And is it the fact that all the increases in the lighterage and dock charges are added to the cost of goods as a separate charge?—(A.) Naturally so. If the Port Authority is compelled to raise its rates in order to meet its expenses, those additional rates must be added to the cost of the goods, and these continual increases on the goods are part of the increase in the cost of living, because the merchant must pass on to the ultimate consumer all the charges he has to pay.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. I want first of all to ask, what is the dead weight charge of capital upon the Port of London Authority as the result of the Port of London Act?—(A.) I do not know.

Q. Do you know what the charge of the dead weight capital is on Antwerp?—(A.) No.

Q. Would not it have been wise to investigate that when you were making a comparison between Antwerp and London?—(A.) My own bus-

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ness occupies too much of my time to investigate the capital charges on those concerns.

Q. You have only time to oppose Labour getting a decent standard of life?—(A.) I do not oppose Labour getting a decent standard of life, but in a time of war and in a time of reconstruction, it is everyone's duty to make some sacrifice, and I think that manual labour has made less sacrifice throughout the war and since the war than any other part of the community.

Q. Will you tell us the number of losses in France in proportion to numbers during the war?—(A.) I have no statistics.

Q. Then did you make that statement libelling my class without due investigation?—(A.) I do not think I libelled your class in any way.

Q. What standard of life do you live at now?—(A.) I live at a much less standard of life than I did before the war.

Q. I am asking you what standard you live at. Do you live at £3 a week?—(A.) I tell you this, that throughout the war—

Q. Answer my question. I want to know whether you live on £3 a week?—(A.) I could not tell you exactly that, but I tell you this, that in order to make the sacrifice which I think everyone should make, throughout the war and since the war I have never had anything but porridge for my breakfast with an apple or any fruit of that kind.

Q. I am asking you whether you are living on £3 a week, whether your wife is managing with three or four children at that rate?—(A.) No, she is not. We have no children.

Q. Can you ask a man who is living at the rate of about £3 a week to make a sacrifice out of that when there is no margin to make a sacrifice?—(A.) I should imagine that with economy there is a margin; and besides that, in my own experience from what I know of wages being paid, while the nominal wage may be £3 a week, very often with overtime and that it amounts to a very great deal more.

Q. Then you assume that a man should not make his living on his 44 hours, but that he should be compelled, in order to live, to work overtime?—(A.) I have worked overtime all my life, and although I am 68 years of age to-day, within the last 12 months my average time of leaving work has been half past 10.

Q. But you do not live on £3 a week, you say?—(A.) I have probably to keep up more appearance than a man who is working on manual labour.

Q. You do not carry two cwts. on your back and on hard cobblestones all day?—(A.) I do not think hard work as a rule is bad for a man.

Q. You have been rather pleased that you have been able to avoid it, I assume?—(A.) I have tried to do my duty in the position to which I was called.

Q. Let me ask you this: You say that any charge made for labour must be passed on to the public?—(A.) That is so.

Q. Irrespective of the profits that the industry is making at the moment. Is that so?—(A.) I cannot quite follow the question.

Q. Assuming you are in a business making a big profit, and labour is asking for an advance of wages, are we to understand your assertion to be this, that irrespective of the profit you are making in your business, if an added charge goes on you will exercise your power in controlling the commodity to pass it on to the public?—(A.) That assumes that one controls commodities, but in business as merchants we are in competition, we are controlled by competition, and we have to make up our costs by what we do to pay for the goods, and the charges upon them, and we make

our costs and try and get that cost back again with a certain margin of profit.

Q. Will you tell the Court that there is the same competition to-day as in 1914 in the control of commodities in Great Britain?—(A.) In my own experience there is just the same keen competition between merchants as there was before.

Q. Have you heard of a Committee called a Committee on Trusts?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Have you read their Report?—(A.) I have not read their Report.

Q. Would you be surprised to know that a unanimous Report was made which indicated that practically all the commodities we are now consuming are controlled by monopolists, as a result of long investigation lasting over two years?—(A.) I know that all those commodities in which my own firm are operating are not controlled by monopolists.

Q. You say that to get cheaper distribution the entrepôt trade is going to Antwerp, that your tea is being blended in Calcutta. I want to ask you this: Supposing you have a cargo of stuff and you find a cheaper place or a cheaper method of distribution, do you automatically put the price down to the consumer, or does that extra saving go to the capitalist?—(A.) If it were diverted to another port the consumer in this port would not get the benefit of the cheaper charge, because it would have to come out again from that port.

Q. So if you take the fact of re-shipment there is no real saving?—(A.) No. I do not think your question is logical. If the tea is blended in Calcutta, the work on it is not done in this country. The tea when blended is not distributed from this country to the Continent and other countries, but the blended tea would be shipped direct from Calcutta, because it is being blended there, and it has to be blended before it is distributed to the ultimate consumer. It would be distributed direct from Calcutta, instead of coming through London.

Q. Supposing you blended in Calcutta for distribution in England, and thereby saved money, do the public in Great Britain automatically get that saving, or do the merchants pocket it?—(A.) They generally do get the saving, because if any one there blends it and makes a saving, he would be able to reduce the price here, and usually in the course of competition he would reduce the price so as to get the trade for himself, rather than his competitor should have it.

Q. Could you give us any classic example where tea blended in Calcutta has been shipped to Great Britain and you have voluntarily as merchants reduced the price to the British consumer?—(A.) I have not as yet imported any blended tea from Calcutta, so I cannot give you an instance.

Q. They are blending it there, are they not?—(A.) They are blending it there; they are starting doing it.

Q. And when we get it we shall get cheaper tea?—(A.) I think we shall have very much cheaper tea before long, if the Government would leave things alone.

Q. It is the poor Government again?—(A.) I think so.

Q. What would the price of tea have been in this country if the Government had not stepped in; if it had been left to the competition or to the machinations of the merchant?—(A.) Take another article—mutton; if we as merchants were holding that mutton we should sell it at 5d. a lb.; the Government is holding it for 9d.

Q. And we have a business Government, have we not?—(A.) They think they are.

Q. There are no poor Labour men who are unfit to govern in it, are there?—(A.) I believe there

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are some Labour men there, or, rather, there were, and that is a very good thing.

Mr. BEVIN: But now they are gone, it is hopeless.

Re-examined by Mr ABADY.

Q. On this question of the suggestion which Mr. Bevin makes—of cheaper costs being taken advantage of by those who incur them to make greater profits—of course, it is a truism, is it not, that you are in competition with other merchants dealing in exactly the same produce, from exactly the same sources, and it is the competitive price that determines the cost to the consumer?—(A.) Certainly, because if I put my price 1s. a cwt. over my competitor, he would get the order and I should not.

Q. And it is true, is it not, that a reduction in cost will effect a reduction in cost to the consumer, and it is equally true to say that an increase in cost means an increase in the cost to the consumer?—(A.) In the case of a lessened cost the consumer must get the benefit of it.

Q. With respect to tea, you did not say, did you, that tea was being blended in Calcutta to be distributed here? I understood you to say that tea was being blended in Calcutta to be distributed abroad, and that we should lose the benefit of the trade and the labour involved in the trade in blending and distributing that tea from London?—(A.) I do not believe tea for consumption in this country would, to any great extent, be blended in Calcutta, at any rate not until the charges here become so excessive as to compel it. I think the intention is to blend in Calcutta for distribution to other markets of the world.

Q. You are not here to oppose any system or arrangement whereby the men working in the docks can get a decent living with an adequate effort, are you?—(A.) Certainly not.

Q. Is not your point that the effect of doing it by simply increasing the wages without regard to output is to really reduce the real value of the wages to the men themselves?—(A.) My view is this, that if the wages rise it increases the cost of living all round for everyone, those wage-earners and other people as well, and that necessitates a further rise, and that there will be no end to it until labour is willing to make a certain sacrifice and have a little patience and wait for the cost of living to begin to come down, when they will get the benefit of it. Might I be allowed, my Lord—

The CHAIRMAN: No.

The WITNESS: To make an explanation with regard to the attitude of the Chamber of Commerce. I am representing the Chamber of Commerce.

The CHAIRMAN: Your own counsel has not elicited it. I was going to thank you before you left the Box for having given expression to these views; we were somewhat familiar with them, but still we were very glad to have them.

(The Witness withdrew.)

MR. WILLIAM HENRY PILLOCK, *Sworn.*

Examined by Mr. ABADY.

Q. You are the President of the National Cattle Food Trade Association, are you not?—(A.) Yes.

Q. Your Federation, with its affiliated Associations, represents 1,000 firms?—(A.) That is right.

Q. Who deal in the importation of cattle food-stuffs?—(A.) That is right.

Q. That form a very important part of the cost of food that has developed in this country?—(A.) Quite so.

Q. What is the system whereby charges are made for feeding stuffs that are imported. Will you tell us as briefly as you can. Is the stuff itself charged for as a separate item?—(A.) The cattle foods are imported into this country principally on consignment, and having been imported the charges are added to the cost, and those charges are naturally passed on to the merchants and by the merchants on to the consumers.

Q. Are the charges for distribution, that is to say, for lock and port charges, added as a separate item?—(A.) Certainly.

Q. There is no question of those who import foodstuffs making a profit on those charges?—(A.) Not the slightest.

Q. So that the direct result of any alteration in port dues is that those are passed on automatically to the farmer and increase the cost of the foodstuff?—(A.) Yes, to the internal consumer.

Mr. ABADY: That is the point I want to bring out, my Lord.

Cross-examined by Mr. BEVIN.

Q. Let me put two questions to you: Some time ago was it used as an argument that the shortage of milk was due to the shortage of cattle food?—(A.) Unquestionably it was.

Q. So that when you could not give the cow the food she could not give the output of milk?—Quite correct.

Q. If you do not give labour the food, can you expect the output in the docks?—(A.) I do not think that is quite relevant.

(The Witness withdrew.)

Mr. ABADY: That is the last witness I call, my Lord. I do not know whether your Lordship wishes me to make any observations, or whether you would prefer that I did not.

The CHAIRMAN: We have had a very full presentment of very familiar opinions by your last witness but one. You will be guided by those instructing you, but I should not think you need trouble.

Mr. ABADY: Very well, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: Now, Mr. Bevin, there are the speeches. Sir Lynden, are you proposing to lead off?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord.

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The CHAIRMAN: What are your anticipations as to the length of your address?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I can answer for myself, but not for the Court. I think, my Lord, I could undertake to finish my observations by this afternoon. I shall be certainly three hours.

The CHAIRMAN: We will stand it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I can assure your Lordship of equal reciprocity on my part. Now, my Lord, it is my duty to sum up the case on behalf of the Port Labour Employers, and when I use that term your Lordship will have in mind the exceptional organisation of the employers for the purposes of this case. We have endeavoured, Sir Alfred Booth endeavoured, to effect an organisation which would enable us to put forward for the Court, as far as it could, information which really would be typical of the country as a whole; but while the organisation is sufficient for that purpose, your Lordship will bear in mind that it is not an organisation which really constitutionally represents all the port labour employers throughout the country. They have got no (if I may use the phrase to which your Lordship is now accustomed) mandate, so to speak, to give any undertakings or to enter into any arrangements which would, by reason of their so doing, be binding upon all the port labour authorities of the country; but they are such a body as is able—and I think your Lordship will agree it has been able—to put forward information, as they understand it to be relevant, of all the port labour conditions throughout the country.

I understand that the first part of the Inquiry of this Court is to be directed, firstly, to the question of wages; secondly, to the matter of de-casualisation of labour; and, thirdly, to the question of the maintenance of port labour unemployed. I will deal with the first part only—the wages. It is a little bit difficult that the matter of overtime has been separated from the question of the daytime rate, because what you fix to be, or what you recommend ought to be, the daytime rate inevitably affects the question of overtime, and it is almost impossible in industries to separate one from the other, because one has a most important effect upon the other; overtime must naturally depend, and its rate must depend, entirely, or very largely, on the question of the day rate. But I shall do my best, subject to the limitations which the procedure of the Court in separating the two parts of the Inquiry has laid upon me, to put forward the matter of wages as we understand it. Before I proceed to deal in detail with the question of wages, may I say, on behalf of the Port Labour Employers, that we regard with very great, shall I say, feelings of congratulation, the success which we think has attended the machinery—it is entirely new machinery—of the Courts of Inquiry under the Industrial Courts Act, 1919. It must be apparent to any person who comes into this Court and has heard the way matters of acute industrial controversy are discussed between the respective sides and between the two sides of the Court, that there is a very great future ahead of conciliation machinery such as is exemplified by your Lordship's Court; and if this Inquiry does nothing else than this, I think it ought to teach the outside world, both of employers and of labour, that there are better ways of settling their disputes than by the old-time methods of force, and that neither side lose if they

come before a tribunal such as this to fight to their utmost in presenting their respective points of view and obtaining a decision upon them. We feel we should like to bear our tribute to the success of your Lordship's procedure, and of the methods which have been adopted by both sides, and hope that in the future similar arrangements will take the place of so many methods of settling disputes that we all regret have been all too common.

There is one other preliminary matter we should like to deal with. My friend Mr. Bevin has from time to time, no doubt in quite good faith, made charges against a number of authorities and Port Labour Employers. I accept at once the point of view that he largely, as I have got to do, has to speak on instructions on matters of which he has no personal knowledge; but these charges are made and they are disseminated through the broad world of Labour, and they are accepted by many people as having been made with good warrant and authority. It is so much easier to start a charge of that sort than it is to overtake it and refute it; and, therefore, my Lord, I would ask the Court in the interests of harmony between the Port Labour Employers and the workers to dispose of a number of charges which have been made, and which I think, when I give your Lordship the short facts, both Mr. Bevin and the Court will agree are without real foundation. There was one charge that was put forward by Mr. Bevin, and if it had been really accurate it would have reflected with very considerable force upon the attitude of the employers, and that was in respect of the Home Office Inquiry into safety appliances round the docks. He said that the Port Labour Employers had spent something like a quarter of a million sterling in resisting the placing of a chain designed to save the lives and limbs of dock labourers round the docks of the country. Now, my Lord, that surely was a figure of rhetoric, because there is no substance really for that suggestion. I have had the facts most carefully investigated by the gentleman who was the Chairman of the Committee which represented the Employers throughout the whole of these investigations, and he has given me the actual expense and he has given me a statement of the procedure, and I assure you, and I would like your Lordship to find in your Report there is no suggestion for the inhuman, I use that phrase, attitude, which it was suggested by Mr. Bevin the employers had adopted. What happened is this. The Home Office issued certain regulations in regard to placing chains and other things round docks. They were issued by the Home Office without having ever been sent to the Dock Owners or the Shipowners or to Labour, and all three assumed, or took the view, that in their form they were impracticable. Commissioners were appointed to consider the whole matter, and at the Inquiry before the Commissioners the Home Office proceeded to place the whole of their case before the Court. After the Home Office case was finished a round-table conference was held in the same building between the Labour representatives and the representatives of the Port Labour Employers, and that Conference there and then drew out a set of working regulations satisfactory both to the Port Employers and the representatives of the Unions.

Mr. BEVIN: What Inquiry are you referring to?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am referring to the Home Office Inquiry on Chains Round Docks.

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Mr. BEVIN: I was referring to the Dock Regulations, which included that, which is another Inquiry altogether.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The Dock Regulations were issued by the Home Office. They cover a good many things, and they were divided into one or two sections, and Commissioners were appointed, and it was of the Inquiry before these Commissioners that I am speaking.

Mr. BEVIN: Who was the Chairman?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The Chairman of this particular section of the Inquiry was Sir Henry Cunningham.

Mr. BEVIN: The Chairman of the Inquiry that I am referring to was Mr. Chester Jones; it was a different thing altogether.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That was the other section of the same Inquiry.

Mr. BEVIN: That is not the Inquiry I was referring to; it went all round the Ports.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am referring to the Inquiry in regard to the placing of chains round the docks. Just let me read what Mr. Bevin said. Your Lordship will find it on page 8 of the first day: "I think in that case it is estimated that the shipowners and dockowners of this country spent over a quarter of a million of money in trying to resist a chain being put around the dock for a man to catch hold of if he fell into the water, proper ladders in ships, and proper precautions to save his life, and proper gear in order that he could work in safety."

Mr. BEVIN: That is it; take the whole lot, gear and everything. I submit it would save trouble if the whole paragraph were read. You will find the Dock Regulations are not limited to the section Counsel is now referring to. That is only one section of it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I have the figures here for the whole Inquiry. Mr. Bevin said the shipowners and Port Labour Employers incurred something like £250,000 in fighting that claim. There is not the slightest foundation for that statement. I have the actual expenses incurred by the various groups of docks—

Mr. BEVIN: And shipowners.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: And shipowners. The total expenses of the Northern group, including Liverpool, Manchester, Hull, Tyne, and Belfast, was £3,000. The expenses of the whole of the Scottish Ports were £3,000, and if you take the expense of all the business from start to finish for the whole of the country it does not reach £20,000. Then, my Lord, the second point is that these Regulations were afterwards agreed upon between the representatives of labour and the shipowners and the Port employers and put before the Home Office. Statements of that sort, of course, do—they are not intended to, but they do—incoercible harm, because they are disseminated through all the vast body of labour, and they serve to paint the employers in a picture that the circumstances of the case entitle no one to place them in.

Other statements were made which I really must deal with. Your Lordship will remember that a witness was called from Plymouth, and already

harm has been done by the statement which was made in your Lordship's Court. I would like your Lordship to deal with it in the Report that you make. At the bottom of page 18 of the thirteenth day Mr. Bevin was cross-examining Mr. Murdoch, and he asked this: "Was it not the fact that the Admiralty intervened because the stevedore, on a basis of 2s. per ton for labour, was charging 5s. 3d. per ton to cover his charges, or a profit of 3s. 3d., out of which he was paying workmen's compensation and providing gear?" And the answer was: "I could not say what the rate was, because it was fixed in conjunction with labour. Before the material was brought there at all we were all sent for to go to the Admiralty, and the officer in charge would not fix up the rate until he knew what rate was to be paid to the men; and I believe it was something like 15 per cent. for establishment charges, but I could not say from memory. (Q.) Are you aware that it was at my request, as representing the Union, that the Admiralty took the work away from the private trader because of the exorbitant charges which were being made on the State over and above the labour charges; and, in fact, the Admiralty did the work direct through their own foremen, and engaged our men, and saved on the contract over 2s. per ton?" Then he says he is not aware of that. Then further down the page Mr. Bevin says: "The contractor in dispute at that time was a man named Roose, and I understand that he was charging 5s. 3d., which is the same charge as was being made by Burnard and Algar for the same work." We have made investigations, and I have here an official letter from the Ministry of Shipping, Finance Department, which I will read, and that will show there is no foundation whatever for the suggestions that were made. The letter is dated March, 1920, and this is the case of Mr. Murdoch. It is written by the Accountant General of the Ministry of Shipping: "Sir, Referring to my note of yesterday I have now been able to trace the papers relating to the Victoria Wharves (Murdoch), which you referred to. Accounts were received from him, made up as follows:—Labour breaking out of hold, stacking and slinging into barges 3s. 6d. per ton. Labour breaking out of hold, stacking and slinging on wharf and stowing in store 4s. 3d. per ton. Taking from wharf, slinging and placing in truck and stowing 3s. per ton. Cranage 9d. per ton. Marshalling trucks, etc., 1s. per ton. Upwards of 12,000 tons were handled in one way and another and wages paid represent £1,476 11s. 8d. Materials, etc., £39 0s. 8d., making a total of £1,515 12s. 4d.; Establishment charges £1,293, making a total of £2,808 12s. 4d., plus 10 per cent. profit, £280 17s. 3d., making a total of £3,089 9s. 7d.; an average cost of 5s. 5½d. per ton"; and the payment for profit out of that, the 10 per cent., represents 5½d.

