

THE NATIONAL UNION OF SEAMEN.

FULL NOTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Executive Council Meetings

AND

Annual General Meetings

HELD AT

ST. GEORGE'S HALL,  
WESTMINSTER BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON, S.E.1.

*DURING JULY, 1926.*

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HAVELOCK WILSON, Esq., C.H., C.B.E.

(The General President),

IN THE CHAIR.

From Shorthand Notes and Transcript by Messrs. ERNEST L. HUMPHREYS & SON,  
Mitre Court Chambers, Temple, London, E.C.4.

## **PREFACE.**

Historians will undoubtedly regard the year 1926 as one of the most disappointing and disastrous in the history of Trade Unionism. The year was marked by the consequences of the departure from sound Trade Union principles, and the substitution by most leaders of political propaganda for tenets which sincere Trade Union leaders of the past struggled so hard to inculcate in the minds of working men.

The culminating point was reached when the General Strike became a fiasco, the boomerang effect of which brought privation to thousands of workers, and incidentally struck a damaging blow to many Trade Unions.

The lessons and mistakes of 1926 will reverberate through the years to come, and only by dauntless courage will the sound Trade Union principles, which were espoused by leaders before the intrusion of "Political Adventurers" with anti-British ideas and doctrines, be again firmly established to the betterment of the toiling millions whose main desire, as it is everyone's, is to achieve by mutual service the maximum of happiness and well-being in this world.

Therefore it has been deemed wise to put on record, for the guidance of present and future officials and members of the National Union of Seamen, the deliberations of the Executive Council and Annual Meetings of this body during the year 1926, in the hope that these pages, which are a correct copy of the shorthand notes, will be a guidance to those who may be destined to take part in the control of the policy of the National Union of Seamen and the conditions of work and welfare of the seamen and their families.

## INDEX TO CONTENTS.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING.	Pages.
First Day's Proceedings ... ..	13
Second Day's Proceedings ... ..	130
Third Day's Proceedings ... ..	235
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.	
First Day's Proceedings ... ..	331
Second Day's Proceedings ... ..	353
Third Day's Proceedings ... ..	389
EXAMINATION OF OFFICIALS.	
Case of Mr. Davidson ... ..	13
Case of Mr. Hagen and Mr. Barnes ... ..	31
Evidence of Mr. Parker ... ..	44
The Alleged Conduct of the T.U.C. ... ..	48
Case of Mr. Rogers and Mr. Johnson ... ..	51
Evidence of Mr. Knight... ..	67
Case of Mr. T. Walsh ... ..	81
Case of Mr. Murray ... ..	102
Case of Mr. Pearce ... ..	119
Case of Mr. Osmer ... ..	123
Case of Mr. Roche ... ..	128
Case of Mr. Charles McVey ... ..	130, 195, 200, 212
Case of Mr. White and Mr. Parkin ... ..	150, 214
Case of Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Allen ... ..	162
Case of Messrs. Beckett, Cosgrove, Jenkins, Warburton, Lloyd and Jowett ... ..	172
Case of Messrs. P. O'Connor, M. Murphy, J. Basson, W. J. Green, E. Galvin and R. Murray ... ..	181
Case of Messrs. P. Murphy, Aldridge, Candlish and Kenny ... ..	189, 226
Question of Superannuation Money ... ..	196
Case of Mr. Campbell ... ..	229
OTHER BUSINESS.	
Affiliation with Foreign Unions ... ..	317, 295
Appeal from the Wireless Association... ..	276
Appeal of Trades Union Congress ... ..	317
Appointment of Mr. M. Tearle as National Organiser ... ..	272
Board of Trade Committee of the S.N. Insurance ... ..	275
Business of the Union as an Approved Society ... ..	252
Delegates and Attendance of Trades Union Congress ... ..	312
Election of Delegates, etc., at Labour Party's Annual Conference	316
Election Nominations ... ..	272
Further Monetary Grants to Members ... ..	304
Fusion of Approved Society ... ..	215, 257
General President's Quarterly Report... ..	235
General Secretary's Financial Statement ... ..	250
History of the Seamen's Union ... ..	319
Insurance Amalgamation Proposals: Sir Norman Hill's Statements	215
International Seafarers' Federation ... ..	295
International Transport Workers' Federation ... ..	297, 317
Labour Party and Treasurer ... ..	317
Mr. Cathery Elected as Representative on the Trades Union Congress ... ..	315

OTHER BUSINESS— <i>continued.</i>	Pages.
Officials and Seagoing Qualifications ... ..	318
Officials and Parliamentary Candidatures ... ..	301
Organising Campaign : Newport Resolution... ..	303
Proposed International Seamen's Union ... ..	321
Question of Severance from Political Parties ... ..	258
Resignation of Mr. J. Henson ... ..	312
Reduction of Entrance Fee to Union ... ..	303
Retiring Age for Officials ... ..	306
Rules and Regulations : General President on Implicit Obedience to Rules and Regulations ... ..	30
Union Officials and Seagoing Qualifications ... ..	318
Vote of Thanks to General President ... ..	303, 320
Vote of Thanks to Officials ... ..	234, 325
Views of the Guests at the Executive Meetings ... ..	321
<b>PROCEEDINGS AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.</b>	
Annual Balance Sheet and General Secretary's Report ... ..	354
Appreciation of General President's Efforts ... ..	340
Appointment of Committee to Examine Contribution Books, etc. ... ..	353
Appointment of Standing Orders Committee... ..	353
Appointment of Press Committee ... ..	354
Appointment of National Maritime Board ... ..	447, 457
Delegate from Australia ... ..	459
Death of Mr. Talbot, of Southampton Branch ... ..	434
Election of Trustees and Honorary Members for the Executive Council ... ..	387
Election of Assistant General Secretary ... ..	445
Election of Representatives on Seafarers' Joint Council ... ..	449, 457
Fraternal Greetings from America ... ..	389, 450
General President's Annual Address ... ..	332
General Treasurer's Report on the Business of the Union as an Approved Society ... ..	361
Liverpool No. 1 Resolution ... ..	340
Mr. Henson's Resignation ... ..	416
Members Entitled to be Present ... ..	331
Paid Officials and Parliamentary and Municipal Offices ... ..	448
Question of Fusion of Health Societies ... ..	374
Report of Royal Commission on National Health Insurance of Seamen ... ..	371
Report of Executive Council on the Expulsion of Officials and Members ... ..	389
Report of Standing Orders Committee ... ..	404
Resolutions from Branches : North Shields re Disassociation from Political Affiliation ... ..	406
Resolution from Green's Home : No Confidence in the Executive Council ... ..	418
Resolution of Victoria and Albert Docks re Overtime ... ..	419
Resolution of Victoria and Albert Docks No. 2 re Policy of Mr. Havelock Wilson ... ..	420
Resolution of Mersey District re Withdrawal from the I.T.W.F....	421
Retirement of the General Secretary .. ..	434
Retirement Age Limit ... ..	442
Suggested Monument to Samuel Plimsoll ... ..	457
Visitors to Annual General Meeting ... ..	331

## THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETINGS.

The Executive Council Meetings were held at St. George's Hall, Westminster Bridge Road, London, S.E.1, on Monday, July 19th, Tuesday, July 20th, and Wednesday, July 21st, 1926, Mr. J. Havelock Wilson, C.H., C.B.E., in the chair.