Mr. BEVIN: How much establishment charges?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: £1,293.

Mr. BEVIN: That is 100 per cent., is it not?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No. The only point I want to make is this: these sort of things must be disposed of; there is no suggestion for the charge which Mr. Bevin made. He says: "In this case, as in the case of Roose, the Admiral Superintendent decided that he could do the work more cheaply by Dockyard Labour, and subsequent to March, 1916, it was so done at Devon-

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port, Your obedient servant, the Accountant General." Then I come to the case of Mr. Roose, and I have a similar letter from the Accountant General of the Ministry of Shipping: "I have to inform you that our records show that a contract was made by an Officer of the A.S.C. with Messrs. Roose for loading and unloading at the rate of 5s. 6d. per ton, made up as follows:—Labour 4s. 2d. per ton, paid at the rate of 3d. per ton per man and overtime. Tug hire to take men to and from ships £3 per day—3½d. to 4d. per ton. 10 per cent. on wages to cover Workmen's Compensation and Insurance—5d. per ton. 2d. per ton for gear. 3d. per ton overhead charges. Total 5s. 3d. per ton and 3d. profit, making 5s. 6d. This contract terminated in November, 1915, when the price of labour was reduced to 3s. 6d. per ton, other charges remaining as before." The 3d. profit remaining as before. "The prices as above were confirmed by the local Shipping brokers, who stated that 7s. per ton, plus tug hire, was frequently paid by shipowners. At a later date, many ships conveying munitions were consigned to H.M. Dockyard and unloaded there by Dockyard labour, the actual arrangements made are not known to this Department, as they were purely a local affair."

Mr. BEVIN: Would you mind giving me the figure of the cost of labour; you said 4s. 6d. a ton, I think.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: 4s. 2d. a ton.

Mr. BEVIN: What does that include, does it say?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: "Paid at the rate of 3d. per ton per man and overtime."

Mr. BEVIN: Would you mind inquiring from the Ministry of Shipping how many men there were in the gang?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I suppose that can be found out.

Mr. BEVIN: That is where the dispute was.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The point on Mr. Bevin's suggestion was this, that outrageous charges were being made by Mr. Murdoch and Mr. Roose. If those charges were true it reflected most seriously upon the Ministry of Shipping and upon the Admiralty, and certainly also upon Mr. Murdoch and Mr. Roose. These letters show conclusively there was no foundation for it.

Mr. BEVIN: I adhere to every word of it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: There are the official letters that I must hand in and ask your Lordship to find there was no ground for those suggestions. I am told that in Plymouth they are doing harm now. These charges have been repeated and repeated round through Plymouth, and they are doing harm. Therefore I ask your Lordship to find on this official evidence there was no foundation for them. There were other things, too. Your Lordship remembers the strike which took place in London in 1911. I do not want to repeat the evidence which was given in regard to that strike, but your Lordship remembers what Lord Devonport said, and the actual records of the shorthand notes which he turned up, which entirely and conclusively showed that Mr. Bevin's

statement of the strike being necessary to secure the payment by the shipowners of 1d. per hour to their men is quite unfounded. There, again, we have cuttings of papers coming to us which show that this charge is being repeated broadcast, and I would ask your Lordship in your Report to dispose of the matter so that these causes of difference and sources of bad feeling may once and for all be disposed of. There was one other matter, your Lordship will remember, that while Professor Bowley was in the box Mr. Bevin produced to him a menu of a lunch which he said had been enjoyed by a shipowner at the Savoy Hotel. I ask Mr. Bevin—and I have good reason for asking Mr. Bevin—the name of that shipowner. If Mr. Bevin will give me the name, I shall be much obliged; if he does not, I shall ask your Lordship to ask who Mr. Bevin says was the shipowner.

Mr. BEVIN: I did not say a shipowner; I said a lunch which shipowners eat. I did not express that it applied to one man.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: He said: "I have a menu in my hand to which an ordinary shipowner, whom we are asking for a living wage, would go to the Savoy to have to-day at 7s. 0d. What is the calorific value of that?"

Mr. BEVIN: That is right.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I would ask Mr. Bevin for the name of the gentleman who lunched on that menu?

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord, I have been in the Savoy on one or two occasions and had luncheon with shipowners on that menu myself; but I do not think I ought to say who those friends are. The last time I was in there was with two gentlemen from Bristol, and the food cost a lot more than that. We discussed wages afterwards, and they disagreed with paying a wage to their workmen when they had spent more than they would pay them in a week.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That has been made a great matter through the Press of the country which circulates amongst the workmen, and has been represented as an ordinary shipowner's lunch. Now, my Lord, I again ask Mr. Bevin for the name of the gentleman, and I have reason for doing it.

Mr. BEVIN: I did not say that that day a gentleman had been in and had that lunch. Read the Notes; it is given as the type of lunch that a shipowner eats at the Savoy.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If Mr. Bevin will not give me the name, I will leave it there, but I would ask your Lordship to ask him for the name of the gentleman.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not saying a word, in case I begin; but we are certainly not going to allow this Inquiry to go off upon small trifling points of that kind; and if you, or either side, ask us to assist you in developing those points, they are entirely mistaken as to what our view of the function of the Court is.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think your Lordship is right, but the reason I mention these things is this—

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The CHAIRMAN: I do not interfere any more, because I am anxious to leave you entirely to present your own case in your own way. I will not have any one moment of time occupied by any interposition from me.

Sir LYNDEN MACASBEY: All these charges that have been made have been repeated broadcast, and have been circulated amongst the men, and are operating to-day to, shall I say, not improve the feelings which ought to exist between the employers and the workmen, and I ask your Lordship, on the evidence, to find they are made without foundation, and that will go a long way to create the confidence which Mr. Bevin, like myself, desires to see created, and which certainly is being impaired by these sort of foundationless charges.

Now, my Lord, I come to the Claim, and the first item of the Claim is the claim for a national minimum. That is the great issue of principle between the men and the employers. When I opened the case I gave the Court the history of industrial practice up to that date. That stands unrefuted, and your Lordship has got no evidence of any great industry, for instance, like the Port Labour industry, where a universal national minimum has up to this date been created. We take our stand against that, not with any desire of restricting wages, but anxious that good wages should be paid for good output. We take our stand against the question of a national minimum because we feel, instead of bringing peace into industry, it is going to bring disturbance and disruption. For that point of view we have very considerable grounds to base our view upon. If your Lordship takes the unfortunate illustration of the 12½ per cent., that was in its first inception put forward as a scheme, by the desire of the men concerned, for the purpose of producing contentment and satisfaction amongst the members of the class of workers in question. Skilled men who worked on time in the engineering trade found themselves at a serious disadvantage in respect of aggregate earnings as compared with piece-workers who worked on piece. They went and said: "It is unfair that we, working on time and being unable to work on piece, should receive these lower earnings, while other men, many of them semi-skilled, doing work on piece, can secure so much higher rates of remuneration." It was put before the Minister of Munitions, and he, accepting the view that this would bring peace and contentment among the skilled men of the engineering trade, put it before the Government, and the Government put it into operation. My Lord, it may have done what it was said it would do, bring peace and contentment amongst the skilled men of the engineering trade, but it spread like a prairie fire through the whole world of industry. It upset straight away all the piece-workers in the engineering trade, and they had to get the advance: it upset the essential relationship that exists between all the different classes of workmen in this country, and they had to get the advance: it spread through every rack of industry down till now, when, as your Lordship has heard, the men who are engaged in sweeping the roads and market gardeners are getting the 12½ per cent.—established in the first instance to bring peace and contentment among the skilled men in the engineering trade. I say advisedly to this Court, with no desire to restrict the wages of the port labour workers provided we can get output, that they stand on the verge of introducing, if they introduce a national minimum, a force into port labour as disruptive as the 12½ per cent. was disruptive in great masses of the engineering

trades and allied trades of the Kingdom. That is the question of principle which divides us at the present moment from the other side, and that, my Lord, is the point which we must put before the Court and obtain their views upon.

My Lord, let me come, after having explained our honest stand on principle against this uniform minimum proposal, to the effects which that principle would have if put into practical operation. Let me deal first of all with the small ports. It would be impossible for this Court to say: "If we are going to put into operation the uniform national minimum it shall stop here or it shall stop there." You cannot do that. You fix it in respect of dock labour and in respect of all dock labour wherever that dock labour is employed; just as the 12½ per cent. spread so will the uniform minimum spread and be an accepted minimum through the country. Mr. Allen prepared a statement, which is a very striking statement. He prepared a list which showed all the small ports throughout the country; it was a printed table, Statement 19 and Statement 20. Statement 19 gave all the ports at which vessels arrived with cargoes from foreign countries and British possessions, and coastwise. At the bottom of that statement you will see other ports in England and Wales, at which a total number of vessels of 1,860 arrived. Those other ports which are too small to be grouped in the summary table are all shown on Statement 20. They include small places, as, for example, in Scotland, the Port of Wigtown; there were three foreign vessels arriving, and 126 coastwise. Take a little place like Padstow in England, a little place like Whitby and innumerable little ports. Your Lordship may not wish to apply the uniform national minimum to those ports, but if you fix the uniform national minimum for dock labour you cannot stop it and say: "It shall go there and no further." It will automatically apply in a very short time, and it will put all these small ports in the same position as great ports like London, Liverpool, and Glasgow. On the very face of it the circumstances, I would submit, ought to be such as to negative the common sense of a proposition such as this. Nor, my Lord, does it stop there. Apart from these ports given on Mr. Allen's Tables Nos. 19 and 20, there are 874 creeks, estuaries and bays round the coasts of this country where coastwise cargo is unloaded. It is unloaded in some cases by the ship's crew; it is unloaded in the greater number of cases by men from the little towns and villages, who will come down and unload the vessel when it has got to be unloaded, and will do other things when there is no vessel to be unloaded. If there is a case for establishing a uniform national minimum for port labour throughout the country, that will be the minimum which will apply to work in those small places. The official records show 2,870 small places, too insignificant to be given even on Mr. Allen's table, where coastwise vessels are in fact loaded and unloaded to-day just as part of the ordinary work of the little town or hamlet or place in question. That is one of the effects. If the principle of a uniform national minimum is established it is bound automatically and inevitably to apply right down to the smallest of those small places. My Lord, just to illustrate still further its disturbing effect, you have all the piece prices throughout the ports of this country. Your Lordship will agree that if one thing more than another is desirable it is to put in operation, and wherever you have got it in operation to maintain and extend it, the principle of payment by results, because thereby you do give the worker a natural stimulus in the direction of production,

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the country receives the output, and he receives higher earnings for his greater production. All these piece prices have that definite relationship to the time rate. There is a simple little formula which is easily applied, if your Lordship does not mind writing down a little mathematical expression. It is this: that if O equals the output in tons and P equals the tonnage rate and D equals the day rate, then O multiplied by P over D minus 1 is equal to 1 over r ; 1 over r is the relationship of piece prices to day rates. If your Lordship looks at that formula with the mind of a mathematician, you will see that if you increase the day rate—I will give a practical illustration in a moment—in order to maintain the relationship of the piece-worker's earnings to the time-worker's earnings, you have got to increase the piece price by precisely the same proportion; if you increase the day rate by 20 per cent. you have got to increase the piece prices by 20 per cent. in order to maintain the same relationship of earnings between the piece-worker and the day-worker. But here is a little illustration. Supposing the output is thirty-two tons in a day, and the rate you pay the piece-worker is 6d. a ton, his earnings for the day would be thirty-two sixpences, or 16s. Supposing the day rate is 12s., the piece-worker is making 16s., and the day-worker is making 12s., so the relationship of the piece-worker's earnings to the day rate is $1\frac{1}{3}$; he is making one-third more than the time rate of 12s., so he is making time and a third. Supposing you increase the day rate by 4s. and you make the day rate 16s., you have increased the day rate by a third, and the day worker is receiving precisely the same earnings as the piece-worker; both are getting 16s. One of two things must happen at once: either the piece-worker will refuse to exert the effort he formerly exerted when working on piecework, and he will state his guaranteed rate of 16s. as the best way of making the day's pay, or, if that does not happen, the whole of the piece prices must be revised. Supposing you raise the day rate from 12s. to 16s., you have increased the day rate by a third, and you must then increase the piece prices by a third; you must give the piece-worker not 6d. a ton, but 8d. a ton. If you give him 8d. a ton he gets thirty-two tons at 8d.; that would be 256 pence, or 21s. 4d. You would have to increase his prices to 21s. 4d., so that he might still receive one-third more than the time-worker, who was raised to the 16s. This is the practical point. It takes years and years to work out all these piece-work lists, and I speak to a Court with experience, some of whom will know the time it takes to work out a piecework list. Now, your Lordship takes a national minimum of 16s. Immediately every one of these piece-workers is prejudiced, and he says: "I am in a worse position in many cases than the time-worker"; or, "the excess earnings I used to receive as a piece-worker have now disappeared, and my prices must be revised at once." There is no machinery in existence to-day round these different ports which could possibly attempt to adjust all these piece prices in the space of a few days which the piece-workers would demand, because of the extent to which labour is prejudiced by the introduction of a national minimum. It will take months and months and months to get these piece prices adjusted. It is admitted that they must go up; part of the claim is that they must go up, and the workers will insist that they as piece-workers will get something if the minimum time rate is raised to 16s. Therefore, so far as piece-workers are concerned, the introduction of a uniform national minimum would simply upset, in the view of the port employers, the whole

stability of the piece prices which exist through the different ports of the country.

My Lord, next I come to the question of differentials. Evidence has been put before the Court at very considerable length to the extent of showing the important differentials which exist between the various grades of workers at the different ports. My Lord, I should submit the Court would come to the view that those differentials are not merely the outcome of increase, or, what shall I say, the fruit or the tribute to a specially energetic official of the Union in that particular place, but they do represent, in the vast majority of cases, economic differences between classes of worker and the conditions under which the work is done at those respective places. The evidence, I would submit, is perfectly conclusive that in the past those differentials have always had to be maintained. Your Lordship will remember the evidence of Sir Alfred Booth on that point. On the 5th day, page 7, Sir Alfred Booth was dealing with this point. He was asked by my learned friend, Mr. Bruce Thomas: "Will you give the Court your view as to whether the labourers at Liverpool would readily give up these differentials?" Sir Alfred said: "These differentials have always been jealously guarded by the dock labourers in Liverpool, and quite naturally so, I think. We have often discussed at the Joint Committee, as a matter of fact, or discussed privately between ourselves and the Union, as to whether there was any real ground for the differences made between the ship men and the porters, but I think that we have always felt that if we brought the porter up to the level of the ship man the ship man would at once insist on having his differential of 6d. re-established. The best instance that I can give with regard to the way in which these differentials are guarded by the docker, and the value which he puts upon them, is the case which arose last summer, arising out of the 44 hour agreement. We agreed then with the Union that we would make a re-arrangement with regard to overtime work. At the time when the 44 hour agreement was made the war bonus at a flat rate was paid to the men, whether for day time or for overtime, at the rate of 3s. 3d. for the half day or for the half night. We decided, as part of the general settlement which we hoped was going to work well and be a good thing both for the employers and for the men, to increase the pay for night work to definitely time and a half. Now, if you look at Clause 2 of the White Book on page 3 you will find that the ordinary ship man there gets 5s. per day for ordinary work (these are the pre-war rates) and 8s. per night. So that for the half night the ship man for ordinary work got 4s.; but a stevedore, who is mentioned immediately below, getting 2s. a day more in the day time from time immemorial, had 5s. more per night, or half a crown more per half night; so that for the half night the stevedore was getting 6s. 6d. whilst the ordinary ship man was getting 4s. The addition of war bonus made no difference to that differential, they each drew 3s. 3d. war bonus, so the differential remained half a crown. When they were put on the basis of time and a half the ordinary ship man's pay for the half night was 12s. 2d., or for the half day 6s. 1d., and time and a half on 6s. 1d. gave him 9s. 1½d. The stevedore, as his day rate is now 2s. more, made 14s. 2d. for the day, 7s. 1d. for the half day, and, therefore, 10s. 7½d. for the half night. So that he was now getting only 1s. 6d. more for the half night than the ordinary ship man. They went on strike at once. They