### PRESENT:

J. HAVELOCK WILSON, C.H., C.B.E. (General President).

E. CATHERY, C.B.E. (General Secretary).

G. GUNNING (Acting Assistant General Secretary).

F. FOLEY ...	...	...	...	...	
W. J. DAVIES ...	...	...	...	...	} Trustees.
R. MCGHEE ...	...	...	...	...	
E. TUPPER ...	...	...	...	...	
J. GRIFFITHS ...	...	...	...	...	} Hon. Members.
W. SPROW ...	...	...	...	...	
J. DOXFORD ...	...	...	...	...	

### Deck Department.

T. JONES, substitute for D. MCCARTHY	...	...	...	...	Bristol Channel.
J. W. PEARCE ...	...	...	...	...	(London)
G. T. MARTIN ...	...	...	...	...	Home District.
O. HOARE ...	...	...	...	...	} Mersey District.
W. MCCARTNEY ...	...	...	...	...	
H. LEY ...	...	...	...	...	S. & S.W. Coast.
J. ASH ...	...	...	...	...	N.E. Coast.

### Engine Room Department.

J. MARRITT ...	...	...	...	...	Bristol Channel.
P. LANG ...	...	...	...	...	Home District.
J. DAVIDSON ...	...	...	...	...	Humber District.
G. DENCH ...	...	...	...	...	S. & S.W. Coast.
H. BURNS ...	...	...	...	...	} N.E. Coast.
B. FLETT ...	...	...	...	...	
H. HIGGINS ...	...	...	...	...	West Coast Scotland.
J. H. TARBITTEN, District Secretary...	...	...	...	...	Humber.
C. JARMAN, District Secretary...	...	...	...	...	Mersey.
C. DAMM, Hon. District Secretary	...	...	...	...	Continent.
M. TEARLE, District Secretary	...	...	...	...	Bristol Channel.

### District Secretaries "on rota."

R. BRECKENRIDGE ...	...	...	...	...	Scotland.
R. W. CLOUSTON ...	...	...	...	...	N.E. Coast.
W. R. SPENCE ...	...	...	...	...	S. & S. W. Coast.

### Catering Department.

J. COTTER, National Organiser	...	...	...	...	Catering Department.
S. G. LE TOUZEL, ...	...	...	...	...	} London.
G. HORTON, ...	...	...	...	...	
A. KOCK ...	...	...	...	...	Continent.
J. CONNELLY ...	...	...	...	...	Belfast.
W. ALLEN...	...	...	...	...	} Bristol Channel.
R. H. MITCHELL ...	...	...	...	...	
T. J. SMITH, substitute for C. FULTON	...	...	...	...	Mersey District.
A. STREET ...	...	...	...	...	S. & S.W. Coast.
C. BOOTH ...	...	...	...	...	Southampton.
C. MCPHERSON ...	...	...	...	...	East Coast Scotland.
C. WOODS ...	...	...	...	...	Leith.
H. OVEREND ...	...	...	...	...	West Leith.
T. J. NOBBS ...	...	...	...	...	Hull.

### District Secretaries (Catering Department).

W. JONES ...	...	...	...	...	Bristol Channel.
B. MOLLAN ...	...	...	...	...	Mersey.

### Fraternal Delegates from America.

A. FURUSETH, P. FLYNN and D. GRANGE	International Seamen's Union of America.
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IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE.  
CHANCERY DIVISION.

ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE.  
Tuesday, May 11th, 1926.

BEFORE  
MR. JUSTICE ASTBURY.

NATIONAL SAILORS' AND FIREMEN'S UNION OF GREAT  
BRITAIN AND IRELAND

v.

G. REED AND OTHERS.

(Transcript of the Shorthand Notes of H. H. Tolcher & Co.,  
93 & 94, Chancery Lane, London, W C.2.)

### JUDGMENT.

Mr. Justice Astbury : This is a motion in an action brought by the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union of Great Britain and Ireland against a number of Defendants who are officers or officials of a Branch in London of the Plaintiff Union, seeking an injunction to restrain the Defendants, putting it shortly, as Branch Secretary or Officials of the Union or in the name of the Union calling members of the Plaintiff Union out on strike or calling upon members of the Plaintiff Union to leave their employment without the authority of the Executive Council of the Union. The Defendants have appeared in person and they have given me considerable assistance in dealing with this matter, which I am bound now to do. I will try and state as clearly as I can the facts which have been proved in the evidence which has been filed upon this motion.

The facts are as follows : First, a serious crisis has arisen in the country with regard to the dispute in the mining industry. The General Council of the Trades Union Congress have assumed control of this dispute and have called upon all affiliated unions to the Trades Union Congress to cease work if required by the General Council. The General Council has called a so-called General Strike, and the Defendants have kindly explained to me the nature of that strike which has been so called. A large number of Unionists throughout the country in railway, transport and other trades have been called upon by the Trades Union Council to come out on strike. The Defendants are the Branch Secretary and Delegates of the Tower Hill Branch of the Plaintiff Union, and they intend to take instructions from the Trades Union Congress and not from the Executive Council of their own Union in relation to the matter in question. The Tower Hill Branch of the Plaintiff Union has, without the authority of that Union, passed a resolu-

tion endorsing the action of the Trades Union Council or Trades Union Congress in calling a General Strike, and that resolution is in these terms: "We, the members of the Tower Hill Branch of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union, endorse the action of the Trades Union Congress General Council in calling the General Strike, and pledge ourselves to do all in our power to help them, and we call on the Branch Secretary and Officials to notify all members to cease work immediately." In pursuance of the above resolution the Defendant Stuart has issued the following notice. It is written on the Plaintiff Union's paper, it is addressed from 27, Plough Road, Rotherhithe, and dated May 4th instant. It is in these terms: "All members of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union except men on articles of agreement are to come out in support of the Trades Union Council's policy and are to picket their jobs." Mr. Stuart signs that as Acting Secretary, and he has explained to me in Court what it means and the other Defendants are apparently in agreement with him. I have been told that that policy therein referred to is the policy of the Trades Union Congress in trying to induce and promote a General Strike throughout this country. In addition to the resolution of the Tower Hill Branch, which I have already read, they passed a further one as follows: "We, the members of the Tower Hill Branch, express our confidence in the Secretary and officials of this Branch"—whom I have had the pleasure of seeing and hearing—"and we will support them in carrying out the instructions of the Trades Union Congress General Council." I have been informed by the Defendants that those instructions are to come out on strike. The General President of the Plaintiff Union, Mr. Havelock Wilson, has made an affidavit in which he has proved a number of the matters I have referred to, and in paragraph 3 he says this: "Having regard to the present emergency the attitude of the above-named Defendants is one of national importance, inasmuch as beyond it causing a breach of agreements with shipowners it is an interference with the food supply on which the nation is dependent." According to the Rules of the Plaintiff Union certain trade union benefits are given to the members of the Union under certain conditions. One of those conditions is that without the consent of a two-thirds majority no General Strike—that means no strike in the Union itself—shall be proclaimed, and I see in Rule 16, Sub-Rule 3, that there is a provision referring to members "wilfully and persistently doing or suffering any act or thing in contravention of any one of these Rules or of any lawful resolution of the Executive Council." According to the evidence before me certain members of the Plaintiff Union have been misled and compelled in London by the Defendants and their pickets to leave their ships and to suffer serious loss and damage and have been placed in doubt as to their position as members of this Union. These acts on the part of the Defendants have been done without the authority of the Plaintiff Union and contrary to its rules and orders, and lastly, no strike has been called by the Plaintiff Union and no ballot of its members, as provided for by its rules, has been completed. In these circumstances the Plaintiff Union seeks the injunction which I have referred to, and the learned Counsel who has appeared for the Union bases his right to claim

this injunction on two grounds : One, that the Defendants have acted in breach of the rules and orders of the Union and are liable to be restrained as prayed ; and secondly, that they have acted contrary to the common law of this country.

I will endeavour now to state what I apprehend is the law upon this matter. In the first place it is evident from the facts above mentioned and from the rest of the evidence that has been filed that members of the Plaintiff Union have been placed in a position of doubt and danger, and it is my duty to state shortly their rights and those of their Union. The Defendants have very fairly admitted that they desire that the members of their Union shall be told their rights under the unfortunate circumstances which have arisen. The so-called General Strike called by the Trades Union Congress Committee is illegal and contrary to law, and those persons inciting or taking part in it are not protected by the Trades Dispute Act of 1906. No trade dispute has been alleged or shown to exist in any of the Unions affected, except in the miners' case, and no trade dispute does or can exist between the Trades Union Congress on the one hand and the Government and the nation on the other. The orders of the Trades Union Council above referred to are therefore unlawful, and the Defendants are at law acting illegally in obeying them and can be restrained by their own Union from doing so. The Plaintiff's Counsel has contended that if the members of the Plaintiff Union stay in their jobs and refuse to strike they cannot be deprived of their trade union benefits, and the Defendants who have appeared before me have stated, and stated very properly, that it is important to them that their members should know their rights in this respect.

Now the law upon that matter is as follows : No members of the Plaintiff Union or any other Trade Unionist in this country can lose his trade union benefits by refusing to obey unlawful orders, and the orders of the Trades Union Congress and the Unions who are acting in obedience thereto in bringing about the so-called General Strike are unlawful orders, and the Plaintiff Union is entitled to have this fact made clear and brought to the attention of its members.

Mr. Luxmore has further contended that those members of the Plaintiff Union who obey this order to strike will not be entitled during the continuance of the Strike to receive any strike pay from their Union, and the Defendants have, again very properly, and I think very fairly, stated that it is their desire that they should know their rights in this respect. Trade Union funds in this country are held in a fiduciary capacity and cannot legally be used for or depleted by paying strike pay to any member who illegally ceases to work and breaks his contract without justification in pursuance of orders which are unlawful, and this fact also is one that the Plaintiff Union is entitled and bound to make clear to its members in the difficult position in which they have been placed.

With regard to the second ground upon which the Plaintiff Union seeks to obtain this injunction, the matter is beyond question. The Defendants in addition to acting as above in defiance of the law have acted contrary to the rules and orders of their



own Union, and are on this ground also liable at the suit of that Union to be restrained by injunction from continuing to do so.

The result is that there must be an injunction until the trial or further Order substantially in the terms of the Notice of Motion, which can be settled later, or the Defendants may, if they prefer it, give an undertaking in those terms until the trial or further Order. I was desirous of assisting the Defendants as far as I was able to do so in coming to a conclusion as to whether they would prefer to give this undertaking or be restrained by injunction. They agreed with me that they would like to know their rights before deciding which course to adopt. I have done my best to explain the rights as I understand them. I will now ask the Defendants to kindly agree amongst themselves whether they will prefer that the injunction should be granted *in irritum* or give an undertaking substantially in the terms of the injunction that I have referred to.

Mr. Reed : My Lord, we appreciate your Lordship's very clear explanation to us and we have consulted among ourselves and we prefer to be restrained by your Lordship.

Mr. Justice Astbury : Thank you. Then, Mr. Luxmore, the injunction will run until judgment or further Order from either (as to the Defendant Reed) as a Branch Secretary and (as to the remaining Defendants) in the name of the Plaintiff Union—

Mr. Luxmore : Calling members of the Plaintiff Union to leave their employment without the authority of the Executive Council of the Plaintiff Union or contrary to its rules. Your Lordship will make that Order.

Mr. Justice Astbury : Yes.

Mr. Luxmore : And the costs of the Motion will be the costs in the action.

Mr. Justice Astbury : Yes.

# Executive Council Meeting.

## FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

MONDAY, JULY 19TH, 1926.

### THE CASE OF MR. DAVIDSON.

The General President : Gentlemen, before we proceed with the Minutes and my Report, I think it is essential we should decide who has a right to be at this meeting. I do not think any man is entitled to be here who has been acting detrimentally to the best interests of the Union—(hear, hear)—by misrepresenting the Union and sending offensive and insulting letters to its officials. (Hear, hear.)

I see there is such a person present this morning in Mr. Davidson, the Executive Council member for Hull. Before I make any statement, I want to know whether he is a fit and proper person to be here.

I am going to read his letter, and I think, when you have heard it, you will come to the conclusion that it is a most insulting and offensive document. I cannot think that he intended it to be a privileged letter because he did not mark it "Private and Confidential"; so it was a letter evidently intended to be read here and read anywhere else. If that is true, I say he is not a fit and proper person to be here.

Moreover, I want to give him an opportunity of justifying the contents of the letter. I hope he will do so. Because I may tell him there will be no half measures as far as I am concerned. It is either true or untrue, what he has said. If it is untrue, he has no right to send such a letter. If what he has said is true, I have no right to sit in this Chair. So I am going now to read this letter and we will see just where we are.