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must have the old half-crown. We were powerless, and the Trade Union were powerless to settle this matter, except by re-establishing all the old differentials on the overtime rates, although we had signed an agreement that the rate of pay for overtime was to be time and a-half." There are other cases from Liverpool, but that is a most striking case where one of these essential differences could not be eliminated either by the Trade Unions, who were anxious to do it, and who had signed an agreement to do it, or by the employers or by anybody else. The same thing was true at other places. Mr. Spencer gave a most striking illustration at Glasgow. It was on the 11th day, page 26. He was speaking of the oremen and the coalmen. One would have thought that the oremen might be considered in a separate category from the coalmen, and in point of fact your Lordship has heard how efforts are being made in the ports by the National Transport Workers' Federation to deal with them on that basis. The evidence of Mr. Spencer on page 26 in regard to Glasgow is this: I will start half way down the left-hand column: "(Q.) Now let me come to the oremen's rates. Was that at one time fixed at 1d. per hour over the general cargo rate?—(A.) Yes, the same as the coalmen. (Q.) Was the reason for that this, that the work was regarded as being of a disagreeable character?—(A.) Yes. They also had in addition certain rates for dusty and dirty ores. (Q.) But in 1912, at the instance of the Union, was a flat rate of 2d. per hour over the general cargo rate fixed to cover all the ores, dusty and dirty, and night work and overtime?—(A.) That is correct. A rate of 2d. per hour over general cargo rate was fixed, and the rates which had previously been paid for dirty and dusty ores were wiped out. (Q.) Now to show how these different local rates react one on another we have got to the stage that the coalmen received the same rate for day work and night work, namely a penny an hour more than general cargo rates, and the oremen received 2d. an hour over the general cargo day rate.—(A.) That is so. (Q.) Some time after that did the oremen ask for a revision of their rate, and were extra rates then conceded?—(A.) That is so. They asked for an overtime rate, and they asked for the rates which they had previously been paid for dusty and dirty ores to be reconsidered, and to be applied again; and that was done. Immediately after that was done that put them back into their previous position, except that they received 1d. per hour more than they had before; in other words they were then getting the dusty ore rates before they got the 1d., and that made them in the same position relative to the coal men, except that they were now getting 1d. per hour more. The coalmen shortly after were minded that their own rate should be brought up to that level so as to bring the relative position back to what it was before. (Q.) No sooner were the rates of the oremen lifted in the way you have described than the coalmen came forward with the demand to have the pre-existing differential once more established.—(A.) Yes. The effect of that was to put them in the same position as they were in previous to that arrangement; that is to say, they were now 2d. per hour over the general cargo men, but the dirty and dusty ore rates were re-established, and it put them in the same position relative to each other. At that time also the general cargo men received certain concessions in the way of dirty and dusty rates for objectionable cargo, but they did not get any increase in the ordinary rate. (Q.) Having regard to your special experience concerning these local differentials, do you think it is practical to

wipe them out and do away with them altogether?—(A.) I do not think so. I do not think you could do that." My Lord, the evidence is so full of illustrations that I am only taking some of the big ports. The same thing applies in regard to London. That is spoken of by Mr. Matthews in the fifteenth day's evidence, on page 6. There, speaking of the differentials which existed between the Port of London men and the shipowners' men, I put the question to Mr. Matthews—it is the left-hand column of page 6, the third question from the bottom: "(Q.) I think the table you have put in shows that there are very many differentials within the port of London.—(A.) Yes. (Q.) What view do you hold as to whether or not the men would insist upon these differentials being maintained.—(A.) With thirty-three years' experience, I am positive they would. (Q.) When the Devonport agreement was made, there was a special reservation, was there not, that the question as to whether, in view of the 1d. increase which had been granted to the Port Authority's men and the wharfingers, the differential of 1d. to the shipowners' men should be obtained.—(A.) Yes. (Q.) That question was referred to Sir Albert Rollitt, was it not?—(A.) Yes. (Q.) And he gave an award on the subject?—(A.) Yes, he gave an award maintaining the differential." I do not want to labour this point further, except that I have had the evidence carefully extracted, and you will find an unbroken current of testimony in regard to all the ports from which representatives have come before you, that these differentials do represent integral parts of the local wage arrangements, and have been insisted on. In the past, when one class of men has had an increase, other men have claimed the increase on that very ground. They represent forces which this Court has got to reckon with, and, no matter what may be the recommendations of this Court, will exert an active forcible economic effect upon the wage arrangements. Your Lordship will bear in mind that at one time the rates in many of the ports were much about the same. Mr. Bevin referred to the rate as the dockers' tanner. Then, my Lord, came into operation all these forces, and you have only to look at the tables which are put in by Mr. Allen to see how all the old differentials have been once more re-established, and the greatest disparity possible exists between the rates of pay in the respective ports. That obviously presented a matter of concern to the National Transport Workers' Federation, and Mr. Bevin suggested a method of standardisation. For example, he proposed, on the second day, at page 6, a method of dealing with it in respect of money. In the middle of the second column he says: "Yes, but I want to call attention to another point that I think rather nullifies the one you have made, if I may say so. We have based these calculations on the absolute minimum, but we had in our minds the point that I made just now, about the datum line; so if you will test London again, if you do not mind, you will find that there are two rates in London, a 12s. 8d. rate and a 11s. 8d. rate. It is our intention—and I say this because I do not want the men or yourselves to be under any misapprehension—to amalgamate both those sections of men and to bring them to 16s. Hence you arrive at the result that those two sets of men in future will be upon the minimum. There are other men in London who would be slightly above the minimum if our theory is adopted, and I will give you the reason for that in a moment." Later on, in the fifteenth day, Mr. Bevin put forward a different suggestion for standardisation in London. It is on page 17, at the top of the left-hand column.

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Your Lordship will remember that just before the adjournment there had been some little controversy as to what Mr. Bevin exactly proposed, and after lunch he corrected his figure. He said: "Speaking from memory, in putting forward a conjectural figure this morning, I used the figure of 13s. 4d. for London. I did not have the table before me at the moment, but it was in my mind that the 13s. 4d. men worked ashore, for the shore sea traders. On re-examining the table I find he works aboard, therefore the figure I wish to correct should be 13s. 4d., and not 13s. 8d. I have explained to Counsel the difference in the figure. I forgot the grade of work."

Mr. BEVIN: It should be 12s. 8d., and not 13s. 4d. I think this is an error in the Notes, is not it?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think very probably it is, but it does not affect the point I was going to put. Probably, for good reasons, Mr. Bevin had changed, between the first day and the fifteenth day, his ideas as to what particular level the line should be drawn at.

Mr. BEVIN: No, it was the same figure, 12s. 8d.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The Notes may be wrong. It does not matter for the point I am going to put.

Mr. BEVIN: 12s. 8d. was the line at which we proposed to amalgamate.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: This is the proposal. There are men in these different ports who are employed upon different kinds of work, and the principle which Mr. Bevin is suggesting is this, that they should be standardised, having regard to their existing wage levels. In London he was going to bring the 11s. 8d. and the 12s. 8d. man up to 16s. He was going to put the men who were above that up to 17s. 6d. Now, those two classes of men, some of whom were going in London on the 16s. line, and others on the 17s. 6d. line, were both to be brought in Glasgow to the 16s. line.

That is a novel principle of standardisation, and it would lead, I submit, to the greatest possible difficulty in practice, and certainly would be anything but a stable system of wages. If I may refer to, for example, the railway system of standardisation, from questions which your Lordship has asked from time to time, and, indeed, from questions which any person would ask, you would think it is an easy thing to do, and that two persons might sit down and arrange a system of standardisation in a few minutes. If you take the railway case, it took months and months in working that out, and if I may give you, very shortly, the details of what was done there, you will see how, if it is a sound system of procedure, what Mr. Bevin suggests in this case must be unsound. What was done in the case of the railway system of standardisation was, as I say, wholly different from what is now proposed by Mr. Bevin in this case. What was done there, if you take the case of the comparable men—that is to say, the goods porters—was this: the National Union of Railwaymen and the Railway Executive Committee and the Minister of Transport selected altogether all the men who were, in point of fact, doing work similar to the work done by a porter, and this is the list. They started with dock porters, office porters, basin porters, and there are about twenty altogether,

and they said: "We in the future will treat all those men as if they were porters." There is a long list of them. They took the rate at which each one of those men was working under the company by which he was employed, and by so doing they found out what was the average rate at which all those men were employed throughout the country, so that they have got what was the actual average rate of pay for all men doing that class of work. Then, on top of that, to give their present wage, they added, as your Lordship knows, the figure of 38s. 0d. to bring it up to the present rate of pay. That was a long and lengthy process, but that was a sound basis if there is to be standardisation, because that was an attempt to standardise men, not having regard to the level of wages which in point of fact they received, but having regard to the class of work which they did. If what Mr. Bevin proposes had been adopted there, what the Government and the railwaymen and the Railway Executive Committee would have done would have been to classify all those different porters according to their respective rates of pay in the different districts or in the different companies, but that would have led at once to hopeless confusion. What they did was to take all the men who were doing the same class of work, to find out what was their actual average rate of pay, to adopt that as the standard for that grade, and then to add on to that the 38s. to bring them up to the present wage which they have received since January 1 last. That is standardisation on a stable basis, but that is absolutely wholly distinct from the standardisation which is suggested by Mr. Bevin. That is our very great fear. We know that these differentials have existed, and we say that you cannot wipe them out, that they will reassert themselves; and we say that to attempt to acknowledge their existence, because it is only a half-hearted acknowledgment of their existence which leads Mr. Bevin to put forward the proposal of dealing with the London men in the way I have described, bringing certain of them up to 16s. and others—because he has got to recognise the existing differential—up to 17s. 6d., while he brings them all together to 16s. in Glasgow, is going to lead to difficulty and disruption at once. Therefore, I have gone as far as this, to put my submission: that the effect of the national minimum would be most serious in respect of the small ports, will prove a disturbing factor of great potency and immediate operation in respect of the great system of piece-work which applies throughout the ports, and will be unable, as it is suggested it will be able, to distinguish the existing differentials, which must assert themselves without any question in the future as in the past.

Now, I want to come to what would be the effect of this uniform minimum pay on other trades. Mr. Bevin throughout the course of this Inquiry has deprecated the consideration of dock labour in regard to other trades. He asks that your Lordship should deal with the matter as if dock labour could be put into a separate watertight compartment and could have its rates of wages considered and its conditions of employment investigated or determined without regard to what are the rates of wages or conditions of employment in other trades. I think your Lordship will find great difficulty in doing that; I think your Lordship will find that that has never yet been done in the past; I think your Lordship will find that where that has been done in the past it has led to difficulty and trouble from the outset; and I think your Lordship will find that if there is to be anything like a stable wage basis in the country as a whole you must not consider individual sections of industry as watertight compartments, but you

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must consider them to be what in fact they are, all sections of a closely articulated organism.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Before the adjournment, my Lord, I was proceeding to advance as an argument against the novel principle of a uniform national minimum the effect which that would have upon the other classes of labour, semi-skilled and skilled, in the employment of each Port Labour Authority and in the district in which each port is situated, and I was proceeding to contest the soundness of Mr. Bevin's contention that dock labour should be considered in a watertight compartment, separate and distinct from all other classes of labour. I was pointing out that that is not how the matter works out in practice, and I was suggesting to the Court, consisting, as it does, of many gentlemen of great practical experience, that they do not find that that clear-cut definition exists in practice, but they do find that each section of labour is in point of fact one part of a closely articulated whole. It would be peculiarly (shall I say?) unwarranted to say that any industry like transport could, for instance, be considered separate and distinct from the great manufacturing industries of this country. If you will take the simplest case, take the case, for example, of a manufacturing workshop: it is dependent upon transport for its raw materials in; it is dependent upon transport for its manufactured articles out; and to say that you can or ought to deal with wages on the distributive systems serving our great manufacturing industries on a wholly separate and distinct basis from that upon which the manufacturing industries are dealt with is to say something which on the face of it really is absurd. There is another point to which I referred your Lordship in the case. It was this, that so far as I know the experience of industry in this country, and the decisions of Courts such as your Lordship's Court in the Colonies, has been definitely to recognise the apprenticeship and length of training which is necessary for a man who is proceeding to enter the craft trades, and that is universally recognised by a difference in wage. In this case, if one may take what are the actual circumstances, for example, in any of our great port authorities, Glasgow or London or Liverpool, you find in the employment of the port authority itself any number of categories of men. They are working in close connection; they are meeting one another every day; they are all engaged within the boundaries of the same premises; and it is perfectly manifest that if you applied a new and novel principle which is going to raise substantially the wages of one section, that is to say the dock workers, you are going to unsettle all the rest. That is not a matter of inference. If I may refer the Court again to the 12½ per cent. business, it will be remembered that that spread out from the engineering trade into outside industries in this way: In a very large number of the workshops and the mills and the factories there were a certain number of fitters, perhaps half a dozen or eight or nine, engaged in looking after the engines and power plant which were in those factories. They received the 12½ per cent. Then all the other trades who were engaged in much greater numbers in those factories and in those mills at once claimed the same thing because they said: "It is not fair that a new and novel principle like the 12½ per cent. should be applied to a small and favoured section of labour, and that we, the others, should be deprived of participating in its benefit." And

that is what is going to happen here so far as the great number of classes of employees in the service of the different port authorities is concerned. It goes further. I have the honour to represent, amongst other port authorities, all the railway ports of the country. After a long discussion, which has lasted, I think, over six months, arrangements were made at all those ports on a local basis for segregating workers between the National Transport Workers' Federation and the National Union of Railwaymen; and it is important that the Court should have before them the details of the arrangement. I have them here, and I can pass them up.

*(*The document was handed in and marked H.43.)*

Your Lordship need not bother about the type-written page; that is only the memorandum of the conference which gave effect to all the various local agreements which are contained in the printed document. Generally the effect of the document is this: You will find that at all the docks a certain number of the men have been allocated to the National Union of Railwaymen, and certain men have been allocated to the National Transport Workers' Federation, and in some cases there appears to be no principle or guiding line. If your Lordship looks, for example, at the very first on page 3 in regard to Barry Docks, Newport Docks, and Port Talbot Docks, you will find that it says a little way down the page: "The following agreement was arrived at, to apply to the grades shown below: Tugboat crews, dock gatemen, watermen, ferrymen, dry dock men, lightermen, dredger crews, berthing-masters, launchmen, floating cranes, ballast tippers." Then it gives the arrangement. Then over the page you will see that it gives similar classes of men at Newport and Port Talbot, with some slight exceptions. Further down it says, "And it was agreed: To apply the same conditions to these men as to railwaymen in the conciliation grades, under the following headings." In the same way you will find similar differentiations between all the men at the ports, those who are to go under the railway conditions and those who are to go under the conditions of the National Transport Workers' Federation. Up to the present, with the exception of the sole question of hours, there is not much disparity in the respective rates of pay and conditions of employment, but there will be the most immense disparity, as your Lordship will see at once, assuming the rates of pay and conditions of employment which are included in the present application are granted to that particular section of men at the port who are now under the National Transport Workers' Federation arrangement and are denied to the other section of men who are under the National Union of Railwaymen arrangement, that is to say the last great national agreement with the Government. I do not want to elaborate the point further, but your Lordship will see what the facts are. For example, if your Lordship looks at the Fleetwood Harbour on page 23 you will see that all the men there come under the railway settlement. The only point of referring your Lordship to that is to bring to the attention of the Court the fact that there is this division of men between the railway arrangements and the arrangements which the National Transport Workers' Federation ask the Court to make in this case existing in all these docks, and that they are more or less on a level now, but if your Lordship is going to tilt up one end of the stick, it

* See Appendix No. 133

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must inevitably mean that the other end comes down, and that obviously must mean, instead of harmony, trouble and disturbance coming right on top of the recent settlement of the national arrangement for the railwaymen of the country as a whole.

Only to develop the point one stage further, your Lordship has had evidence that at many of these ports—and Liverpool I may take as an illustration—the claim if allowed to the transport workers in this case would mean that the wages of the dock worker would exceed the wages of the semi-skilled man considerably, and be on a par with and sometimes exceed the wages of the skilled men; and Liverpool, I think, is a very admirable illustration. For example, on the tables which Sir Alfred Booth put in, it is on "Booth G." There it shows that the wages of the shipmen at Liverpool are at present 1s. 6½d. per hour, of the porters 1s. 5½d. per hour, and of the coalmen 1s. 11d. per hour; and it shows that in the engineering and shipbuilding trades the wages of the skilled men, the turners and fitters, are 1s. 10½d. now, of the shipwrights 1s. 11½d. now, of the drillers 1s. 8½d. now, and so on. I take Liverpool deliberately, because Liverpool is a place where on the North Bank the work is entirely ship repairing with the exception, I think, of one small yard, and as one knows, the ship repairing rates, from the fact that the work is not like new construction continuous but is more or less casual, are always higher. Therefore, I deliberately take the Liverpool case for the purpose of giving this comparison, as a case where the skilled men are receiving a higher rate of pay, being under ship repairing conditions, from the fact that the work is casual; and I make the comparison, and I show that if the present claim be allowed the dock labourer would be getting 2s. per hour whereas the skilled men at the present moment are getting, as I have stated, figures which range from 1s. 8½d. up to 1s. 11½d. per hour. It is obvious what must happen. Again my suggestion is that these results which follow from the introduction of a uniform national minimum must tend to show the Court that trouble will come, and not peace and stability, from the introduction of the principle.

I come to the question of the permanent staff and the effect of the principle of a uniform national minimum if applied to the permanent staff. I think my friend Mr. Bevin and I are agreed as to what section of the permanent staff should come within this claim. As the claim was drawn in the first instance it was in very wide terms; it was the same terms as had been on two occasions previously cut down by the Committee on Production and the Arbitration Court. There has been alteration resulting from the new demarcation agreement at the railway ports, which I have now just put in. So, my Lord, the section of the permanent men who will come within this claim will be the section of permanent men, according to my submission, who had been treated under dock labour awards by the Committee on Production, supplemented to such an extent as is necessary by the new arrangements made at the railway ports. Now, my Lord, if you take that section of men, they are all men engaged in permanent employment; they are all men who are not engaged in dock labour but in all kinds of maintenance work and general work in connection with the actual handling of goods. All their wages, the evidence shows, have been fixed on a local basis. My point, my Lord, is this: Having regard to the regularity of their work, having regard to the fact that many of them are in receipt of indirect

advantages, having regard to the fact that many of them are in receipt of superannuation payments and things of that sort, it is quite unsound that that should be all—what shall I say?—entirely subverted because of the necessity, and it is a necessity, of applying to them the uniform national minimum principle, it having been applied to the regular dock workers.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not ask that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My friend Mr. Bevin says he does not ask that.

Mr. BEVIN: I think we could save time. What I have said all through the case is that the margin between the permanent men and the casual men on the maintenance staff who come within this application should not be made wider; that is to say, they should get a proportionate advance.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am much obliged.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you just say that again?

Mr. BEVIN: That the permanent men on the maintenance staff, that is, permanent men other than dock workers whom Counsel is now referring to, should have such a proportionate advance as will leave them, relatively to the casual men, in the same position as they are at the moment. I thought I pointed that out very clearly in my opening statement.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We know exactly what is the effect of that form of words. That is the formula which has been applied in the past, and it means that if the casual men get a particular sum, call it X, by way of advancing wages, the permanent men will claim, and, if the past practice is followed, will get precisely the same sum, X. My friend agrees.

The CHAIRMAN: He said a proportionate advance.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I put the illustration deliberately to test what Mr. Bevin says, and Mr. Bevin agrees that my illustration represents the true facts; that is to say, supposing the casual worker gets per day a certain increase of wage—we will call it X—the permanent men will get per day the same increase of wage, X. Mr. Bevin agrees, so, my Lord, there is no dispute. I thought there could be no dispute between us on the facts. I am going to put it quite clearly. Call it 4s. a day. The claim is this, that if the casual worker receives a 4s. daily advance, the permanent worker will receive a 4s. daily permanent advance; there is no dispute about that. So getting away from words to the essence of things, it means that each receives precisely the same advance in wages. That is exactly what I traverse. The casual worker claims to be paid, and is entitled to be paid, a higher rate of wage on the ground that his employment is casual. Now the permanent worker is not entitled to that advance, at least to that element of the advance, because his work is regular work, and therefore it is quite wrong, I submit, on all grounds to give the permanent worker what the claim asks for, namely, the same advance as would be given to the casual worker. My Lord, if that is going to be done it is going to reflect right through all the grades of permanent workers employed by these great Port Authorities, because why should one section of the permanent men receive the same advance as the casual dock workers

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and the other section of the permanent men receive no such advance, but have their wages dealt with on the basis on which it has been dealt with heretofore, namely, of local conditions, and having regard to the regularity of their work?

That is my point in respect of that portion of the claim which deals with permanent men. I want to go one stage further to illustrate the extraordinary results which are produced by applying anything in the nature of one uniform national principle to all grades of workers, irrespective of local conditions. One of the most striking illustrations I take—it is only an illustration, I have many more—is the case of the Liverpool tugmen. Your Lordship will remember the details of their wages and conditions of employment. It is given on "Booth C." On "Booth C" you get the weekly rates of these tugmen. Mr. Proctor quite recently put it in another table, which shows their weekly earnings. Your Lordship will remember what the figures were; they varied for the period from August, 1919, to December, 1919, from £11 to £14 for masters; from £5 to £8 for mates; from £5 to £6 19s. for able seamen, and so on. Now, my Lord, it surely must be wrong to increase the wages of those men who are already in receipt of those substantial earnings because there is an increase of wage given to the casual dock worker; but, my Lord, that is what is going to happen. The Table put in by Mr. Proctor was "Proctor 1"; it is "H.39." My submission is that it must be wrong. It must suggest that there is something wrong in a principle which, if applied universally, produces those results. And it does not stop there; there are many ports where men are working on piecework and are making very high earnings. Your Lordship has had evidence with respect to some of the South Wales ports in respect of corn porters at various ports. Those high piecework earnings in the same way will go up as the result of the introduction of a uniform national minimum as is proposed, and the claim is that they should go up.