The letter is dated "3rd of May, 1926," 1, Vine Terrace, Barnsley Street, Hull," and addressed to "Mr. Wilson" :—

"Dear Sir,—I have just read your Circular No. 25-26, and read with amazement that you 'strictly adhere to the Constitution and Rules of the Union,' and have come to the conclusion"—

it should have been "*I have come to the conclusion—*

"that you only do so when it suits your purpose"—

that is a very serious charge against me—then further on,

"from some quarters severely criticised; well you deserve it, as in my opinion taking a ballot in the manner you have done is both unconstitutional and dishonest."

I hope Mr. Davidson will be able to throw some light on that subject; it is a very serious charge to say that the ballot was unconstitutional and dishonest. If that is true, it is a further reason why I should not occupy this position.

The letter goes on :—

“ and further is not a result, as a better method could have been adopted while the E.C. was in session, and I think would have been a different result, but I repeat again that would not have suited your purpose ”——

that is, my purpose——

“ In view of the fact that the E.C. was dismissed without having a final debate after the T.U.C. decision. I applaud whatever was done by those officials who did what you are constantly doing, that is, ignoring the E.C., also constitution.”

I hope Mr. Davidson will be good enough to throw a little light on that subject.

Then it goes on :—

“ Now, in conclusion, I have to smile when I read that you declined to call a special E.C. meeting on account of expense, especially when hundreds of pounds are being spent here in Hull to imprison a man who broadcasted a circular which is full of truth ”——

I would like to know why that good gentleman did not go down to the Court of Law at York and tell the Judge where the truth was. The other offender, when he got in the box, dared not justify it. I would like to know why Mr. Davidson did not go down and justify what the other man did.

The letter continues :—

“ in fact, give the means of balloting the Humber district as regards yourself and methods and let the result go to the Assize Courts; you would get quite a shock.”

I wonder if he believed that? It goes on :—

“ I am a bit surprised to see an official in the witness-box who has had his accounts ‘ when his balance was on the wrong side ‘ made good by late Hull Section Officials; it is funny how men get into wrong box.”

Mr. Davidson knew perfectly well Mr. Maclaren went into the box and was going into the box. Why did he not show a bit of manly courage and go down and put Mr. Maclaren through it while he was in the witness-box?

“ I wish the E.C. had met before this Hull case finishes, as I feel like giving evidence for either side ”——

That is very significant : " either side "; it is a strange kind of statement : prepared to give evidence on either side—

" but which would be the voice of the Hull seamen ; it would make your case a little less promising."

I hope Mr. Davidson will tell his fellow members all about it this morning in this room. As he had not the courage to go to York and go into the witness-box, he will have the opportunity of telling us all about it this morning.

His letter continues :—

" I am pleased you sent Ockleton away from Hull after promoting him for the bogus resolution he took from London to Hull and back again to suit your purpose."

Is Mr. Ockleton here? SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY'S

A Delegate : Yes. BRANCH LIBRARY

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The General President : He will tell us all about the bogus resolution. Mr. Davidson's letter continues :—

" He has been howled down by 600 men on two occasions in Hull, but as he has attained what he set out for, the men he was so keen to assist by being elected on the E.C. can now go to Hell"—

a nice place to consign a fellow member—" to Hell."

" Well, that's another stink out of the nostrils of the Hull men."

Then it continues :

" I could write on for ever about matters which you think you are smart about, but once I get a little more time at home, and that won't be long"—

well, we have got them here this morning—

" I shall call meetings here and put some facts before the members, especially the Hull Section, which will be an eye-opener to a few."

Now here is the time, members, to have your eyes opened. We have got them here.

" Anyway, more about that later."

So we shall have it to-day, I hope.

" Kindly give my regards to those officials who have offended your majesty"—

so I am a king now—

" and believe me to be yours sincerely,—(Signed) J. DAVIDSON,  
E.C., Humber District."

At the end of the letter there is a P.S. ; that is an afterthought ; it just struck his mind as he was going to seal up the letter, and it is as follows :—

“ Please let me know how many flunkeys you intend taking to Geneva and what the cost may be. I should like to see the difference between your joy ride and an E.C. Meeting.”

The General President : That is Mr. Davidson's letter ; it is a public letter ; tell us, Mr. Davidson, all about it. First of all I want to know if you can justify this : “ That you have read with amazement my Circular No. 25-26 that I strictly adhere to the Constitution and Rules of the Union, and you have come to the conclusion that I only do so when it suits my purpose.” Please inform the members all about that.

Mr. Davidson : Fellow Members, it did not suit my purpose to have that letter read here, as far as that goes ; but as it has been read here I do not mind giving you full details. In the first place, influence alone made me write that letter, influence from Hull. Before you go any further as to whether I shall sit here or not, I gave in my resignation after the first Executive. After this Executive Meeting I have finished absolutely, and I will pay my shilling a week, or, in other words, be able to go to sea. I have finished with Trade Unionism.

The General President : I shall be more obliged if you stick to the point, that I adhere to the Constitution when it suits my purpose.

Mr. Davidson : I shall tell it in my own way or not at all.

The General President : We are not going to be particular about that. You will obey the ordinary rules of decency.

Mr. Davidson : I am going to go into a detailed account of what influenced me to write that letter—not as the letter is—and if it does not suit you, I will sit down, because I do not care whether I sit on this Executive or not. When I wrote those letters, I wrote one after the last Executive Meeting, one thing that influenced me was the dirty way in which this Executive was dismissed before the T.U.C. finally came to any decision. One portion was sent away at dinner time, another was sent away at night, and another next morning ; and the most important point of the T.U.C. meeting did not come before the members until twelve o'clock Friday night or early Monday morning.

Mr. Gunning : On a point of order—

The General President : Let him go ahead ; we will tolerate a good deal.

Mr. Gunning : I was raising a point of order. He said that the Executive Council was dismissed at different times. The

Executive Council was dismissed at five o'clock on Friday night; the members of the Executive Council knew about eight o'clock on Friday night there was no more need for them to attend.

The General President : You can bring that up later. Let the gentleman tell us all about it.

Mr. Davidson : The Executive Council was dismissed then? I did not know. I said there was a document handed to the head of this Executive Council when the T.U.C. finished at Friday midnight. The gentleman it was handed to, Mr. Bond, called a meeting for next morning at ten o'clock in this hall to consider it, the same as everyone else had to consider it. That meeting never came off, because the Executive was dismissed. I consider that was the most important part of the whole T.U.C., for us to study those points on that paper, and we never saw the answer that was handed up, and we should have been the people to read it before it was handed up. It is possible we may have changed our minds, and I am aware we had arranged to have a ballot of the members, which I really do believe in; but had we have had that meeting, it might have been arranged then for each Executive man to go to his district and there ballot his members and get a genuine and true ballot from them, instead of five or six financial members in Hull not receiving a ballot paper at all; because on all sides they shouted, "Where is my ballot paper?" "Where is mine?" "Where is mine?" and "I have not the privilege of balloting." The excuse was that we could not get the printing done; but we could have gone to the different districts and balloted there and forwarded the result up. That would have been a better way. When you got the figures of the ballot, the N.S. & F.U. members did not ballot because there was not sufficient foreign—

The General President : Will you keep to the letter? You have not said a word about that in your letter.

Mr. Davidson : That is one thing that influenced me in writing that letter. I had already written out a report touching on every particle of that letter before Friday, but on Friday night, after Friday night's meeting, I tore it up, and I thought I would come and give the Executive it in my own way. At that Executive on Friday I did not give the Executive the best of matters, because I have said before that all the Executive up to the present are influenced by the Chair. But, anyway, at that meeting I just gave the men of Hull my opinion, pure and simple. Tarbitten will be able to tell you why, because he is a better talker than I am. What makes me think what I am going to say is that Tarbitten, an intellectual chap like him, and a platform speaker, should be so childish as to try and make me look a fool on matters which are nothing at all to do with Unionism. For instance, at the last Executive Meeting I had my wife here. I was called upon to count the votes for the Treasurer. I had already had to spend a lot of money for shopping purposes and I was short, and I 'phoned this Office for more money because it was impossible for me to get it otherwise; but at the meeting at Hull he flounced it before the

members that the only thing Davidson went for was to spend £50 in Selfridge's shop. What has that got to do with Unionism? A little later he said: "We know in Hull that you finance the members of your crew in foreign ports so that you can hold them and do as you like with them." Well, I do finance them if they are in want of money, and they pay me back. But forget about the financing—

The General President: Are you a moneylender?

Mr. Davidson: No. But if I have a shilling, and a man wants it, I lend it to him. He pounced that at the meeting. He said then I was the second engineer of the ship. The second engineer has been to me and asked what his position is, because if that got to the ears of the Office it might do him a lot of damage. I know he is writing to Tarbitten himself and he wanted to know the exact words that were used, because he was going to put it in the hands of his solicitors. After that meeting I decided what I was going to say to you, and it is this. Some time ago, when I was elected on this Executive, and after each Executive Meeting right up to just after the last ballot in fact, I had private conversations with Tarbitten. Now your Executive can believe what I say or what Tarbitten says afterwards; it does not matter; we were two together, so one is a liar or the other is. It is up to you whether you believe it or not. Tarbitten on more than one occasion has told me and agreed with me that the whole of this Union, the Head Office staff, is one heap of corruption. He has agreed with me on that.

The General President: All corrupt?

Mr. Davidson: Yes. One official is fighting and biting at another one. I have talked this over with him and he has agreed with me on that. He has also agreed with me and made it quite public there is a certain gentleman in this room who had an open cheque left for him if he would interfere with the Hull seamen's ballot. I have had hundreds of men inquiring why do we tolerate a man like that in the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union; there is not much good in him. He has said in front of more than myself—and those men can be brought forward—that the Hull Seamen's Union was sold to the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union. I know what I am saying. When I mentioned the fact that I was going into the details as far as the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union and the Hull section was concerned, he said, "Nobody is more pleased than I am. No one would like to see this go on more than me, so as to see what sort of a job it will be." There were little bits like this in our conversations.

Mr. Tarbitten rose to speak.

The General President: Half a minute, Mr. Tarbitten.

Mr. Tarbitten: Is Mr. Davidson to carry on—?

The General President : I want to be as tolerant to this man as I can, but there are limits even to a Chairman's endurance. I have brought his own letter before this meeting and I have asked him to justify it. Up to the present time, as far as I can see, he has given us a lot of tittle-tattle which does not amount to anything. I would again ask Mr. Davidson if he would be kind enough to confine his attention to his letter. If you have not a copy of it, Mr. Davidson, I will let you have a copy. I would like you to confine yourself to your letter and tell us all about what is in it.

Mr. Davidson : Before you go any further, put it to the meeting whether I stay or not, because I say it my way or not at all.

The General President : Then you decline ?

Mr. Davidson : Yes, I decline to put it as you want me to.

The General President : Now, Gentlemen, you have heard the letter read and you have heard Mr. Davidson say he absolutely declines to explain the contents of his own letter. That being so, there is no need for him to proceed any further, when he will not explain it—those are his own words—he declines to explain it. I say, therefore, if he will not continue and explain it, I shall ask for a resolution in a moment and then you will know just where you are. I will give you one more opportunity Mr. Davidson.

Mr. Martin : Taking the whole thing into consideration, Mr. Davidson seems to be trying to make out that he was influenced by certain outside minor influences to write this letter. Is that the excuse that you want to make for writing the letter? Do you wish the Council to understand that you were influenced in writing that letter?

Mr. Davidson : I want this Executive Council to understand thoroughly that I tore up, since Friday night—after the way I was maltreated by one of our officials—the way I was going to do it. I was influenced a long, long way ; in my opinion I have been used as a cat's-paw by two men for a long time. (*Interruption.*)

The General President : Let this man say what he wishes to say.

Mr. Davidson : One man, Ockleton, has got an official job, and the other one has had one a long time. I thought I was going to do some good for Hull, because I was going into the question of amalgamation, for a start, and these men thoroughly agreed that if someone would take it up, it would be a good thing. I tell you I was influenced purely and simply to write that letter.

The General President : Will you explain it?

Mr. Davidson : In my own way, and not in any other.

The General President : I must again say that if you proceed to talk about what you said to someone and about what someone



else said to you, I shall rule that out of order. If you confine yourself to the letter, it will be all right. It is very simple. You wrote it and you ought to be able to give an explanation of it. We cannot proceed to discuss our business with a man present who says we are all corrupt; that we are all dishonest. If that is so, we ought all to be in jail, and not sitting here.

Mr. Ash : I think we can well afford to spend the time dealing with this particular case, and there are many similar cases to come up. It affects the history of the nation; it is a thing that has never happened before in the history of any nation——

The General President : We are not on the General Strike; we are on this letter. Confine yourself to that, or I shall be compelled to order you to sit down. Can you explain the letter?

Mr. Ash : No, and I am not going to try.

The General President : Can you justify it?

Mr. Ash : No.

The General President : Are you going on with this letter, Mr. Davidson? You are a man, at any rate; I hope you are a man of common sense and understand the English language. You are asked to explain this letter. Tell us very simply why you wrote it, and you ought to know.

Mr. Davidson : Did you not put the whole thing in a nutshell? I shall go no further than I have already gone. That is, that it was influence that made me write it, and I believed most of it was true; that is another reason why I wrote it. It is impossible for me to take it point by point at the present time and go through it, because my brain is not sufficiently fertile to do it without taking time. I had written out one report, but I destroyed it. It is impossible for me to do it now. I was incensed last Friday night or I would not have torn it up.