Now, my Lord, one argument in favour of this uniform national minimum is this. It is suggested that if it is put into operation all the ports will be level and put upon the same basis, and at first sight that appears to be an attractive proposition. But, my Lord, it is quite unsound for the reasons I think I will show you in a moment. In all ports there are various grades of men and above the minima, and those various grades of men in the various ports do not occupy the same relation one to another: In one port you will find a certain grade of men above another grade of men, yet the latter grade of men will be above the first grade in some other port. You can illustrate it in this way, take the cases of Glasgow and London, and suppose a uniform national minimum of 16s. is introduced. The deep sea men who work in London are to go up to 17s. 6d. That is Mr. Bevin's second proposal in regard to the standardisation on the basis of earnings which I discussed before. The deep sea men in Glasgow are to go to 16s. So that you have all the men engaged on that most important item of dock labour, namely, working cargoes in to and out of the big ships, the overseas ships, brought farther apart from one another under this principle than they are to-day. They are 14s. to-day in Glasgow, and 13s. 9d. in London; there is only a difference of 3d. between the two grades of men, but under this proposal that 3d. is increased to a very much bigger figure; it is increased to 1s. 6d. because actually the Glasgow 14s. man is made 16s., and the London 13s. 9d. man is made 17s. 6d., so the very principle which is advocated for the purpose of putting ports on an equality, when examined

closely, has not that effect, but a contrary effect, and actually increases the disparity which exists between ports at the present time in respect of a large and important section of workers. It not only increases the disparity, but it reverses the disparity, because Glasgow before was 3d. higher than London, and London under this is to be 1s. 6d. higher than Glasgow. I take that only as an illustration; I could take other grades of men and apply precisely the same test and secure the same results.

The CHAIRMAN: How do you get London 17s. 6d.?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is the evidence on the 15th day, at the bottom of page 16. Mr. Bevin's actual proposal is on page 12, about one-quarter of the way down on the left-hand column. You, my Lord, put the question specifically on the top of page 12. Then later on, on page 12, Mr. Bevin says: "I have definite instructions from the Glasgow Executive here, sitting around me now, that they will consolidate the 12s. 8d. and the 14s. men, and, on the assumption that both get 16s., the Glasgow men will make a common cause for 16s. to rule for the port." Mr. Bevin makes a correction on page 17. He gives certain figures there, and those figures were corrected by him at the top of the left-hand column on page 17. Mr. Bevin says: "Speaking from memory, in putting forward a conjectural figure this morning I used the figure of 13s. 4d. for London. I did not have the table before me at the moment, but it was in my mind that the 13s. 4d. men worked ashore, for the short sea traders. On re-examining the table I find he works aboard, therefore the figure I wish to correct should be 13s. 4d. and not 13s. 8d."

Mr. BEVIN: It should be 12s. 8d.; there is a mistake there.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That only re-enforces my argument that the lower the figure is put in London the more men go on the 16s. basis. It is quite obvious what it is. Mr. Bevin is going to consolidate 12s. 8d. down, but he recognises that he cannot wipe out, just as I say you cannot wipe out, the existing differentials. Therefore, he is going to lift men who are above that figure to a figure which he says would be about 17s. 6d. for the 13s. 9d. men. And, my Lord, the effect of that is this: you establish your flat minimum for your lowest men, but you knock out of that relationship all the higher men, and you are not going to get equality between the ports which is advanced as one of the main reasons for this national minimum, but you are going to get, in many cases, greater disparity than exists to-day, and why? Because you rely on a principle, a principle which is unsound from beginning to end, the principle of a national minimum.

The CHAIRMAN: What do you make of the statement which Mr. Bevin made, I think, at page 12?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Which passage is that, my Lord? Do you mean the passage where he said that he had definite directions from the Glasgow Executive here?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I accept that, my Lord, and use that as the basis of my argument. I assume that the Glasgow men will agree all to go on the 16s. line, but I say: All right, I will

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compare that 16s. wage level for your deep-sea men with what is to be in London, and you say yourself in London you are going to consolidate on the 16s. line every person, from the 12s. 8d. men down, and you are going to raise above that line, by some differential or other, the men above it; and I take his 17s. 6d. as indicating the line on which the men working big ships in London will be put, and I point out what is indisputable, and this is only one illustration of the same thing which can be applied to all the ports, that your uniform national minimum is going to increase the disparity between ports in respect of all except the minimum men instead of putting the ports on a level—one of the reasons advanced for the principle.

Now, my Lord, I go one stage further. I do submit to the Court that the fixing of a minimum on the basis of the present abnormal conditions is unsound. One of the great reasons advanced for the claim which is put forward is the present abnormal circumstances in respect of the cost of living. Those are circumstances which are not peculiar to one section of the industry, but are a matter of hardship to all sections of the industry, and to all sections of the community; and I would submit that when you have regard to the whole community it is unfair to fix a minimum which is not merely for the moment, but which is intended to be a permanent minimum, on the basis of, and by reason of, the present abnormal circumstances. A minimum is a minimum, and Mr. Bevin has been quite frank about it, and says that no matter how things ease in the future he would ask that the minimum should stand, and therefore the whole wage basis supported by that minimum; and that, my Lord, comes to this, which has to be considered when you think of the interests of the community as a whole. You put forward a claim largely on the ground of there being a special abnormal circumstance in existence, but you say that when that abnormal circumstance has mitigated in severity, or has disappeared, notwithstanding that, the level should stand—fixed on the abnormal circumstance. Now, my Lord, I draw the Court's attention to this: Under the Railway Settlement, which, whatever you may say about it, represents the most important wage arrangement ever consummated in this country (without any question it is that), you may say you do not like it, you object to the principle of it, but in fact it is the most important wage arrangement consummated in this country; you will find that that point has been covered, and you will find, if you look at the Railway Settlement (which is the document I put in, H. 3) on the second page of that print under the grades Goods Depot Staff, a list of men called porters, and those include all the men who are dock porters at the various railway ports, where the dock porters have been allocated under these arrangements, to the railway company. The system of the arrangement was that the country should be divided into three districts—London, all the big towns, and then the rural districts—and then there were class 1 stations, class 2 stations, and London. You will see that the wage fixed now is 57s., or, taking London, it is 61s., for the porter. Those porters in London will include the railway companies' dock porters at their own places, like Poplar, down about the London Docks. He gets 61s. to-day, and, as the note at the top of the page says, he will get that so long as the cost of living remains at 125 per cent. above pre-war cost of living, and then it is to be subject to the sliding scale, which is 1s. up or 1s. down, according as there are five points up or down in the cost of living. That is the scale. Now, under no circumstances does it

fall in London below 47s.—47s. is the minimum. That is the legislation for normal conditions. Now, if your Lordship will look at class 2 stations, the wage for the porter to-day is 57s., with the cost of living at 125 per cent. above the pre-war cost. In class 1 stations it is 60s., and in London 61s. Those represent a difference of 4s. between the lowest and the highest, but if your Lordship looks at the difference between the permanent wage differentials you will see as the cost of living falls the difference between the lowest and the highest increases to 7s.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the minimum below which it cannot fall?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is the B wage, which is shown in the second column. It is 40s. at class 2 stations, 44s. at class 1 stations, and 47s. in London. I just want to make one further point on that.

The CHAIRMAN: Where is the actual text which applies to the going up or down of the index figure?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am going to read that now. This is the official statement issued on January 4, 1920, by the Ministry of Transport. It is headed, "Standardisation of Railwaymen's Wages." It has not been put in yet, my Lord. It is very short, I think, on the points which are material, and I can read it. "During the course of the discussions between the Government and the Railway Unions the difficulty of fixing, in an abnormal period, standard rates of pay which would be neither too low during the present abnormal time, nor too high when a more normal time is reached, became increasingly apparent. Ultimately, to get over this difficulty, the Government have offered to standardise wages for the adult male staff, other than drivers, firemen, and cleaners (for whom provision has already been made) employed in the Conciliation Grades on the controlled railways in Great Britain on the following lines. The present abnormal standard rates and permanent standard rates are determined respectively as follows: the average pre-war weekly rate of pay of the men in a grade or group of grades is to be ascertained, and a sum of 38s. 0d. is to be added thereto." That is to the result. "This combined sum will form the present abnormal standard rate for the men in the grade or group, and is to be subject to a sliding scale, whereby there is to be a reduction or increase of 1s. 0d. per week for every fall or rise of a full five points in the cost of living, as shown in the figures published by the Ministry of Labour, the present figure being 125 per cent. above the pre-war rate. No reduction of the average rate plus 38s. 0d. can take place until after September 30, 1920. Any adjustment to be made in the rates of pay are to be considered at quarterly meetings of the Central Wages Board. The permanent standard rates of wages for the various grades are contained in offers dated November 5, and show, generally speaking, an increase of at least 100 per cent. on the average pre-war rates of the respective grades. The rates for any grade will not fall below these permanent standards, however much the cost of living may come down, so that if and when these rates are reached, as a result of the adjustments referred to above, they will come into force as the permanent rates." Then it goes on to say: "There have in the past been a large number of grades in the railway service, the names and duties of these grades varying with the different companies, so that two men doing

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similar work for two different railway companies might be classified in different grades and receive different rates of pay, although working in the same town and under similar conditions. The new proposals will ensure that men doing the same work will receive the same pay on all controlled railway companies, provided that similar conditions apply. The rates proposed vary in the case of some grades as between London, other large towns, and rural districts, and in the case of guards the pay increases with length of service, the maximum being reached after eight years' service as a guard." Then, my Lord, this is important: "In addition, machinery has been set up to deal on a national basis with any further questions of pay or conditions of service which may arise. This machinery comprises a Central Wages Board, consisting of ten members, five representing the Railway Administration and five the Unions, with power on either side to bring in a sixth member. If any question cannot be settled by the Central Wages Board, it is to be referred to a National Wages Board, which is to consist of twelve members, four representing the railway companies, four the Unions, and four the users of the railways, with an independent Chairman appointed by the Government." That is the first case in history up to date where the public have been represented in regard to the fixing of wages.

Mr. BEVIN: What about this Court?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The interests of the public are in his Lordship's hands. This is the first, your Lordship's case is the second.

Mr. BEVIN: There are two gentlemen here representing the public.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: This Court is the second case.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you on the question of an independent Chairman being introduced?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The independent Chairman was first appointed under the old Conciliation Boards established under the agreement of 1911.

The CHAIRMAN: Then all I can say is I think something ought to be done to the author of that idea.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship speaks with sympathy. "Local machinery is also to be set up to deal with local questions. The Unions have agreed that if any question cannot be settled by the Central Wages Board, no strike shall take place until one month after it has been referred to the National Wages Board. The men are also represented by four of their leaders on the Railway Advisory Committee which is being set up to advise the Minister of Transport on questions referred to them by him." Now, my Lord, this is important: "In dealing with questions of wages it has been kept clearly in view by the Government that some addition to Railway wages was already due before the war, and that the claims of the Railwaymen to a higher standard of remuneration were only then postponed because of the country's necessities. It is believed that the arrangements above set forth meet all reasonable demands of the men, and it is hoped that the system of standardisation which has been adopted and the rates of pay which have been applied to

the various grades will form the basis of a contented service. It is not too much to expect that these proposals, taken together with the system devised for deciding any matters in dispute, will bring a greater harmony into the working of the Railway service which will prove of ultimate benefit to the country." My point is this, that firstly here you are asked to fix for the future a national minimum on the basis of these abnormal conditions and that national minimum is to remain after the abnormal conditions have either disappeared, or have been mitigated. Nor, my Lord, should I have thought it was just to the community as a whole, because your Lordship, I think, must have been satisfied by the evidence which has been given before this Court that it is by the public as a whole that the burden of the increased cost of wages will be paid. That is what was clearly before the minds of the Government in fixing the Railway arrangement, and it was to ensure that that burden on the public would be lightened as and when times improved that the sliding scale was introduced. I only point out that you are asked here to affirm for the first time a principle diametrically opposed to the principle of the Railway arrangement. And, secondly, my Lord, while I am on this point, I may just as well make another point which I proposed to do later. The rates of pay in the Railway arrangement must be contrasted with the Claim under the present application. If your Lordship compares, for example, the rates of pay as fixed in the Railway arrangement for a dock porter, which is 61s. in London, with the 88s. a week as the minimum wage, or with a much higher rate in the case of a ship man, if they go to the 17s. 6d.—subject, of course, to this one point that one is casual and the other is regular work—

Mr. BEVIN: And one gets his clothing and the other does not.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Quite true—some of them.

Mr. BEVIN: The porters do.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The porter would get his clothing and, of course, the casual worker does not.

The CHAIRMAN: It seems to me it would be of great assistance to me if, when you quote a figure, you would tell me where I would get it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You get it on that document, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: No doubt I do.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I will assist your Lordship to get it. It is on H.3, the figures your Lordship has already noted. Your Lordship will see on page 2, Goods Depot Staff, Porters. He is the man who is down at the docks goods depots, and he receives in London 61s., subject to this. He is a regular man, and he gets his uniform. I accept Mr. Bevin's statement, but I am told that the goods porter does not get his uniform. I am told by gentlemen who are connected with the railways that the goods porter does not get his uniform.

The CHAIRMAN: In contrast with that what is the figure that you wish to put?

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Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: 88s. is the claim. That is on the basis of a 5½ day week, 88s. is the claim.

The CHAIRMAN: The 61s. is for 48 hours, is not it?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: What we want to get is the comparison of 61s. for 48 hours as compared with 88s. for 44 hours. Is not that right?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Those are the figures, my Lord; subject to the point of the dock worker who claims the 88s. for the 44 hours being a casual workman; it is subject to that. Your Lordship will have to consider how far this railway arrangement could stand if, working alongside the porter who receives 61s. for a 48-hour week in London, the dock worker is to receive 88s. for a 44-hour week doing work close by.

Now, my Lord, I want to bring right home, if I may, to the mind of the Court what the claim is in respect of the different rates when it is reduced to an increase of so much per week; because I do think that the Court have hardly realised how it works out; and on a table which was put in yesterday, Mr. Allen's Table No. 16, I have had the figures given as a percentage increase of the claim over the present rates worked out at so much a week. I will hand this table to your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: I have it somewhere.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: You have the table, but you have not on your table the additional figures which I have just now put on it. (**The table was handed in.*) All that has been done there is to take the claim and find out what it amounts to for a 5½-day week. It amounts to 88s., and from that 88s. one subtracts what is the present rate of pay for a 5½-day week, and you put down in the right-hand column the difference which represents the increase. If your Lordship will just look down at that it represents an increase for the Port of London men of £1 3s. 10d. a week; for the shipowners' men of 12s. 4½d.; then it represents, if your Lordship goes down the page, for example, 11s. a week in Bristol, 11s. a week in Glasgow, and it runs up to £2 ls. 8½d. for the rope runners at Ardrossan. It runs up to the figure of £1 13s. a week in Gloucester—

Mr. BEVIN: You are wrong there; the rope runners at Ardrossan would be a proportionate advance.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It is exactly the same thing.

Mr. BEVIN: What does the casual man get at Ardrossan?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The hatchway men on the river at Middlesbrough run up to £1 13s. 8d.; for labourers at Troon it runs up to £1 19s. 10½d. So that the range of increase per week which would result from the claim varies from a minimum figure of 3s. 9d. at Swansea up to a maximum figure of £2 ls. 8½d. at Ardrossan. Those are striking figures.

Mr. BEVIN: I think that should be checked, to save trouble. A rope-runner at Ardrossan is a permanent man, and the figure upon which his wages would be based would be the top figure, which is 12s. 3d. To make him 16s. would be

adding 3s. 9d., would not it; that would be 3s. 9d. a day—that is not £2 ls. 8d.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: These are the wages as proved by the witness from Ardrossan.

Mr. BEVIN: That is a permanent man; he gets a similar advance to the casual.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: This is the wage as proved by the witness from Ardrossan, but let me eliminate that for the moment, because it is wholly immaterial for the purpose of my argument; I will take as the maximum the figure which I gave of £1 19s. 10½d. for the labourers at Troon. Take the minimum at 3s. 9d. at Swansea and the maximum at £1 19s. 10½d. at Troon. What I want to bring home to the mind of the Court is the extraordinary diversity in the amount of the weekly increase in wages which would result from the application of this novel principle of a uniform national minimum. May I on that point make only this further remark? I have here all the awards which have been given since the beginning of 1915 by the Committee on Production, by the different Arbitration Courts, and by the interim Arbitration Court, and you will find in no case any advances anything like such as are claimed in this case awarded to any section of industry, and I would ask the Court (for the list is in existence, though I have not a copy of it) to obtain the ordinary list of the advances which have been awarded since 1915 in respect of different sections of workers by the various Arbitration Courts. If your Lordship compares that with the amount of the weekly increases which are set out on that table, your Lordship will see how immensely greater what you are asked to recommend should be allowed in this case is in comparison with anything that has previously taken place.

Now, my Lord, I want just to summarise very shortly the submissions I have made to the Court in respect of the uniform national minimum principle. My first submission is this, that it would work most hardly, and produce most serious injury, upon the small ports. The second point was: it would entirely disorganise the present piece-work basis, and would leave the piece-workers in a position to demand an increase without any machinery whatsoever in existence to say what that increase ought to be. The third point was: it is entirely impossible for the Court or anyone else to wipe out the existing differentials, and, in point of fact, it is not proposed that they should be wiped out, from the illustrations which I gave the Court furnished by Mr. Bevin earlier in the proceedings. Next, my Lord, my submission was that the effect which this principle would have upon all labour employed by the Port Authorities, upon all labour employed in the district, and, nationally, upon, for example, the great body of railway workers, would be the most serious thing. Lastly, I have endeavoured to show your Lordship that if the principle was carried out and given effect to, there would be no levelling up of the rates at all, but in respect of a large and important section of the workers an increasing disparity of wage.

Now I pass on to the question of output. The position of all the employers that I have the honour to represent is this: that while they are firmly opposed, for the reasons I have had the honour to present to the Court, to the principle of a uniform national minimum, they are not opposed to wages being paid where output is given. In other words, they are all in favour of adequate wages, provided output is secured. Mr.

* Appendix No. 130, No. XVI.

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Bevin has declared, towards the latter end of this Inquiry, strongly in favour of increasing output, and that has rejoiced the hearts of many of those for whom I appear.

Mr. BEVIN: Well, agree to the minimum, and you will help me do it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It relieves me from referring to what Mr. Bevin said in the earlier stages of this case, by which, at any rate, so far as our minds are concerned, a different impression was created.

Mr. BEVIN: You concede nothing.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The evidence in respect of the diminution of output is a serious body of evidence. I do not want to refer to it at very great length, because I have it all collated here. It only represents a small amount of the matter which I was in a position to put before the Court showing the serious diminution of output at every single port round this country. I think, whatever the causes may be—I do not know, and I am not going to conjecture—but it is quite clear that the urgency of output is not realised. It is realised I believe by the officials of the Transport Workers' Federation, but it is not realised by the individual men working in the different ports.

Mr. BEVIN: Nor by the employers.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: By some employers, probably not.