The General President : I have underlined the points which I think are objectionable.

Mr. Davidson : It does not matter what you say.

The General President : Then you cannot explain it?

Mr. Davidson : I cannot put it that way.

The General President : You cannot explain your own insulting letter?

Mr. Davidson : Not at a minute's notice.

The General President : That being so, I shall submit to you, gentlemen, that Mr. Davidson is not a fit and proper person to take any further part in the business of our Union; furthermore,

I recommend that he be suspended for a period of three months from all membership. My reason for doing that is very simple. If he had spoken those words at a meeting of this Council when he was excited—we all get excited sometimes—I could forgive him. But for a man deliberately in cold blood to write that the President of this Union is an impostor—that is No. 1, because that is what he means—I am an impostor, I break the Rules just as it suits my own convenience—that is his charge. Then, further, he goes on to say, with regard to the prosecution of Mr. Ridley, he was prepared to give evidence on either side. What does that mean? To me it means he will give evidence for which side will pay him for his services. He may not have meant that, but that is what it means to me.

Then he goes on to say that this Circular was quite justifiable. I wonder if he knows what the Circular said? The Circular said the President of this Union was a dishonest man and that every official—every official, do not forget—of this Union was a crimp, was taking “backhanders.” That is what Mr. Davidson said he would justify in a Court of Law, and the man who published it had not a word to say in his own defence. That is the sort of material, Mr. Davidson, which you have disseminated. I will give you a few more instances.

“The joy ride to Geneva with the flunkeys!” Two months ago, when that letter came, I was a dying man, lying between life and death, and that is the type of letter this man would write to a dying man. That in itself is a disgrace and a scandal, if there was nothing else. Then he goes on to tell us that the men who broke the Constitution and Rules of this Union and ignored the resolution of the Executive Council were quite justified in doing so. Therefore, I put Mr. Davidson in the category of those who advocate the breaking of the Constitution, involving the men in strikes that would cost the seamen of this country £3 a month reduction in their wages, the destruction of the Maritime Board, and the destruction of collective bargaining. Then contrast that with what he says. He was one of the men, was Davidson, who sat on this Council who voted for the resolution or acquiesced in it, that we should have no strike before taking a ballot of the members. He says he agrees with that; that that was quite right, he says. But in this letter he has condemned us for having done it.

Now, with regard to the meeting of the T.U.C. He was present; he heard what we had to say. He knows that we deputed one man to go there and inform the T.U.C. at the meeting that whatever they decided to do, we should take part in no strike until we took a ballot. He went to that meeting on the Friday. He came back here on the Friday night and he had not a word to say. Whilst he was at the T.U.C. meeting, I am told that he applauded everything that was said and done. The Executive Council decided to go there on the Saturday. Mr. Davidson knew perfectly well that Mr. Henson was deputed to explain our case. Our case was what I have said—no strike without a ballot. Then he comes here and he says there should have been another meeting called on the Saturday to reconsider our decision. To reconsider it! And then, I suppose, he meant by reconsideration that the Executive Coun-

cil should have decided, according to his views, to ignore their previous resolution and declare in favour of a strike.

Then he complains that the ballot was a "fake"; was not a true ballot. Let us see how much truth there is in a statement of that kind. On Saturday, May 1st, four of the delegates who attended that Conference came to my bedroom at five o'clock in the evening and they reported to me that the T.U.C. Conference had decided for a General Strike. They asked me what I was going to do about it. I said I knew what I was going to do about it and I would take the proper steps to deal with the situation. At 6.30 that night, May 1st, I drafted a circular to all the Branches. Mr. Davidson got a copy of that; he says so in this letter—I want to pin him down to that fact [ "I have just read your Circular" ]—he is writing on May 3rd, do not forget—

"I have just read your Circular No. 25-26 and read with amazement that you 'strictly adhere to the Constitution and Rules of the Union' and have come to the conclusion that you only do so when it suits your purpose."

So he got that Circular. It was drafted on the Saturday night, when I was very ill. It was printed on the Sunday and was posted on the Sunday evening. The ballot paper was prepared on the Saturday night and printed on the Sunday; it was circulated on the Sunday—as many as we could get done, and I believe that was two or three thousand. They were put in the post and sent to the Branches. Day after day from that time the ballot papers were posted to all the men who we knew were at home. Then you, Davidson, have the audacious brazen effrontery to come here and show your crass ignorance—that is all I can apply to you, because you have insulted me here. You have insulted the Union and have acted in a cowardly infamous manner, like all cowards do. You have insulted the Union—a Union that got you £800, I am told.

Mr. Davidson: Not one penny did this Union get, because I would not allow them to. They did not get me a halfpenny; I would not allow them.

The General President: There is further evidence of the sense of gratitude of this man. I struggled for five years—perhaps he is right in saying the Union did not get it—

Mr. Davidson: I am right.

The General President: Yes; because it was J. Havelock Wilson who got it for you. I struggled up and down the country, working enthusiastically, crying for the poor unfortunate prisoners of war, and demanding that they should have ample reparation for the wrong that had been done to them. Then, after I had done it, Gentlemen, you see what a splendid example of gratitude I have got for all the services that I rendered to such a man as this.

I think I have said enough this morning to prove this, that you are no man at all, because a man who writes such a letter would

either get up at once and say, " I am sorry for that ; I wrote it in a temper ; I am exceedingly sorry and I withdraw it " ; but instead of that, in a most miserable, cowardly way you have tried to give us a lot of gossip about what was said to someone else and what someone else said to you, and nothing at all to do with the letter.

In the circumstances, Gentlemen, I submit that this man is not a fit and proper person to be here. He is evidently an enemy of the Union ; he is evidently in favour of breaking constitutions ; and I therefore suggest to you, according to the Rules, that he should be suspended from all benefit in this Union for a period of three months, and therefore not to be entitled to take any further part in the business of this Council meeting. If any of you think that that is a fit and proper termination of this matter, I will accept a resolution.

Mr. Higgins : I will move the resolution.

Mr. Jones (Barry) : I will second the resolution.

The General President : You have heard the resolution, " That after the reading of Mr. Davidson's letter and the failure on his part to explain it, we are of the opinion that he is not a fit and proper person to take any further part in the business of this Union ; and we therefore suspend him for a period of three months." If anyone would like to move an amendment to that, he can do so now.

A Member : I suggest that Mr. Davidson should make an ample apology to you.

Mr. Davidson : I do not suggest that at all.

The General President : I do not want any apologies. We have gone too far for that.

Mr. Davidson : I am willing to abide by that resolution.

The General President : Does any other member want to say anything upon it? The matter is before you.

Captain Griffiths : I should like to move that instead of three months you make the suspension fourteen days.

Mr. Davidson : I might as well tell the Executive before you go any further that with regard to this Executive, or holding any office, I would not think of it.