Mr. BEVIN: They won't help.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship has had case after case where the introduction of machinery has been obstructed, where the men have insisted upon the machine being equipped with the same number of men as did the work before the machine was brought into operation. That does not help industry. That does not help employers to pay the wages which they would like to pay, and that does not help the country. Therefore, my Lord, we are most anxious that out of your Lordship's Report there should be born some system of assisting us, some suggestion for improving output—

The CHAIRMAN: Are not you going to give us any?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am just going to do it. The first suggestion is this. I hardly like to make it, because Mr. Bevin may feel that I am, shall I say, invading his prerogative and assuming functions I have no right to assume.

The CHAIRMAN: You will excuse my saying this, but, on the other hand, when you do refer to that, bear in mind that this country has never received a clearer light or more help from any statement than from the statement made yesterday on the subject of output by Mr. Bevin.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Quite true, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: I am pleased to recognise that the employers, acting wisely through you, realise that, and so I am quite sure that any suggestion which you make will not be resented by Mr. Bevin; on the contrary, you are working together.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The first suggestion I would like to make is this, whether it is a matter

which should be left to Mr. Bevin entirely to deal with, or whether he would like our co-operation in dealing with it I do not know; if he would like our co-operation he shall have it.

The CHAIRMAN: How can you doubt that? I do not understand that line of argument. This Court is anxious to get light; why should you shut the door or bar the window in that way? Why not put your cards on the table, and tell us the best that you can to help these men to do their duty?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Perhaps, before your Lordship makes that comment, your Lordship will be good enough to hear what exactly my suggestions are.

The CHAIRMAN: That is what I want to hear.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: It might avoid the necessity of that comment. I will proceed to make my suggestions, and the first is this: that some method might be devised for educating the workmen, and I will say for educating also the local employers as to the urgency of the necessity of output.

Mr. BEVIN: Put them in my class.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: What is obstructing output is this, in my view: that the men do not realise the urgency of output as a means of increasing their own wages, as a means of increasing the prosperity of the country. Some system of education has to be devised by which that fundamental truth can be brought home to them, and it is primarily a question of provoking, if I may use the phrase, a new outlook on the part of the men, and I am bound to say, too, on the part of many employers; we have had some illustrations during the war of how a new outlook can be created by a definitely organised system of educating the workers and the employers on the urgency of the question of output.

Mr. BEVIN: That was when the country was benefiting—in time of war; not when it was for profit.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Mr. Bevin says: "Not when it was for profit." That, of course, brings us really to the crisis.

Mr. BEVIN: Educate the employers.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If the existence of the present system of organisation of industry is to be adopted as a reason for refraining from giving all possible output, of course, the outlook is very black; but I cannot think that that is the real position, and I cannot help thinking if there were more co-operation on the part both of the employers and the Trade Unions that that point of view would gradually be extinguished, and it would be realised that it was for the advantage of all sides and of the country to secure the output which every person wants. Apart from the first material and essential factor of education, you come, secondly, to what I think is essential, and that is putting into operation in every case something in the nature of a system of payment by results.

Your Lordship must have noticed how enormously the output in certain ports exceeded that in other ports by reason of the fact that in the former ports men were working on a piecework basis and in the latter ports on a timework basis. The Port of Glasgow was most illustrative. You will remember that when the loading of iron ore was

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changed by the men from a piecework basis to a timework basis the output went down enormously; it went down from 64 tons per grab per hour to 21 tons per grab per hour. Therefore it is urgently essential that wherever practicable a system of payment by results should be put into operation on some system which is adapted to local circumstances. It should be an independent piecework basis or a universal piecework basis, but some basis which will give the worker an incentive to output and secure for him the benefits of increased output.

There is another matter, my Lord. It is perfectly obvious that steps must be taken by the National Transport Workers' Federation to secure that collective agreements which have been made by the Federation, or by the Unions affiliated to the Federation, with the employers should be honoured. I referred to the 8-hour day.

Mr. BEVIN: You will not make an agreement with us; that is my trouble. You are resisting it now.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Take the agreements which are made. Surely an agreement is just as solemn, whether it is made with the Federation or made with the individual Unions affiliated with the Federation. It is an agreement which ought to be binding upon the members of the Union who have made the agreement. We cannot offer any suggestions as to how that agreement should be enforced; we can only say to the Unions, through the Transport Workers' Federation: "You have made this solemn Agreement by which the employers were to get an 8-hour working day, as a result of which your hours were most materially reduced, as a result of which your rates of pay have been increased." We must look to them to enforce that Agreement. It is no use suggesting, as Mr. Bevin suggested, to some of the Witnesses from Liverpool in the box, "Why have not the employers taken up this matter for discussion at the local Joint Labour Committee?" We can only look to the Unions who have made the Agreement, and say to them: "You have the means of enforcing it, and you ought to enforce it upon your members; your members get the benefit of this, therefore it is up to you to see that they carry it out." I do think that amongst many men there is not that sense of responsibility in giving full effect to the terms of an Agreement which has been made in their name and on their behalf by the Unions of which they are members. I think one of the results of this Court will be, and certainly ought to be, a united attempt on our part, on the part of your Lordship's Court, and on the part of the Federation, to bring home the solid nature of that obligation to all the workers who come under those various agreements.

Now, my Lord, the next proposal which I wanted to make in respect of increase in output was the question of mechanical appliances. Mechanical appliances are absolutely vital, and your Lordship has seen the extent to which their introduction has been delayed and in some cases obstructed in the different ports. It has been suggested that the real difficulty in the way of introducing mechanical appliances is because the old men may be displaced. I do not know why old men should be displaced. One of the usual results of the introduction of appliances is to enable work to be done with less effort than it was done formerly, and, certainly, looking at industry generally, nothing has so contributed to the employment of the less fit members of the community than the introduction of machines of all kinds,

certainly in the engineering trade. Your Lordship knows, of course, that women and boys can with machines do work which 20 or 25 years ago could only be done by the most skilled and powerful men on the then existing type of machine. My Lord, the real root of the difficulty is this. Then men do feel that the introduction of machinery lessens the amount of employment, in other words, it reduces the amount of work that goes round. That is a short-sighted view, I am sure, but it does impede the introduction of these machines and their working on the proper basis. Apart from that, there is one fundamental difficulty of principle, and that is this. If you introduce a machine, the machine, if it is any good at all, must do the same or a larger amount of work in a shorter time; in other words, you must secure from the machine or the appliance increased efficiency. Here is where the whole trouble comes in. The employer who provides the machine asks for something to cover his cost of the machine, something to cover his working costs, and something to cover his depreciation. He asks for that to recoup him for the expense of providing the machine, but after that is done there is a balance of efficiency. The whole dispute in industry arises on how that balance of benefit, so to speak, of the machine should be divided; should the employer take the whole of it, or should the men take the whole of it, or should it be divided in some agreed proportion. That controversy is always reflected in the amount of rates which are asked by the men in respect of the working of the machine, or which the employer agrees to give. I am bound to say that I should have thought the right way of looking at it is this, that that balance of benefit should be divided, should not be wholly sought to be appropriated by the men, that it should not be wholly sought to be appropriated by the employer, but that it should be divided in some fair way between the employer and the men. If that is done, and it can be negotiated by the local Port Labour Committee, there ought not to be much difficulty in getting those machines into operation.

The CHAIRMAN: Do not you think the public is entitled to a share of it?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I do, my Lord, and the public will get a share of it. They will get a share of it in this way.

The CHAIRMAN: What is the trade of the country for unless the general public are also to have the benefit of an increase in output?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I agree; they ought to get a benefit. They will get a benefit in this way, that the effect of the introduction of machinery is to increase the expedition with which work is put through; it increases the amount of work which passes through in a given time; it reduces the costs of the employer, because his standing charges, which are a fixed amount, are allocated over a larger amount of output, so the cost to each element of output is less, and therefore the selling price is lower. That is where the public ought to benefit. I think I am stating it perfectly accurately when I say that, in reality, one of the greatest difficulties in introducing machines is this fight, who is to get the benefit of what I may call the balance of efficiency of the machine—that is to say, whether the employer is to get the whole of it, or whether the men are to get the whole of it, or whether it is to be divided in some fair proportion between the two. I am speaking

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now to a Court which consists of gentlemen who have practical experience of this matter, and I am perfectly sure that if you can formulate a principle which would naturally be accepted up and down the country, we shall have gone a great deal further in getting proper machines and proper time and labour-saving appliances into operation in the different ports than hitherto, as put into operation they must be in order to expedite the work of the ports.

I have dealt with the question of the uniform national minimum, my Lord, and I have tried to put, as I understand them, the views of the port employers for whom I have the honour to act. On that I say we contest entirely the expediency and the soundness, for the reasons I have given, of attempting to apply a uniform national minimum. We have given the evidence from the different ports; we have put it before your Lordship's Court, and your Lordship's Court, with the experience it happily includes, will have to consider what recommendations they make upon it to-day to the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: We are to hear you, I trust, on the question of casuals.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: On the question of casual labour, my Lord, what we have done is this. We have given evidence from all the different ports as to the amount of the casual work in the ports, and as to what the views of the local people are in respect of the way in which casual labour ought to be treated. But I will tell your Lordship quite frankly that, after considering the matter from the point of view of the evidence which has been submitted to me for presentation to the Court, I am quite unable to present to the Court anything in the nature of a uniform principle for application. My Lord, the local circumstances of all the ports varies so enormously that I certainly would not take upon myself the responsibility of attempting to devise a formula and asking your Lordship to accept that for application to all the different ports round the country, but there are so many different factors.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a little disappointing, and I will tell you why. Pretty early in this case, as early as the 6th day, I said upon page 14 this, in arranging this Inquiry: "We think it will be in the interests of both parties that the question of the demand for a minimum wage shall be considered first and separately from all the other questions in the case, with one exception, to which I shall allude. In treating the wages case first we are not dislocating the order of the claim, because, by good fortune it happens to be in the forefront, and No. 1 of the items which are demanded. We think, however, that the question of the demand for a minimum wage cannot be dissociated from another question, which might appear under the later category of conditions of labour; I refer to the question of casualisation, including the demand for maintenance of non-employed labour. Therefore, in giving a restriction to the area of the primary Inquiry, we give it on those fixed conditions: the question to be determined is the minimum demand and the point of casualisation, coupled with the demand for maintenance." Now, I think you will agree, Sir Lynden Macassey, that nothing, so far as marching orders are concerned, could be plainer than what is there laid down and accordingly we shall (and I repeat the observation) be glad now to have your observations and suggestions with regard to this question of casualisation coupled with the demand for maintenance. I do not press you to do it to-day; we are getting

near the end, but you will observe it is only due to the Court that I should mention, as its Chairman, that that was the condition upon which this Inquiry was conducted.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship must not think that I have at all burked the point your Lordship put there.

The CHAIRMAN: No. It was rather this, that it occurred to me that perhaps, after these protracted proceedings, you might have pretty definite suggestions to make from your side on the subject. We shall be glad to receive those if you have them formulated.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship is quite right, if I may respectfully say so, in putting the point to me, and, on the principle of devising some scheme for decasualising as much as possible labour at all the various ports, you may take it that the employers whom I have the honour to represent are in favour—it is obvious that any person must be in favour—of effecting a reform of that sort.

The CHAIRMAN: In favour of what?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: In favour of decasualising as far as practicable. That is obviously a proposition which commends itself to employers who occupy the public position in the industries of the country as those for whom I have the honour to appear. But the difficulty is this. As soon as we sat down to consider a particular scheme, while that scheme was perfectly suitable to the conditions of one place, as far as we could see, it was wholly unsuitable to the local conditions of another place. Therefore, I was not going to take the responsibility of misleading your Lordship by advocating the outlines of any particular scheme, when I knew, from the facts put before me, that, while that would do in one place, it was wholly unsuitable in another, and which, put before your Lordship and adopted as a general type, might bring disaster to all concerned.

The CHAIRMAN: The length that you go, Sir Lynden Macassey, is that your clients are in favour of decasualisation as far as practicable.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, as far as reasonably practicable.

The CHAIRMAN: Now I point out to you that they could have said the very same thing without 19 days of inquiry, and it has been said for years and years, because we know that this is a social sore. I am not pressing you, I hope, unduly to ask you between this and to-morrow morning to consult your clients to see if they can tender to this Court, after the inquiry which has been held, some practical suggestions of any kind whatsoever that would help this Court to promote the social well-being of these seaport communities by abolishing this system. You will also bear in mind that it has been specially remitted to you to consider, in the probation in this case, the question of a possible maintenance for under-employed casuals. I should like you, if you have the opportunity, to consult your clients. I say so particularly, Sir Lynden, in view of this. I recognise to the full the difficulty of advocacy in your position. You represent very powerful authorities through the length and breadth of the country. Here is a problem which effects the workers in that industry with which they are concerned. We have told them weeks and weeks ago we should like all the help they can give about it. I would not like your

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speech to close without your making a further effort to give us some light upon that subject. I hope you will not think that is unduly pressing, but we have only one object at heart, namely, to do good to all concerned.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Quite, my Lord. In this case I am only the buffer state.

The CHAIRMAN: I know, and I hope I have not spoken unsympathetically with regard to that.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, but what I want to avoid is this. It would be very easy, my Lord, to apply my ingenuity and exercise my imagination in formulating a scheme, but that is no use to your Lordship.

The CHAIRMAN: That is no use to us. What we want is the great, powerful, practical talent that is behind you to consolidate itself and present itself, so far as you can do so to-morrow,

with the best suggestion that had occurred to them to eradicate this social trouble.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I will do my best to get your Lordship the assistance of practical people, and, if it comes to this, that what is suitable in one place is not suitable in another, I shall have to tell your Lordship: "You may do this here, that there, and something else in a third place."

The CHAIRMAN: We will take all the light we can get, and we will not promise to agree to any of it, and will, perhaps, promise to agree with the whole of it. But any light will be helpful. There are some questions that occurred to me in the course of your argument, but it would be better that I should defer those. I made rather a point of allowing you to state the thing in your own way. When you conclude I may have one or two questions to ask, but I will defer them until this illumination to-morrow.

(Adjourned to to-morrow morning at half-past ten.)

TWENTIETH DAY.

Thursday, March 11th, 1920.

Present :—

THE RIGHT HON. LORD SHAW OF DUNFERMLINE (in the Chair).

Sir JOSEPH G. BROODBANK

Mr. FREDERICK SCRUTTON

Sir LIONEL FLETCHER

Mr. JOHN SMETHURST

Mr. HARRY GOSLING, C.H.

Mr. BEN TILLET, M.P.

Mr. A. PUGH

Mr. ROBERT WILLIAMS

Mr. NORMAN MACPHERSON } Secretaries.
Mr. G. H. INCE }

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The CHAIRMAN: Sir Lynden, before the proceedings are resumed this morning, the Court wishes to make the following announcement. After the evidence of Lord Devonport it was resolved, in accordance with an intimation which I ventured to make during the course of his evidence, that a communication should be addressed to each of the departments which appeared to be involved in the matters on which he gave evidence. Such a communication was made accordingly to those departments. In reply to one of the communications, Sir Arthur Goldfinch attended, took the oath, was examined and cross-examined upon the subject matter of the rebuttal of the charges made by Lord Devonport. The action of the other departments will now be disclosed to the parties and to the public in the correspondence which I ask the Secretary to read.

Mr. MACPHERSON: If your Lordship pleases. This is a letter from the Secretary of the Ministry of Transport: "I am directed by the Minister of Transport to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, and to thank the Court of Inquiry for the opportunity which has been afforded to him, and of which advantage has been taken, of perusing a copy of the evidence given before the Court by Lord Devonport. The Minister notes that, in the opinion of Lord Devonport, the congestion prevailing in the Port of London is to some extent attributable to shortage of wagons, but Sir Eric Geddes apprehends that it would not be the wish of the Court, which, he understands, has been set up for the purpose of inquiring into the claims of the National Transport Workers' Federation for a national minimum daily wage and other alterations in the conditions of dock labour, to embark upon an investigation of the extent to which congestion at the ports, including the Port of London, may be attributable to lack of wagons. It therefore does not seem to him that it would be helpful to the Court that his department should submit comments on the subject matter of Lord Devonport's evidence, but I am to add that if the Court should desire to receive any information on specific points from the Ministry, every effort will be made to meet their wishes. As regards the statements made by Lord Devonport with reference to the inability on the part of the railway companies to convey the quantity of imports which awaited removal from the Port of London, and the number of trucks required, it will no doubt be within the knowledge of the Court that the railway companies serving the Port of London are in a position to lay before them, if requested to do so, full information as to the working of the traffic, the resources of the companies in wagons, the daily wagon requirements noted to them by the Port Authority, and the extent to which it has been possible to meet those requirements. I am to add that the information supplied to the Ministry by the railway companies differs materially from Lord Devonport's statements as to the extent to which the wagon requirements of the Port Authority have not been met." Then, my Lord, this is the letter from the Ministry of Shipping: "In reply to your letter of March 4, I am directed by the Shipping Controller to express his thanks to the Court for sending a copy of Lord Devonport's evidence and offering to allow a representative of this Ministry to give evidence, and to say that Sir Joseph Maclay does not desire to comment upon the subjects dealt with by Lord Devonport." The letter from the Secretary of the Royal Commission on the Sugar Supply is as follows: "I am directed by the Royal Commission on the Sugar Supply to ask you to convey to the Court of Inquiry

appointed by the Minister of Labour to inquire into the claims of the National Transport Workers' Federation for a national minimum daily wage, and other alterations in the conditions of dock labour, its thanks for the opportunity given to it to peruse the evidence given before the Court on Wednesday, March 3, by Lord Devonport, Chairman of the Port of London Authority. Should the Court of Inquiry wish to take evidence from the Commission on the matters referred to by Lord Devonport the Commission will be ready to furnish a witness. But so far as the Commission itself is concerned, it is not prepared to dispute the substantial accuracy of Lord Devonport's statements. All that it could do would be to show that it is in no way responsible for the heavy demands on the Port of London Authority's warehousing accommodation that is threatened in April in respect of raw sugar. The blame, such as it may be, must be with the Ministry of Shipping, on which the Commission is dependent for provision of the ships to convey its purchases of sugar, and which failed during January and February to supply the ships required to carry the sugars which were awaiting shipment in those months. It is wholly to this failure that the threatened glut of sugar imports in April is due; and any further investigation of the circumstances, which the Court of Inquiry may think desirable, should be directed to ascertaining the causes which precluded the Ministry of Shipping from supplying the required freight accommodation in January and February."

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I gather, my Lord, that this is another illustration of the principle of "passing it on."

The CHAIRMAN: The Court is of opinion that it has discharged its duty with regard to the evidence given by Lord Devonport in affording an opportunity to the departments concerned to give rebutting evidence to that sworn on oath by his Lordship. It has no further duty in the matter except to put the parties in possession of the attitude of the departments as it is disclosed in the letters now read. With regard to the congestion or glut in the case of meat, the department communicated with by the Secretary to the Court was the Board of Trade. No answer has been received from that department.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Nor tea, my Lord, I suppose? Tea was another matter referred to.

The CHAIRMAN: Nor tea. That was the Department of the Food Controller. Sir Lynden Macassey, I observe in my notes of yesterday that various matters of query were arising in my own mind, and I postponed putting these to you until to-day. On further reflection and examination I find that they all, or nearly all, come naturally enough to be the subject of reply by Mr. Bevin, and, accordingly, it would be no advantage to the public that I should attempt to forestall any points which naturally arise of criticism of your argument. I leave that to Mr. Bevin. There still, however, remains the matter of substance to which I alluded as to decasualisation of labour.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord. Before I commence, my attention has been drawn to some evidence which was given by a witness called yesterday on behalf of the London Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Edwin Tredwen. It is reported

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in more than one paper that that witness was a witness called by the Port Labour employers. He made an answer on page 10 of the typewritten notes to which I wish to refer. At the bottom of that page Mr. Bevin put this question to him: "You have only time to oppose labour getting a decent standard of life," and his answer was: "I do not oppose labour getting a decent standard of life, but in a time of war and in a time of reconstruction it is everyone's duty to make some sacrifice, and I think that manual labour has made less sacrifice throughout the war and since the war than any other part of the community." I desire most emphatically, on behalf of the port employers, to dissociate them from that answer and from the sentiment in the answer; and I say this in the hearing of Mr. Bevin and of his friends behind, that no such sentiment, from start to finish of these proceedings, has emanated from our side, and we should be ashamed to have offered any such opinion as that. I want to kill here and now the report which has gone out that this was said by one of our witnesses; and if the London Chamber of Commerce had nothing better to say than that, I say most emphatically that they had better have stayed away.

Mr. BEVIN: I desire to thank Sir Lynden Macassey for that observation.

The CHAIRMAN: That incident is very happily passed from now.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Now, my Lord, I desire to give your Lordship the assistance which I undertook yesterday afternoon to give in respect of the question of decasualisation of labour. The position which is taken up by the port labour employers was very fully stated by Sir Alfred Booth, if I may call the attention of the Court to the evidence which he gave. On page 13 of the fifth day, in the last paragraph at the bottom of the right-hand column, this question was put to Sir Alfred Booth by Mr. Bruce Thomas: "It has been stated here by Mr. Bevin that employers have always resisted decasualisation. Is that true so far as Liverpool is concerned?"—(A.) No. We have turned this way and that way to try to find some practical method which would work, and which would meet with the approval of the men, in which they could co-operate, and after nine years' work on the subject I can only say that you will not find a royal road to this, but it has got to be worked out as a hand-in-hand problem in every port, according to the conditions there are, and according to the local circumstances. What might work in Liverpool might be absolutely impossible in London." The next question over the page is: "Do you recommend a registration scheme at every port, worked out in order to fit the local circumstances of each case?"—(A.) I think that is a necessary step. You cannot do anything without a registration scheme which will show you what men you are employing, and, if possible, what they are earning. You must have figures to start upon, and also you must prevent the flooding of the labour market at the docks with casual labour from every other employment in times of bad trade." I think that Sir Alfred's evidence is entirely on the same lines as the evidence given by Mr. Sexton, the well-known and respected leader in Liverpool, before the Royal Commission on Poor Laws and Relief of Distress, in Appendix, Volume 8, Parliamentary Paper, 1910, Cd. 5,066. On page 312, at question 84,398, he was asked this question by Mr. Loch: "How do you propose to get rid of these outer men, who, you say, come in to find what job

they may?"—(A.) I should say that work should be found for them. (Q.) That would imply, on the other hand, would it not, a regularisation of the work in the docks, so that dock work became a definite bit of work for a definite number of men as far as possible?—(A.) I do not think you could establish that. You could not establish definite work in the docks for a definite number of men (Q.) With a margin?—(A.) It would be absolutely impossible to do it. (Q.) It would be possible with a margin, would it not?—(A.) In principle, but, as you say, if you have the margin there you attract men by the margin, men who are out of work. (Q.) I do not see how you would stop your casualisation?—(A.) You cannot decasualise dock labour at all. You may relieve it, but you cannot absolutely decasualise dock labour."

Mr. SEXTON: I said that, and I endorse it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Mr. Sexton quite properly says that he endorses that now, so that Mr. Sexton and Sir Alfred Booth are quite agreed on that point. So that what has been done at Liverpool is what I say is the right thing to be done: a local scheme by the co-operation of both sides was put into operation, and if that local scheme wants tightening up it ought to be done by the co-operation of both sides locally. Then to carry the thing further the evidence which was given by Mr. Spencer, you will remember, was that the Glasgow port employers in conjunction with the Trade Union in Glasgow on two occasions formulated a scheme there, and that scheme, of course, miscarried, because, notwithstanding the agreement of the unions, the men would not accept it.

The CHAIRMAN: May I ask you this. I do not want to press you too much if there is any difference among those instructing you, but are you instructed to go so far as to say, assuming that a local scheme is feasible, that a system of registration should be adopted?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord. All our evidence which we have given by the different witnesses from the different ports is directed to that.

The CHAIRMAN: You agree to that proposition?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord, but the registration scheme must be one to be carried into operation having regard to the local circumstances. That is the evidence given by our witnesses. Then, in the case of Hull, your Lordship will remember the evidence that there, by the co-operation between the employers and the union, a scheme of registration had been carried into operation. There, again, if that scheme wants tightening up in any particular respect that tightening up should be done by the local committee who put it into operation, in strict regard to their conjoint views as to its adaptation to the local circumstances; and the same thing as regards London. Your Lordship will remember the evidence which was given by Lord Devonport as to London. There a committee, presided over by Mr. Justice Roche, considered this question and reported upon it. I do not know whether your Lordship has a copy of that Report?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, I have read every word of it.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: We have it in print.

(*The same was handed in and marked H.44.)

* See Appendix No. 133.

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Your Lordship will see what the terms of reference to that Committee were. The terms of reference were: "To inquire and report to me what action, if any, should be taken to regulate the work and reduce, if necessary, the number of casual labourers in the Port of London, and also, in view of the demobilisation of the Army and the cessation of munition work, to report on the best method of applying the principle of out-of-work donation to transport workers in the Port of London, and of preventing numbers of workmen, who are in difficulties as regards finding employment in their own trade, from resorting to the docks and wharves, and thus making the conditions of employment there more irregular than they were before the war." The first paragraph of the Report to the Minister of Labour is in the following terms: "Since our last Interim Report, dated March 6, 1919, was presented, the Committee has held a number of meetings and has considered various proposals. It has, however, been found that questions relating to insurance against unemployment and under-employment are essentially involved in most if not all of these proposals, and we are of opinion that no conclusion can be reached until the details of the general scheme of unemployment insurance, which it is understood is in contemplation, are before us. At the same time, certain interim measures seem to us proper to be adopted, particularly in connection with the registration of workmen and employers in the port, and accordingly we have decided to present this second Interim Report." Then this Report was presented, and measures are now being taken to carry out the recommendations of this Report, and to put them into practical operation.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you instructed to express your concurrence with the penultimate paragraph in Mr. Justice Roche's Report and the four recommendations (a), (b), (c), and (d) which are set out? Observe (a) that casual workers and permanent men (*i.e.*, men on weekly or longer engagements) should be registered without distinction."

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: You agree to that?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I say these recommendations (a), (b), (c), and (d) are accepted by the port employers in London, and they are proceeding now to put a scheme of registration to the effect of those recommendations into practical operation.

The CHAIRMAN: It is one of the most powerful reports that have ever been issued in recent times on this subject. That applies to London?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: What I want to get from you is, are those recommendations accepted by the general body of the clients who instruct you as applicable to the other ports in the kingdom?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: No, my Lord, I cannot say that, and I would not say that, for this reason: each scheme must be a scheme adapted to local circumstances, and I should, instead of assisting the Court, be involving the Court in the greatest possible danger if I were going to say that I agree to something which, after local inquiry in London, is found suitable to London, being applied to Liverpool, for example, without any

inquiry whatever in Liverpool as to whether it is suitable. I cannot take that position. The Liverpool scheme, as Sir Alfred Booth said, has been evolved after some nine years' work and consideration, and it would be upsetting the whole business if I were now to agree, without any knowledge of whether I could or should or whether it would work or whether it would not work, to inserting a bit of foreign machinery into the domestic machinery now working in Liverpool. I dare not do that.

The CHAIRMAN: I appreciate entirely your reference to local conditions. I thought you might have been able to go the length of saying that, subject to that, you did accept in principle, on behalf of the whole of the dock labour employers, the principles set out in Mr. Justice Roche's Report. However, I do not carry it further. I recognise the position in which you are, and I am afraid the responsibility for any further step must rest upon this Court.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: That must be the position. Your Lordship will appreciate this—

The CHAIRMAN: I think I have shown, by my observations, that I thoroughly appreciate the position in which you are necessarily bound to exercise great care.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am speaking not merely to your Lordship, but I am speaking to the public. The Court will recognise it would be a most dangerous thing for me to agree to some doctrinaire proposal being applied generally throughout the country without any knowledge whether it would work or not, particularly in agreeing to existing machinery which is working well being subverted in favour of something which has merely a theoretical agreement in support of it. That is the position. Of course, your Lordship will remember that the Port and Transit Committee, presided over by Sir Norman Gibb, after much consideration, drafted out a model scheme of registration which they sent round to various ports as a sort of guide for the various ports to work upon, after having adapted it so far as was necessary to local conditions. It is a very valuable piece of evidence before your Lordship as to what you might say is a kind of novel proposal. Mr. Warner put that proposal in.

The CHAIRMAN: Do you happen to know whether Sir Norman Gibb's report was in the hands of Mr. Justice Roche's Committee?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think you have members of Mr. Justice Roche's Committee on the Bench beside your Lordship, who would know. I do not.

The CHAIRMAN: Anyhow, I am afraid I shall have to cover that, too, and consider the point.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: In conclusion, I would only make one request, and that is that when the Minutes of the Proceedings of this Court are printed, the various statements which have been handed in both by Mr. Bevin, on his side, and by myself and my witnesses on my side, should also be printed, because the proceedings of the Commission would not be of anything like the same value if those statements were not printed as they will be if they are printed.

The CHAIRMAN: Am I within my right now, as you are drawing near the end of your observation,

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in asking you whether there is any hope of a practical suggestion for the creation of a National Council being arranged between both sides. I say so because upon this very important point of casualisation it is quite clear that while this Court could not, answering its specific issue, and sitting for a special purpose, undertake the local duties which are necessary to be performed, a National Council if set up, with that, among other things, as its practical duty, would be of enormous value to the industry and the nation. Now, is there any hope? Please do not answer if you think it would be better not to answer at present; but hold my question as put to you.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think I ought to say this: it is not just as simple a matter as your Lordship probably thinks.

The CHAIRMAN: It may not be.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: The reason is this: as you know, the whole question of these National Councils, the outcome of the well-known Whitley Report, is a matter which has formed now the work of a special Department of the Ministry of Labour, and that Department has views, and strong views, as to what ought to be done, and it also has the experience of what cannot be done and what can be done in the various industries.

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Lynden, I would like to say this to you: it is manifest for various reasons, including the engagements of members of this Tribunal, that a certain short interval may have to occur before our deliverance is made, and our Report is made, and you may accept it from me that anything agreed upon by both parties would be a valuable thing for us to report to the Ministry of Labour. It is for the Ministry of Labour to dovetail those suggestions into schemes of its own governed by Departmental ideas. But it is to the national interest to have an arrangement which would appear to be acceptable to both sides to be ratified by this Court and presented to a Department of the Crown. I carry it no further, except to say that probably at the conclusion of our proceedings to-day we may renew our request that any assistance in such directions as I have indicated may be afforded. I am saying that with a friendly intention towards both sides.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I would like to say this. I should feel disappointed, my Lord, very deeply disappointed, if on that very point the evidence which we have collected from all parts of the country, and placed before the Court, does not give your Lordship some assistance and some guidance; because we have brought evidence before the Court bearing on that very matter. But this is the trouble—

The CHAIRMAN: You entirely misapprehend me. If we are to be guided by the evidence we shall be guided by it, and, again, I may say that there will be no shirking of duty on the part of the Tribunal in that respect.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I am sure not.

The CHAIRMAN: The point of view from which I was putting it was that you, who led the evidence, and Mr. Bevin, who heard it, shall both say at the end of the day to each other: Now, there are a good many practical details, whatever their nature, on which we may agree: those prac-

tical details should be such as to enable the machine which is constructed on the settlement which is come to, to work smoothly in the interests of all parties. I am quite sure you will both approach it in that way.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: And our witnesses have all gone a long way because they have all advocated the formation of local Port Labour Committees.

The CHAIRMAN: I know.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: They have all done that. In all these industrial matters there is one very sound principle, and that is to teach the child to walk before you attempt to make it run.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, you will be fully in possession of those moral maxims when you are negotiating.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: May I also say this, that the sure way of constructive statesmanship is by building from the bottom up.

The CHAIRMAN: There is another most excellent maxim.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I only refer to those maxims because in the complexity of details it occurred to me possibly they were not bearing with their ordinary pressure upon the mind of the Court.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we have them in mind.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: If we were to say this: I agree to the formation of a National Council and under united pressure we were to endeavour to impose it, there would be trouble from the first.

The CHAIRMAN: You will make a shot at it; and I am sure you will do it with goodwill.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I think we have put the case as we conceive it before the Court.

The CHAIRMAN: Are you concluded now?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: You have omitted one thing.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Which point is that, my Lord?

The CHAIRMAN: It is the point which I did mention on the third day, not only casualisation but the question of the maintenance.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: I thought that was all together my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: I said "The question to be determined is the maximum demand and the point of casualisation coupled with the demand for maintenance. We will be glad of any light you can throw on that subject."

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: Your Lordship, I am afraid, was introducing an artificial distinction which does not exist in fact. The two things are one and the same.

The CHAIRMAN: How?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: For this reason: you

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cannot pretend to deal with the question of maintenance of port labour unemployed until you have got registration schemes in operation, till you have records of what the amount of port labour actually employed at the different seasons of the year is, and to what extent there is an influx from outside labour. We have not got those details.

The CHAIRMAN: You do not feel inclined to go further than that?

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I cannot; and I have the very powerful support of Mr. Justice Roche's Report behind me on that point.

The CHAIRMAN: Very well. I should like to say with regard to the argument and your conduct of the case—I hope you will forgive me—it is not for a person in my position to make any observation on the handling of a case by a man of your distinction—but we thoroughly recognise the extreme difficulties which have been in your way in endeavouring to consolidate opinions from all parts of the country, and we wish gratefully to acknowledge your services to the Court.

Sir LYNDEN MACASSEY: My Lord, I am obliged for your Lordship's kind appreciation, and that is compensation for any difficulties I may have encountered.

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord, it is now my duty to wind up the case on behalf of the people that I think are the most seriously affected by it. I want at this stage to join with Sir Lynden Macassey in thanking the Court for the very great kindness which it has shown to me personally. It is a new experience for me to be putting cases in this method. I have been used to arbitration work, where the procedure is slightly different, and I naturally approached it with some amount of diffidence, but I am indebted to you, my Lord, for the assistance you have given me, both from the point of view of procedure and in helping to elucidate the points that the men desired to submit to the Court. I want, however, to proceed by dealing with the last points of Sir Lynden's speech first, and I want to deal first of all with the question of future organisation. I think it was about the early part of 1918 when the then Minister of Labour invited some of us to see him and to see whether any form of national organisation could be applied to the class of labour represented in the waterside industry. We then submitted to Mr. George Roberts, who, I believe, was the Minister at that time, proposals, but we never got any further. Sir Lynden says that you must proceed from the bottom, and I agree with him, but we have to decide what is the foundation. That is the vital point. When the question of what was the foundation for national organisation under the Whitley scheme was before the Whitley Council Committee, they decided that the foundation was the national centre, and that you had to get the national centre right and then gravitate outwards, and the branches should afterwards conform as near as possible to the centre. Now the theory of Sir Lynden is: begin at the extreme end and gravitate to the centre. Now, all the experience of all the Whitley Councils—and I would remind your Lordship I am a member of no less than fourteen of these Whitley Councils, I am chairman of two and vice-chairman, I think it is, of three dealing with the various industries, I happen to have been appointed while this Court has been sitting as Chairman of the Road Transport Industrial Council, which I helped to form with my colleagues—and in every case where we have

approached this question of national organisation of the industries we have begun at the centre and we have got the national basis of the machinery right, and then we have gravitated out and extended the organisation in all its various ramifications until we got right down to the works committee in the shop. That is the only observation I wish to make on that, because I immediately find myself in conflict with Sir Lynden as to what is the foundation of the organisation.

Now I come to Registration. Registration should proceed on exactly the same lines, because wherever you have Registration if you couple it with any form of insurance the broad framework that must be applied must be similar; it must be applicable to the whole country. It is true, very true, that you must have elasticity in your method, elasticity of application, and a good deal of local autonomy, but with all that elasticity and variation it must be a part of a national structure or you will find this difficulty; you will be trying to treat maintenance in London on one basis, in Liverpool on another basis, in Glasgow on another. You will create conflict as to the basis of maintenance, as to the method of collecting money for creating a pool from which maintenance shall be paid, and those broad general methods must, I think, be applied to all the ports. I hold the view that under a national scheme with elasticity of method, to deal with Registration, I can see no very great difficulty in even assisting in seasonal ports with the men who are slack in other ports. For instance you get a lot of small ports, you often find the men are at work at one port, and there is a shortage in another port because of the seasonal character of two ports, although both small ports. You get trades like the deal trade, in the timber trade; you get the pit prop trade, which is purely seasonal—at present it is an unholy scramble the way those men are brought into the docks and discharged again, quite on a loose end, purely a game of chance. But if they were brought within one national scheme you would find that one port was busiest when another port was slack, and evidence of that will be found on Mr. Allen's table, submitted by the other side. You will find on the employers' own representation that if you take the whole of the ports of the country one set of ports are at their highest at one period of the year and another set of ports at their highest at another part of the year, due largely to the changing form of imports which a particular port caters for. I do not presume for a moment to have a monopoly of judgment as to what should be the right scheme; but I am going to ask this Court definitely to give three decisions. First I think there should be national organisation in the manner I have indicated, beginning with the centre and unifying the system and method of dealing with these labour questions out to the branches. That is one point. Try to harmonise methods as much as possible, subject to the inevitable elasticity. I know it may be said that if you have got to have elasticity away goes all your claim; but I think it was the Archbishop of York who said you cannot be logical in everything, and you cannot be logical in dealing with this great human problem always; there must be some slight variation, at the same time maintaining all the best elements of uniformity. Then I want to ask the Court to declare for the principle of Registration, again to be looked at in both senses, national with the necessary local variations; and the third point is I want the Court to declare for the principle of maintenance. The reason I ask the third is this, if I may take a political illustration. Take education. The State did not build all the schools and then say all children should be educated. Parlia-

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ment declared that it was essential that children should be educated, and then proceeded to build their structure. I want the same principle adopted here. Here is a social problem. Here is a problem that demands the best brains of all of us to solve. I want this Court to declare that in its opinion it is capable of solution, and then to issue what is tantamount to a direction to those people, who, after all, are responsible for finding solutions, to proceed to find the solution. The method I have indicated in my opening statement may not be the correct method, after further examination; but if I have submitted on behalf of the Federation a method, the people who have as much joint responsibility as I have got for finding a solution of the casual labour problem have the duty devolved upon them of setting up a counter scheme to see whether or not out of the two minds we may not evolve a solution of the problem. The same illustration I gave for education applies to national health and every problem that Parliament has had to deal with as a great social problem. It has said it is in the interests of the nation that a solution of this problem shall be found; and you, with your experience in Parliament, know that in shaping Bills you have never been able to see, I presume, my Lord, the exact structure and organisation that was going to develop out of the Bill you were originally introducing. You agree to the principle; you place it in a Bill, and your structure begins to grow, and it changes with experience until you finally get the right method to solve your problem. Education, health laws, everything that Parliament has ever done have always begun more or less in a nebulous state, seeing a huge problem that from the point of view of civilisation must be solved, it has set its mind to solve it. I carry it one stage further; if your Court decided that I have made out the case for maintenance, is it not possible that many of those whose business it is and whose life's study it is to study sociology may come to our assistance, and help us even!—because those in the game cannot always see the best of the game and those who make it their prime study in life to help the solution of these great social problems may assist. If there can be agreement it would be better, and I have offered agreement; I have offered to the employers, if they would agree, the principle I would not attempt at this stage, to tie them to details; but whatever the best that was in us, on our side we would bend our energies to try and find an ultimate solution both in Registration and maintenance. Therefore I ask your Court to declare that the principle of maintenance has been established, throwing the responsibility on us all, and it will be a grave responsibility, but it will be a responsibility that on behalf of the workmen's side we will not shirk—of trying to give effect to it, not merely in our own interests but in the interests of the generations to follow. We have had one aim, from the foundation of the organisation of the docker and his associates; we have wanted to make this calling as economically secure as any other calling; and instead of it being merely an attraction to broken and worn-out men from other industries we want a father to be able to bring his boy into this calling with as much pride as he would if he made a craftsman of him or placed him in any other calling. That is our aim, and that is what we have set out to attain; and raking up evidence given before a Poor Law Commission ten years ago, I submit, does not help us. Mr. Sexton, in giving that evidence, was faced, I should assume, with what appeared

at that time to be an almost insoluble problem; but we have gone a long way since then. Mr. Sexton himself has helped to frame the Liverpool scheme since that time; and if it has not met all that was required, at any rate, it was further on than the date when he viewed the problem in 1910; and I want to specially emphasise that point, because what appears to us insoluble today, the solution is found for to-morrow. I must make this comment; in the earlier proceedings I did complain, and it was mentioned by Sir Lynden Macassey, that we always appeared to be up against a stone wall. I do not know what the view of the Court is, but I frankly confess that I am disappointed in this Inquiry at the very negative attitude of the other side all the way through; because not a single problem that I have submitted to this Court have they put up one counter-suggestion towards the solution. It has been purely a negative in everything that we have put forward, and that is our problem as representing the working people. It is not merely opposition—it is not merely the sort of wilful opposition, but it is the negative attitude, the attitude that nothing can be done, which is the most appalling side, and which I must confess I feel at the moment has been the attitude of my opponents all through the case. One other observation I want to make with regard to maintenance and to Registration. I agree that Justice Roche's Committee tried to find a solution for London, and the Report is a tremendous step forward on anything else that has ever been accomplished.