The General President : You have had an opportunity of saying all you want to say. Now it is in the hands of the members of the Executive Council. Perhaps, Davidson, you had better retire while we are discussing it.

Mr. Davidson : Yes, it would be as well.

*(Mr. Davidson then retired.)*

The General President: Now let us have your opinions, Gentlemen.

Mr. Jarman: In view of what our friend who has just gone out has said—and probably there was something you have not heard—I move that he be expelled from this Union. He is certainly not in an apologetic frame of mind. He said he did not care what we did, so let us show him that we do not care what he does.

Mr. Martin: I would like to second that amendment, because I asked Mr. Davidson in the first place if he wanted the Council to understand that he was influenced in writing the letter. He said no, he would not excuse himself for that at all. I thought when he stated he was influenced he meant to apologise. But he evidently did not intend to. Therefore I have much pleasure in seconding the amendment moved by Mr. Jarman.

Mr. Tarbitten: As the District Secretary, I should like to be allowed to make a few remarks to explain Davidson's attitude. He has certainly made several charges of corruption, and so on, against me, and the Council might think they are influenced by myself. I am surprised Davidson did not apologise to you, Sir, and send a letter saying that on Friday he called a special meeting of 50 members; Mr. Nobbs of the Catering Section was present. For two hours I defended the policy of yourself and this Executive with regard to the General Strike, and gave Davidson the biggest trouncing he ever had at Hull. He admitted after the meeting his only complaint was, why was he not told as an Executive man?

With regard to the question of corruption, what I say is this, and I am not afraid to say it, that there are Head Office officials who have been scheming to get the President's chair for years. I am not afraid to say that. However, he called a meeting, and his idea was, his chief idea was, against Ockleton, who got an Official's job. When he and Ockleton were up here last Ockleton said he would not take a job, and Davidson said he would not; but what happened was that a certain Official took Davidson round the House of Commons and patted him on the back, and they had a few wines, and then he said to Davidson, "You are the kind of Official we want." That has given him a swelled head. But Davidson said on Friday night that every one of you Executive members should be cleared out because you were doing no good and allowing Havelock Wilson to run the whole thing. Further, he said he would not sit with any of you Officials because you are the ruling element, Sir. I realise what I have to face when I go back to Hull, but I tell you this, that Davidson is not speaking for the seamen of Hull. There is no mistake about that, because I challenged Davidson on Friday night to call a mass meeting of the Hull seamen and face them. He is one sheer bluff.

Since the meeting I have received this telegram from Hull saying that Davidson took the count, and the meeting did him more harm than he anticipated. Davidson realised and was told on Friday night what was going to happen when he came to this Council Meeting, and he had no intention of apologising. He

simply called that meeting with an idea of placing his resignation before the men at Hull and saying, "I have absolutely finished." His chief complaint is against Jimmy Ockleton, the late Executive man.

With regard to amalgamation, he wanted to know why I associated with two men sitting in this room, because in years gone by we were fighting with the Hull Seamen's Union. I explained to the meeting what had happened in the past we should forget, and that we should not work as a local body but as a national body.

I want this Executive Council to judge this case on its merits. I do not fear Davidson going back to the Port of Hull. He is not here speaking for the seamen of Hull. I can safely say that I have had the confidence of the Hull Seamen's Union for the last 15 years, and have it yet, therefore I do not want this Executive Council to extend any sympathy, because I am prepared as District Secretary to go back to that port and face the men.

Captain Davis: I rise to second the resolution, and, Mr. Chairman and friends, on grounds that are broad and general. In the first place, I cannot for the life of me understand the mentality of Mr. Davidson having regard to what has taken place since the General Strike. Having regard to the fact that the members of this organisation, whose opinion must be considered and honoured from time to time, is unanimous that this Executive's action was a wise one, and one that saved the men of the sea from a position from which they could never have extricated themselves for many years; yet here we find Mr. Davidson coming here this morning with a sort of queer mentality and trying by argument and reasoning to justify the most impossible position that a man could possibly be placed in. Why do I say that? Because immediately this Executive arrived at a decision what must make you feel satisfied beyond any question of doubt that you were right, from the moment that he left this Executive Council he left no stone unturned to decry your action and to make out you were not acting four-square with the men of the sea. Why I say that is this: because when there was a member of the Miners' Executive speaking at Hull he asked him this—and I want to be perfectly fair with him—"If we go against the findings of the Executive of our Union will the T.U.C. support us?"

Considering how he acted the traitor to this Executive, a man who endorses the findings of this Executive and immediately goes round the country and says that your action is tainted with corruption. I am speaking now as one who found it very difficult in the face of all the mob sentiment and reasoning to carry out your instructions, and here we have a man from whom everyone expected support doing all he can to undermine the wise policy which had been set forth by this Executive. Do not let such a preposterous piece of censure and reproach, which should never have been invented, swing us clear from where the guilt really lies. Mr. Davidson, in my opinion, is tainted with something which is diametrically opposed to the Union in particular and to the men of the sea in general.

Take Hull, for instance. I had the pleasure of being in Hull the other day, and there I saw the same Mr. Tarbitten and Mr. MacLaren in among the men. It was a pleasure to know that there was such a common understanding among the Officials and the men; and for that other man to come here this morning and say that Hull is not right, is misleading this Executive Council. (Hear, hear.) No man can turn round and say—I am not going to speak about any other port, let us concentrate on Hull for a moment—take that other man, Ockleton, who sat here and who was a credit to the Executive; he was said not to be a fit and proper person to be elevated to the position of an Official by Davidson, and he comes along here and says everyone is wrong except himself. In supporting this resolution I submit to you this morning that your policy was one that was endorsed by the Miners' Federation to me. A member of the Miners' Federation sitting on the Joint Council said, "No man should deviate from the findings of that Executive Council of yours, Davis; he would not be an honest Trade Unionist if he did"; yet here we have one of our own Executive Councillors, by intrigue, by all that is unmanly, going along and undoing the Constitution which is standing to-day as an instruction to all Executive Councils. I do not think I ought to take up any more of your time, except to say that you have a Judas Iscariot sitting amongst you; it is his duty to say whether he will kindly retire and allow us to get on with the work which we are carrying on to the satisfaction of the men of the sea, and with public opinion backing it. I hope, Gentlemen, you will continue to conduct your business in the satisfactory manner which has hitherto been your portion.

The General President: Just a moment. I want to remind you that you are here as a kind of judge and jury, and you must not go to extremes on either the one side or the other. Impartial judgment is what is wanted—and impartial punishment. The resolution before the Executive is that Mr. Davidson be suspended for a period of three months. That is very mild. Let me tell you what the Rule says: "Offences, Penalties and Expulsion. (1) The Executive Council may expel any member who (a) has been imprisoned for any crime; (b) has been guilty of serious misconduct; (c) has wilfully committed and repeated serious breaches of these rules; (d) has knowingly made any false statement or declaration with the object of imposing on the funds of the Union; or (e) has made any wilful and material mis-statement or omission in his application for membership (not being a member of more than three years' standing at the time when notice of the charge is given to him)." Then it goes on to other breaches of Rules.