The CHAIRMAN: I quite agree.

Mr. BEVIN: I did my best to help shape that Report, with my colleagues. I felt it was all we could do, because maintenance was not before us at that Court in our Terms of Reference; but I do feel this, that with the general consensus of opinion that we had to make a beginning, that was a tremendous step forward, and I want to see it given effect to, which is being done at the moment. But, my Lord, while we are giving effect to registration, cannot we also be working out the scheme to immediately follow to make registration complete? That is where I want to get to now. Machinery of registration, with the exception of the little opposition in Glasgow, which I think can be overcome—overcome by educational efforts, and not force—I would not attempt to force the Glasgow docker, my Lord, but I would try to carry him with me; but, apart from that, 90 per cent. of the country now has registration schemes of one kind or another, and they do not vary very much. Some have rather elaborate machinery, possibly a little too bureaucratic, and it needs modification, but that is a matter for consideration. But, having got to our registration scheme, I feel quite certain of it, if your Court declares for registration, then the registration schemes of the country can be co-ordinated within three months. But during that three months there is an Act of Parliament going through the House of Commons which is useless to the docker. He would be paying contributions the whole time, and be always out of benefit, because his problem is under-employment. The rules and regulations of the Part II. Insurance Act dealing with unemployment are intended to deal with the time when a man has to cease from his industry, when he has to leave one shop and go to another, or leave a building and wait for another building to be started. Now, our problem is a day-to-day problem; it is almost down to a half-day problem. That is the difference, and if you can declare for

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registration, in order to make registration complete and effective, and help a solution of this great casual labour problem, we can, in the meantime, as I have indicated, be working with, I hope, all the goodwill possible, not with a view of beating one another as to how much we are going to get out of the scheme, but with a view of finding a scheme of maintenance which will satisfy the men and considerably improve the industry, and the whole tendency of the industry—

The CHAIRMAN: That Bill to which you refer, of course, is a project; it is not yet an Act.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so.

The CHAIRMAN: Assume it was to be an Act, take it, from your point of view, at the worst, if it were to be an Act, it contains within itself provisions for contracting out, does not it?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: And your view is that this problem, being an under-employment problem in substance, it would be better that some general scheme, such as you have sketched, should take the place in this industry of any unemployed scheme applicable to industries in general whose conditions are in no way analogous to yours. Is that your view?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, I put it in this way: in the language I have used, my Lord, to ask the Court to declare that the general Unemployed Act now before the House is not suitable to meet the problems of dock labour, and that the principle of maintenance should be accepted, and the parties should be called upon to produce a scheme to satisfy the Ministry of Labour.

The CHAIRMAN: One of my colleagues puts it in this way, and I think we may both assent to it: that, unhappily, the labour which we are investigating here is a condition of intermittent employment. It is intermittent employment which is our problem.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so, my Lord.

The CHAIRMAN: That squares with your view as to the inapplicability of the Unemployed Act?

Mr. BEVIN: That is so, my Lord. I do not want to detain the Court too long about that, but if I am not making any point clear I should be glad if your Lordship would interrogate me in order that I may clear up the points as I go.

The CHAIRMAN: I am most reluctant to do so. Please proceed in your own way.

Mr. BEVIN: I do not know whether you understood what I said, my Lord. I prefer you to interrogate me in order to make myself clear.

The CHAIRMAN: I prefer not. I prefer to see a man's mind working.

Mr. BEVIN: I want to deal now with the question of output. I am coming to the amount of money as the last point. On the question of output, correspondence has been read in this Court this morning from Government departments. I think it is very illuminating. It is one of our great problems to know who is the cause of reduced output. It is not merely the Government, my Lord, but the same kind of thing goes on between merchant and merchant. I have sat in this Court,

and I confess I have felt indignant. Several times I have heard very little praise for the great body of men I represent. I have tried to picture what they are, because, as I have found them going to work so late in the morning from the evidence, my mind has been running to the dock gates at seven o'clock, 7.15, 7.30, and seen the crowds there for the fear that if they were not there they would get the ticket. Let me call your attention to the evidence from Bristol—Mr. Bubbear's evidence.

The CHAIRMAN: That was the Witness who gave evidence about those trains, and so on.

Mr. BEVIN: That is so. It is on pages 4 and 5 of the tenth day. The point I want to make about it is this. They seem to proceed to take the time of the men when the sling should be ashore. Absolutely unfair, my Lord, absolutely an unfair thing to take. With regard to the Port of Bristol, which I am closely associated with, where they have had more assistance from the Union, I suppose, than any other port in the country, they seem to set their minds to work not to get out a true picture of the dock, but to find every little cavilling thing that they could put to this Court. An illustration of that was in the disputes. They gave a picture of six disputes. When I went into them on my last visit to Bristol, last week-end, I found all those six disputes came into the picture that Mr. Spencer gave from Glasgow—very fairly I think, in his evidence—that there were some cases where, if the men had worked out the cargo, there would have been no basis upon which any independent person could have formed a judgment, because the difficulty would have been removed. It applied to every one of the cases that that Witness took up. I asked my officials how many claims and difficulties had been settled for the same period without any dispute taking place. I found they settled 124 in that period that nobody heard about, just between the two sets of officials of the dock authority: yet, instead of coming to this Court and saying: "Our machinery works so well that we have only had six stoppages and 124 settlements," they come and say: "We have had six stoppages," and not a word about the settlements until under cross-examination. My Lord, is that the spirit to go on improving organisation? I suggest it is not, and it is one of my difficulties that there is so much fuss made over trivialities very often when the men are a little bit in the wrong, and never a word of credit given to them when they are in the right. On this question of output I have had a note put in my hand this morning from a gentleman who is in the Court at the moment, an employer of labour. This is the paragraph, and he authorises me to use it: "An employer. Regarding output, you can say, on the authority of the appointed representative, that you are glad to be assured the London dockers on ship and ashore in the coasting and short sea trades are nearly back, if not already quite back, to pre-war rates of turnover and output." I congratulate that employer. That will be appreciated more in London than anything I know of, than all the attempts made to pick out every little cavilling thing that there can be against the men. There is no objection to giving the name, I think. It is Mr. James Darge, the representative of the short sea traders for London, who has authorised me to use that paragraph.

The CHAIRMAN: Probably it would be at least a strengthening of your case if it is part of the evidence, that, so to speak, the trough of the waves had been reached, and that we are now again on the up-grade with regard to output.

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Mr. BEVIN: That was the point I was coming to, but I wanted to make this observation about London. You will remember that when Mr. Matthews was in the box a great point was made about some of the grain porters and the deal porters taking some time off for what they call allowance. I find in that case it was reduced in cross-examination finally to 120 men out of nearly 50,000 men employed in London. I find on investigation that it is a custom which has been in existence for generations—

The CHAIRMAN: What was the custom? ..

Mr. BEVIN: The custom has been to take so many minutes off every two hours for a rest period. It was an old custom with the deal porters, and if you put deal porters and corn porters together, which were involved in this custom, in one dock, it does not amount to 300 men out of nearly 50,000. Here you have nearly 50,000 men carrying out the eight-hour agreement satisfactorily, no complaint, but you have a great point made because we have not been successful in getting the men away from a very, very old custom which has existed in London for generations that are past. It reminded me of your words to one of the witnesses, my Lord, when you said: "Causes may go, but effects still linger." I submit it is a very small effect, having regard to the fact that the eight-hour day has only been in operation just about a year, that nearly 50,000 men have fallen in with the new conditions without difficulty; and our failure, if it be a failure, has only been that we have been unable to change the established custom of about 300 men. I leave it at that. If I trace the point around the country, port after port, I find the same difficulty. You will remember the Hull representative got into the box and made a great point that they had had a telegram the day before that the men had knocked off at 4.45. You requested Sir Lynden to get in touch with Hull, and I have been waiting to see what the replies were going to be. But I will read the telegrams that I received. I wired immediately your Lordship requested, and in every case what I suggested to the Court I found to be correct. The pit prop bulk that was referred to, which did not have to be covered up, they worked on to 5 o'clock. In every other case they stopped to cover up. I wired immediately to know whether the men stopped to cover up at the times indicated, or had covered up and gone before the time. I found that it was the time that they stopped actually discharging, to cover up, so it really meant they did not leave the ship until practically the 5 o'clock. This telegram is from Mr. Horner, Mr. Sexton's representative, a permanent official of the Union. He says: "Full enquiry now made, men worked according to agreement 4.45, then covered up with the exception of s.s. Naimes, steam turned off at 4.40." Here is a witness who gets in the box blaming men for stopping discharging at 4.40, and our representative finds that they have to stop because the steam was turned off, and they had no power to lift the cargo—"by engineer this ship stopped three times during day short of steam." I want to hand that telegram in to give an indication of the value of the evidence which the employers have submitted about the terrible wickedness of the docker about not keeping his agreements. (**Telegram handed in to the Court.*) I am going to admit that with casual men and casual conditions there is sometimes difficulty. Who can expect otherwise? Take Liverpool. Great complaints were made of the men, that they follow work one

day and do not turn up the next. But if you want security you must give security. You cannot have security of men following their obligations unless it is reciprocal. If you start a job in Liverpool, and you know there is going to be work for your men next day, then why, in Heaven's name, not enter into an agreement that the men shall have the right to follow their job? Why go through all the paraphernalia of calling off daily? Imagine the delay in calling off 2,000 or 3,000 men every morning when they may be walking straight to their work, and you know the work is there. It is a preposterous idea. It appears to me that the Liverpool employers, as I follow their evidence, have not attempted in a single iota to give security to the men: they have only expected obligations without being prepared to give rights at the same time. I make a very strong point of that. Mr. Ross Johnson is behind me, and he knows that when they called off at Avonmouth every morning the absenteeism was tremendously high. It arose in this way. It is natural, if I have been following a job today and I am not quite certain whether I am going there to-morrow, that I am going to another stand where I think I am certain of getting a start. Is not that natural? But when the Bristol employers enter into the agreement that the man should follow his job, and that he should have a right to follow his job, my information is that absenteeism has been reduced to a practical minimum. These are problems that can easily be worked out if there is a disposition. It is not a conflict between capital and labour at all, as far as I can see. It is the application of common sense to industry, with both sides willing to utilise common sense. That is how it presents itself to me.

With regard to output you put a very pointed question to me, my Lord, that I did think, with all the risks I took—I am not whining about it; I can assure you the pledge I gave is a difficult pledge, but I will not go back on it, but I did expect a little response from the other side, and I have not noticed it yet. I am going to suggest that the workman is not responsible for the reduced output to the extent that has been indicated. I will tell you one of the causes in a good many ports. During the war, my Lord, too many middlemen worked on time and percentage, and the more wages they paid the more money they got from the Government. It did more to demoralise our dock labour than anything I know.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you please develop that?

Mr. BEVIN: The middleman, the stevedoring contractor, working for the Government, in many cases was paid time and percentage, as it was on many contracts. The more wages he paid, my Lord, the more 10 per cents. there were for him.

The CHAIRMAN: Was it as much as 10 per cent.?

Mr. BEVIN: I think 10 per cent. was the figure, as far as I remember. That can be ascertained. In some cases I am reminded it was 15 per cent.; and then there was another percentage, I understand, for establishment charges. At any rate, the actual figures can be got from the Ministry of Munitions and the Ministry of Shipping. I am not quite certain at the moment of the precise figure. If you were to apply to the Ministry of Labour you could get a report by Professor Irvine, who was appointed by the Government to inquire

* See Appendix No. 43.

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into the continued disputes in Newport. One of our difficulties there was this, that when our officials said a job was worth 1s. a ton we suddenly found that the men were given 1s. 6d., and all influence of the Union was gone. When we inquired into it we found that the firm for which this outside representative was working, if it gave 1s. 6d., was taking more percentage. Time after time, as a Union official, if I found a dispute on a ship—and we have settled thousands; the Port and Transit Committee would always apply to us to try and get the work going during the war—the first question I always asked, before I attempted to settle it, was: “How is this ship being worked; is she on a rate per ton or is she on a rate of time and percentage?” If I found it was on a rate of time and percentage, in 99 cases out of 100 the dispute had been provoked. That is a serious statement to make, but it is absolutely true. That was the policy I always followed during the war. It did more to demoralise the work, to create the establishment of claims, and all that kind of thing, than anything I have known. I am not attributing that to great port authorities: I am attributing that to cases of middlemen; and that was some of our difficulty with regard to output. It is a relic of a very, very bad system, which I am glad to say is nearly dead.

Now, one other question, I think, I ought to get an answer to from the Court, my Lord. If the Federation, in the national interests, sits down to this question of output, am I not entitled to ask that the public shall get the benefit of it? If you are going to reduce establishment charges by giving greater output, reduce the cost and save the awful congestion and delay in shipping, ought there not to be a State policy to see that the results of the labour of the men will go to the community and not go on increasing these already fabulous profits? I think that is a fair position, because, if one can see that the standard of life of the whole community is going to be increased as a result of the added effort on the part of labour, then, at any rate, I think we are entitled to ask that that benefit should come to the common weal, and not to a small trustified section of capitalists in the country. I would like an observation from your Court, if it is not too presumptuous to ask, on that point. It is one of the great problems Labour leaders have to face on this question of output at the present moment.

May I be allowed now to deal with the sliding scale, which was suggested by Sir Lynden Macassey.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you do that, could you give me any help that is in your power on this question. There was evidence put to the effect that since the eight hours per day was established the result of this chiselling off, as I shall put it, at the beginning and at the end of the half-day shift, had been to reduce that eight hours substantially to seven. That evidence was not the evidence of one witness nor from one place; my recollection is that there was a good deal of evidence about that. I entirely agree, if I may say so, with the complete relevancy of all the other observations you have made; I am not disputing that at all, but I just want to know what is the measure of opposition we are up against.

Mr. BEVIN: My Lord, I believe that this question of chiselling off part of a day, if it were closely investigated, would be found to vanish into almost thin air. I do not deny that in some cases it has existed. My suggestion on that point is this: There ought to be an immediate investigation of

the facts upon the spot. Let me give you an illustration. If you get a record out of your books three months afterwards that a ship stopped at 4.30, it may look as if the men knocked off at 4.30 wilfully; but if you had been on the spot it may have been there was no lighter alongside or no truck, or you could not go on discharging, or it may have been that you had reached your point for shutting at a given point, or that the foreman had said: “We will not get any more out; we are going to shunt the line.” There are all sorts of factors of that character in a dock. They should be separated. We ought to know the exact circumstances, and the matter should be dealt with immediately. Now, if there was a closer co-operation or at least an understanding between the managerial staff—I emphasise the managerial staff—and the paid delegates of the Union, who operate on the dock to watch the men’s interests as well as to try and see that agreements are kept, I believe that the whole thing can be reduced to almost nothing in a very short time. But, if you take the Port of London Authority, I do not suppose any official of the Port of London Authority—I am talking of warehouse-keepers and other people—would ever dream of discussing any problem he had with a wicked delegate of the dock about men knocking off. If he did he would do it surreptitiously, because it is not the policy of the P.L.A. that anybody should interfere—they call it interference—or co-operate in their management. Therefore, I emphasise that point, that you can reduce these things not merely by receiving deputations in the face of the authority and discussing generalities, but actual consolidation on the job. That is the best remedy.

There is another point, which is the daily pay. That is a very serious problem. I do not think you will get rid of daily pay in all the ports until you have got maintenance. The real trouble is this. A man may be out of work, under-employed, for two or three days, and he gets a job. He has not any food or money to start with, and he is bound to get what he calls a “sub.” to get money that night; but if he is not left in that position then he has no grounds at all for asking for daily pay. Again, this very question of daily pay and the regularity in the men’s habits depends to a very large extent upon maintenance: the two things are interwoven. You take a man who goes down to Tilbury. He pays his fare, and hundreds of them have to borrow it to go down very often in a slack period. When he gets there he gets a job. He cannot go on all day without any food; he has to go to the coffee-house, and hence you have got the subbing system. It is a bad system, and it is bad conditions which have produced the bad system. That is the trouble. But I think it is capable of solution. I do not think your Court could invent, as you rightly suggested, the method, but may I submit this. In all other problems of life I think it is agreed there is almost continuous change, in chemistry and every form of life, and it is the subject of continuous research and study. Why should not labour be the subject of continuous study associated with its life and its problems? I could not pretend to give you a solution of all these problems, but what we are prepared to do is to apply our minds to find solutions, because, Socialist that I am, I recognise that if we change from a capitalist state to a Socialist to-morrow, we have got to have service and we have got to have discipline. It becomes a question of habit. Whatever my politics may be, I am not prepared at any time to suggest to men that there should be a looseness in their method of life, whatever class they belong to.

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The CHAIRMAN: I am anxious to follow more accurately than I fear I at present do. How is the daily pay question related to this chiselling off?

Mr. BEVIN: I will tell you. The man is supposed to finish at 5 o'clock. If he works right up to 5 o'clock at the ship, it is 5.30 sometimes before he gets away from the pay office. That is the real trouble. Of course, if he works to 5 o'clock, and a big firm has 1,000 or 1,500 men to pay, it takes time. I am not complaining about the time the employers take to pay, but, assuming he is at Tilbury, and he has to get up to London or anywhere else, and he has got to get a train, he makes sure (and it is human) of getting his money in time, and that he is not going to get in too late a train. In Avonmouth it is the old problem. The train goes at 5.18 and at 5.30. There are 1,000 men for one firm to pay at night. What is the obvious thing they do? If they lose the 5.18 or the 5.30, the next train is after 6: it means, really, another hour before they get home. So they leave their work—I am quite frank about it—or send some of their mates; all of them do not go to get the money. All sorts of loose methods are applied, to which we all object, in order that there should be no delay in getting away.

The CHAIRMAN: Again, of course, weekly pay would remove that temptation, and remove that waste of time.

Mr. BEVIN: Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN: I see. That is how it works.

Mr. BEVIN: That is it. If we could get over the difficulty of the man being hungry when he starts work, we would have no difficulty in facing the men to force them to have weekly pay. That is our trouble; that is our problem.

The CHAIRMAN: Assume you had weekly pay, and assume a man coming to his work on a Wednesday morning did get his weekly pay on the Saturday afternoon; how would it make any difference? I am sure it would, but I just want to see I am clear about it.

Mr. BEVIN: He would have no justification for hunger argument, and he would get very little sympathy; that is to say, supposing there was an agreed amount that no man should fall below, and it was fixed on a proper basis, assuming proper conditions, and on the Saturday he had drawn a sum to take him through the next week, there would be no sympathy from the other men.

The CHAIRMAN: I follow. That is how it is mixed up with maintenance.

Mr. BEVIN: Yes. It is bound up with the whole problem.

The CHAIRMAN: I am much obliged to you.

Mr. BEVIN: With reference to this sliding scale which has been suggested in the proceedings, I want to put three fundamental objections to it. One is that I object to the working class being segregated from the rest of the community and placed on a food basis. We have never in the whole of our industrial history been asked or invited to adopt this method. I do not want it confused with selling price sliding scales, which is quite another matter, which may or may not be an indication of the prosperity of the industry.

That may be an indication—I am not going to debate whether it is wise or not; I am not asked to accept it—of the prosperity of an industry. In this calling, in shipping, which is international, which is not dependent upon a labour price at one place, it may be, even with freights low, that there may still be a big profit. It may also be that when food is low the industry may be still prosperous and can stand the pinch. But we have to face wages with our economic organisation through the whole of our existence. I do not know what wages are going to be in 5 years, nor am I going to attempt to prophesy, but I am going to rely—and I want to rely and my Federation wants to rely—upon the relationship and bargaining arrangements that may be set up between the parties to govern our conditions for the days to come. We want to be left free, without any automatic arrangements either one way or the other. I think it is bad politically, too, my Lord, very detrimental. If you could buy off the working class with automatic arrangements, which all of us, with any idea of the next two or three years, must see is a tendency upward, or at least no likelihood of a tendency downward, is it quite likely that Government will face the economic problems in the manner they would if the consequences of their acts are felt by the community?

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Bevin, there was a witness, there were probably two witnesses, who said something like this in the course of their evidence, that they saw no prospect of easier conditions of life for 5 or 7 years. Does my recollection betray me in that?

Mr. BEVIN: That is quite correct, my Lord; that is what was said.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ince, perhaps you will look out the passage in the evidence at your leisure and put it before me. What I am pointing to is this. If, on the whole, we thought there might be ups and downs but that the standard of living would remain for a period of 5 or 7 years, should we interpose the theoretical sliding scale which in practice could not come into operation except after that lapse of time? Would it be a wise thing for us to adopt an automatic scale which, for practical purposes, could never see the light except after that period of years?

Mr. BEVIN: I think it would be very unwise. That is my view of it. I do not think it is wise to put anything in an industrial agreement that will work automatically without discussion on the one hand or simply put it in because it is never going to happen. Both of them may appeal to people who want to find an easy way out of their troubles.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not writing a book on economics here; we are wanting to heal a social trouble.

Mr. BEVIN: I quite agree. I am trying to put it from a very practical experience.

The CHAIRMAN: It is that we want.

Mr. BEVIN: Will you allow me to say this. I believe that the sliding scale which has been invented has not been invented to give industrial peace but for political purposes, and that is why I am putting it in the way I am. I do not want to be subject to the caprices of politicians. It is rather a brutal way of putting it, probably, but

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still that is what I feel. I have seen so much of this kind of thing during the war that I want to be freed from it. If I have got a problem, and there are two parties involved in that problem, I prefer to sit down with the problem and find a solution than to try ahead to anticipate it and try to devise a method which will not work when the problem arises. I hope I will not be accused of giving a lecture, but I am putting it because of my troubles during the war. I have had so many suggestions from representatives of big bodies of men put to me: "Cannot we get over this by doing something that will happen in a year's time," with the inevitable consequences that you had disaster.

The CHAIRMAN: Can you give me any light on this, that when the price of living goes down wages will go down; there has been a suggestion that there was a fear of that. Is there any case of any trend of policy that you can refer to in justification of that suspicion?

Mr. BEVIN: There is only the railway settlement, my Lord. The railway settlement indicates that when prices go down, wages automatically go down without discussion—down to a certain point.

The CHAIRMAN: Subject to a minimum?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes. That is the principle I am opposing. I think it is a mistake, and I think it is a mistake from this point of view: Does it not assume that there is going to be no change in railway organisation between now and the time when these wages begin to drop? When those prices come to go down, it may be that science will have so reorganised your railways that they can afford to pay double the wages as an industrial factor; we cannot tell, but yet you have made future generations automatic. There is another problem, too: The generation which agrees to an agreement or the people who are the predominant factor in agreeing to an agreement to-day, may be dead in five years' time, and a new generation will repudiate it. I mean it is the tremendous length of time which is the difficulty.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you leave this, I hope you will not forget what has been manifest from some of my questions: that increased output is a most material factor, whether it be by the man's work or by the organisation or appliances, or the like, in the reduction of the prices of the necessaries of life, and in that way a most material factor in allowing the working class to have more value out of their wages.

Mr. BEVIN: Quite.

The CHAIRMAN: If that be so; if the scale is fixed on present conditions, which in all probability will last for a period of years, then if there is an improvement in the output and the various things such as you have quoted in your argument, including a rise—I say it quite frankly—in the sense of honourable dealing by both parties, namely the workman who gives his time and the employer who gives his organisation and his money—assuming the output to be greater on the part of the working men, they would then get far more value, or at least considerably more value, out of the wages earned; and is it not better to have them assured that they will not be, so to speak, penalised for that by their wages being put down?

Mr. BEVIN: That is what I am arguing.

The CHAIRMAN: I know, but every man has a sort of weakness for his own way of putting a thing. Therefore, I plead guilty to that. I have tried to get it more and more clearly out of the witnesses. They began by saying that they did not understand it; one man said that it was quite intelligible to him but it would not be understood by the working man; and gradually everybody seemed to come to an understanding. You understood it entirely?

Mr. BEVIN: I did.

The CHAIRMAN: And I think those behind you, working men, will understand that there is a far better chance of their giving a good output if they are not to have their wages chiselled off. Is not that so?

Mr. BEVIN: Quite. The feeling of confidence is the essential thing. In the discussion with the Minister of Labour, Sir Robert Horne, on the stabilisation of wages before the railway strike, I then urged as I am urging to-day that if you could give the workpeople confidence that at the psychological moment there would not be advantage taken of the changed conditions, I believe that you could reduce industrial unrest to an absolute minimum.

The CHAIRMAN: That is taking my idea, and it is giving a wider application, which I quite agree is logical and proper.

Mr. BEVIN: Comparison has been made with the amount earned in other industries. It would take me a long time to go over all the figures which existed before the war, but in fact the figure which we have named would put us relatively very much where we were in relation to the other trades before the war. You had a witness from the Portland Cement people in the box the other day, Mr. Brooks, who said: "We paid 5½d. per hour in 1914." "The dockers' tanner" was established in 1889, but it did not appear to have brought his works up to the tanner in 1914. I think that rather upsets all those statements that every other trade gets exactly what the docker gets. There are gentlemen in your Court who represent great industries. I venture to suggest this: If I may use the textile trade as an example, I cannot assume that the textile operatives, in discussing the rates to be paid to the textile workers, count up the number of cases that a docker runs for 16s. I cannot imagine it. The steel trade is dealt with on its own basis, and so is every other trade, and I do suggest that as a question of policy the employers are making a mistake in really urging and advocating this position, because it may occur as a result of their advocacy. We have never advocated it. We have tried to settle these problems as they arise, and on the merits of the trade. I have assisted since the Armistice in the two Federations with which I am connected in negotiation for nearly two million workpeople, and I do not go to another trade to-morrow and say: "I got 16s. for the dockers yesterday, and you must pay me 18s. to-day." I hope that we have sufficient intelligence to discuss each trade as we meet it. That is what we have been trying to do. Unfortunately the organisation of employers, through such bodies as the Federation of British Industries, the great central capitalistic organisation, seems to be adopting a policy which prevents us discussing these things on their merits, and settling trade by trade as we go along. I regret that policy; I think it is a mistake. That is how it appears to us. I

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was engaged in the negotiations with the chemical trade, and they told me quite frankly that they could not settle it unless they consulted some other body, and I have assumed—I have no verification of the fact—that the body is this great central body or organisation to which I have referred, or one similar to it. Let me turn now to the claim itself. I submit that not a single figure which I have submitted has been destroyed. You will remember first of all as to the cost, that Sir Alfred Booth made a general statement that it would cost £20,000,000.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: As an outside figure.

Mr. BEVIN: Take his inside figure of £15,000,000. I thought that Counsel for the other side would have put in some figures to establish that, but not a single figure to establish that has been submitted. Have they found, as the result of their investigation, that I was correct, and have therefore not challenged it? I submitted, on Table D. 1, which I put in, that the shipowner, apart from the coastwise trade, could bear the cost on imports and exports, and, assuming he had to bear the whole cost, it would be 1s. 9d. per ton. I do not detract from that figure, and Counsel has not attempted, by any witness he has put into the box, to destroy it, except in general statements. In the figures which have been quoted from Liverpool—general figures without a detail—he says it is £625,000. There is no calculation on the tonnage of the port. The one witness who did go into the box and work it out on tonnage was from Glasgow, and, representing a harbour authority, he estimated that on the present importation and exports of Glasgow it would be 2s. per ton, you will remember; and I called your attention to it. But if you will take the rise in imports and exports, and clear congestion from the docks to make a free flow, I make bold to say that within six months from its operation it can be reduced to 1s. per ton. Take the figure given by Mr. Pritchard. Mr. Pritchard said: "We do the work from the hold of the ship to the shed." He employs on these big coast boats, I believe, very nearly the same number of men aboard and ashore as the deep-sea boats; that will not be disputed, I think. He says that it would cost the coast-wise people 1s. 1d. per ton; so if you add the loading-off to the merchant, you cannot get beyond the 1s. 9d., which I have quoted. Test it by any method that the employers have submitted; they have not destroyed a single figure of the cost which I estimated to be just under £5,000,000. But then let us get to the figures of the cost of living—or the human need basis, rather, not the cost of living. Take Liverpool as a test. Professor Bowley gave £3 13s. for the provinces, and £3 17s. for London. His figures and his estimates, I think, and the amount of food allowed, were entirely destroyed by cross-examination.

The CHAIRMAN: Before you come to that, which is a separate department of your argument, let me ask you this. My recollection is that more than one witness said, I think in answer to myself, that if they could feel certain that output would be restored, that is to say that they would get their 44 hours fairly instead of subject to the deductions to which I have alluded—if they could get the output in that sense—they did not see any difficulty in giving the addition to the wages. More than one witness said that, I think.

Mr. BEVIN: I will leave it at that, but I would

like to submit, passing from that to the human need basis—.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is a separate matter. We will hear you upon that.

Mr. BEVIN: On the human need basis, I submit that because somebody else is not getting paid a proper wage, that ought not to debar the Court from giving a proper human need basis to the men now under consideration. Professor Bowley gave £3 17s. per week, and I got it worked out on the basis of Liverpool. Take the £3 17s., as suggested by Professor Bowley; the average weekly earnings of a Liverpool docker in 44 hours—in his casual condition, that is—as shown by Sir Alfred Booth's statement, are £2 8s. 4½d. That is with the casual nature of his work, on the day time-rate, you will remember.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the actual earning?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, that is the actual income for the day time hours. During the rest of the time I presume he would be idle. "Assuming the same conditions in the future, the difference to make up the average weekly earnings to the above budget prices means an increase of £1 8s. 7½d."; or, to give the correct figure, it means an increase of 59 per cent., or 6s. 10d. per day. Assuming the same bad conditions to continue, you would have to have an average wage of 18s. 6d. per day in Liverpool and not 16s., on Professor Bowley's estimate.

(*Table D/36 handed in.)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That is on the assumption that he does not work elsewhere.

Mr. BEVIN: Those are clearing house figures.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: The clearing house figures do not represent the total pay.

Mr. BEVIN: If I take figures given by your own witnesses, Mr. Bruce Thomas, you ought not to complain.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: No, but you must add the qualification.

Mr. BEVIN: Very good; see where the qualification is there. But we are not asking for 18s. 6d. per day, and surely, as we are only asking for 16s. per day it allows you 2s. 6d. to allow for the difference of your qualification. You cannot have your cake and eat it; you must come one way or the other. Those figures submitted by Professor Bowley, which are not a decent standard of life, give to a casual worker 16s. per day, but we would be content with the 16s. subject to the declaration which I have made earlier in the proceedings, that we are going to tighten things up, and that the 16s. will mean really more than the spread-over arrangement has meant in the past; that is to say, the average would increase because of better organisation throughout the ports, which we are willing to consider. But I do suggest that the budget estimate of £6 per week ought to be really the human need basis. I do not think it has been destroyed. Nobody who has been in the box has been able to say a single word against it.

The CHAIRMAN: You can hardly say that, because, mark you, your own principal witness, a man of great ability in figures, brought the budget to £5 3s.—I mean Sir Leo Chiozza Money.

* See Appendix No. 42.

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Mr. BEVIN: That was the poverty line budget, if you remember. He took it on the basis of a comparison with the poverty line of 1914.

The CHAIRMAN: Yes, that is so. That is quite a fair remark.

Mr. BEVIN: I think we ought to be above the poverty line; but you see that 16s. per day, assuming a man works for 44 hours, does not bring it to £5 3s.

The CHAIRMAN: I know.

Mr. BEVIN: So that I do feel, and feel very strongly, that our figure is justified, for another reason, too: This demand was made last October, and there have been many additions to the cost of living since. There is a prospect of another advance in the cost of living. Now, wages cannot come every Monday morning and be rearranged. The Cabinet can sit to-night and decide on a policy which puts up the cost of bread or coal, or something, to everybody in the country, and it is operative next Monday, but you cannot change wages like that; they must run some little time. Look at the machinery of this Court, and the time it has taken to get the adjustment of the human factor. I do want your Lordship and the Court to have regard to that fact. We may be pounced upon next week by a change of mind on the part of Cabinet Ministers which alters the State policy, and which depreciates the value of our wages, and we have then to begin all the process of negotiation. I beg your Lordship to have regard to that in your final judgment, because I cannot assume that in a month's time, when this great change comes on, we can immediately go to the employers in the very first week and say that all this thing has to be changed. The employers know full well that it has been impossible.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry to say that one of our number has a rather urgent engagement at about 2 o'clock. Perhaps you will kindly resume your address at half-past two. Will that suit you?

Mr. BEVIN: Yes, my Lord.

(Adjourned for a short time.)

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: My Lord, my friend put in a table, *"D. 36." I think I ought to draw the Court's attention to what appears to me to be an error in this table. Your Lordship will see that it purports to show the increase necessary to bring the weekly earnings at Liverpool up to the budget that was put in. My Lord, the London budget has been put in here at £3 17s., whereas the budget that was referred to as applicable to places other than London was £3 13s. 6d. That would make a material difference.

The CHAIRMAN: That would alter the figures?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: That would alter the figures. There is one other thing I think I ought to draw attention to. Your Lordship will remember that Sir Alfred Booth was cross-examined by my friend Mr. Bevin. It is on the fifth day at page 15. Sir Alfred Booth gave two figures of average earnings, and Mr. Bevin took 25 per cent. off each of those figures, and in one case it reduced it to £2 13s. 7½d., and in the other

to £2 8s. 4½d. I think it is only right that I should draw attention, not only to the fact that the London figure has been included in the top line, but that the lower of Sir Alfred's two figures is put in the second line, whereas if you put in the correct figure in the first line of £3 13s. 6d.—that appears on the eighth day at page 20—and the other of Sir Alfred's figure £2 13s. 9½d., you get a very different result.

The CHAIRMAN: It makes a difference of 19s. 8½d.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: 19s. 8½d.

Mr. BEVIN: I submit that we are dealing with a minimum, so I am right in taking the basis of £2 8s., because that is the man on the minimum rate of pay.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It is earnings, not rates.

Mr. BEVIN: It is the earnings, the result of a man working on a minimum rate of pay. It comes to the same result, surely.

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: Exclusive of overtime. It is a matter of argument.

The CHAIRMAN: Will you give us the references to it?

Mr. BRUCE THOMAS: It is the fifth day, page 15; then the budget figure is the eighth day, page 20.

Mr. BEVIN: I would like to refer to Counsel's observation on that. I take the £3 17s. because Professor Bowley admitted in the box that his 12s. 6d. for clothing was a speculative figure, having regard to the rise in prices, and so on, and I thought it fair to make a little allowance for it within his earnings calculation, and to take the £3 17s. figure, and I have taken the minimum figure of what a man earns on the minimum rate to-day in Liverpool, and made the calculation on that; but whichever way it is taken, I think you will find the 16s. a day is established, even on those figures.

Now, before the adjournment, my Lord, I was dealing with the fact that Counsel for the other side had been unable to destroy the reasonableness of the figure of £6 per week. They called in Professor Bowley, who they regarded as the greatest expert they could find, and I think the result of the cross-examination of Professor Bowley, and the probably a little sensational, but I think very necessary, ocular demonstration of what he was proposing in order to maintain a human being upon, proves that the £3 13s. and £3 17s. was an inadequate figure. On the other hand, the figure which I indicated in my opening statement, for which I should have supported the men in making an application, would have been £1 per day, in view of the developments which have taken place since the original application was made, and in view of the investigations which were forced upon us as a result of this inquiry, but which I had not gone so deeply into before. Therefore I do urge upon the Court that there can be no whittling down, and at the same time that they should deal with the matter equitably from the 16s. The old practice of putting in a big claim on the supposition that an arbitrator will halve it is altogether wrong I think in industrial procedure.

The CHAIRMAN: A good part of my life has been

* See Appendix No. 42.