I think that if any man has made any mis-statement it is this man, Davidson. He has deliberately written there, first that the President is a fraud; then, that the Officials are frauds. You will remember that at the last Executive Meeting you passed a resolution that we prosecute all men who are guilty of libelling this Union. You remember that. (Hear, hear.) It is in your Minutes. Here this man writes a letter to say that he is prepared to go into the box on either side to give evidence to testify that we are a lot of frauds. If that is not a serious offence I want to know what

is. But, no matter how serious it may be, I want to warn you not to go to extremes. Moderation and fairness is your correct attitude. (Hear, hear.) I just put that before you so that you will not get off the line and say things that perhaps are too severe without justification. Does any other member want to speak?

Captain Griffiths : Did you ask for a seconder for that amendment of mine, that he should be suspended for fourteen days instead of three months?

The General President : And you think that is all the honour of the President is worth? You must have a poor estimate of my feelings, honour and prestige, when a man brings grave charges against me to think that fourteen days' suspension is enough. I am surprised at you, Griffiths, but I will accept it if you want to move it, and if you press it I will put it to the meeting.

Mr. Doxford : I think we have debated long enough on this matter. We have been an hour and a quarter on this man's case.

The General President : We do not want to come to any conclusion without proper consideration.

Captain Griffiths : The first statement that gentleman over there made was that the Executive Council at the last meeting was disbanded piecemeal, that some went at one time, and some at another time, and some in the middle of the night. Mr. Gunning cleared that away as an untruth. But that showed his mentality when that was the first statement he made. The second statement he made was that the Executive Council were called together on the Saturday morning and there was no one there. Certain of us on the Executive were left on the Friday night; I was one. The official spokesman of this Union asked the members of the Executive who were there on the Saturday morning to meet here at eleven o'clock on Saturday. Six of us turned up here on Saturday morning. So that statement was absolutely wrong, and again shows the mentality of the man. To be perfectly candid, I do not think that the man was worth spending all this time over in the discussion that has taken place. The third reason is what my friend on the other side said. If we suspend him for three months—I do not know whether he is married or single, or anything at all about him, but I did not want to keep a man away from his livelihood; and if we carry this resolution that he is not a fit and proper person to be a member of the Executive, that is as big a punishment as anyone wants.

The General President : You have heard that he got £800. Through whom did he get it?

A Member : Through you.

Mr. Jarman : Why I moved the resolution I did a little while ago was because of the remark he made. He said you could leave that job to him, and I want to leave it to him. Put him outside



the Union. What did he care about our bread and butter and the seamen's bread and butter? After what Captain Davis has said, I say it is not right for him to be in the Union.

Mr. Doxford: After listening to this letter and his so-called explanation I have come to the conclusion that that man in or out of the Union is going to be a trouble; he will be as big a trouble in the Union as out of it. The question is: Is the Union greater than he or any other man in the Union? To my mind the Union is greater than any man. If any man is going to do anything detrimental to the Union he has to go under. To my mind you are treating him generously with regard to the three months' suspension. If I had my way he would cease to be a member from this day.

Mr. Nobbs: I think the three months would meet the case. Among his charges was that the General President was dead—he was a dead number altogether.

The General President: Dead! I look dead at this moment, do I not?

Mr. Nobbs: He also said that the President had no right to hold office. He then went along to explain why. Then he turned round and: "The whole of the Executive Council are governed by that man"—by a dead man. So I should like to know what position you hold, sir, if you are worse than a dead man. Of course, he creates an anomaly straight away. He says, "You are governed entirely by the General President and the General President is dead"—well, you must be worse than dead, of course. Then he went on to say, after trying to explain that position, when he came up to the Executive Council he was more than surprised to find the businesslike manner in which everything was carried out. (Laughter.) You do not know where the man is. It was a most inconsistent statement all the way through. His speech on Friday night was made for one reason only in my opinion, and that was he knew he was going to take the count here. He knew that the sack was coming along. So in front of all the boys who elected him he gave in his notice and said he wanted no more of it. That saved his own face. I think three months will meet the case, because I do not believe we shall have any bother with Davidson later. He started off in the Executive Council with one intention—to bring back a head on the charger; his cronies in Hull are asking where it is, and he cannot produce it.

Several Members: Vote, vote.

The General President: Are you satisfied that the "dead" man does not want to stifle discussion?

Mr. Ley: There is one little point I should like to have cleared up. Mr. Davidson said that we held a meeting on Saturday morning. It was not a meeting at all. Five or six of us met outside the door, and we decided that we would get a pass from Mr.

Gunning, which we did, and go and hear the thing out at the T.U.C., but it was decided whatever we heard there we must abide by the resolution of the Executive Council; and we did so. Mr. Davidson was most emphatic on that himself. Therefore, I cannot see how he has taken up the stand that he has taken up. He was emphatic that we must abide by the Constitution and take a ballot.

Mr. Martin : There was a meeting on the Saturday morning, and there were over 20 here.

The General President : But it did not matter. If you remember what took place at the last meeting at which I was present, I was asked was it necessary for the Executive Council to attend this T.U.C. meeting. I said I did not think it was, but I was not very particular, as we had already deputed one man, Mr. Henson, to go there and explain our position. And it was rather more due to my good nature—I knew there were a lot anxious to be there; there was no resolution passed that you should go; do you remember that?

Several Members : Yes.

The General President : You will bear that in mind; and it was my good nature wanting the Executive Council members to have the benefit of the first information that caused me to say, "All right, if you want to go, you can go"; and then they went. That is all there is about it.

Mr. Gunning : There was no Saturday morning meeting.

The General President : We will now take the resolution and the amendment.

Mr. Jarman : I have had a talk with the District Secretary for Hull, and I would like to ask the seconder of the amendment—in view of what the District Secretary for Hull has said and the other Secretary for Hull—to withdraw if he is satisfied that three months would meet the case.

Mr. Martin : I have much pleasure in doing that.

The General President : Then there is only the resolution now; and that is, that Davidson be suspended from all membership for three months. Those in favour of that put up their right hands.

Mr. Tarbitten : On a point of order. In what position are the District Secretaries as to voting?

The General President : Those on the rota will have a vote; those not on the rota will not have a vote. Will those in favour of the resolution hold up their hands.

There voted :—

In favour of the resolution	...	...	34
Against	...	...	0

The General President : I declare the resolution carried unanimously. Will you ask Mr. Davidson to come in again.

Mr. Cathery : I might say that Mr. Breckenridge, Mr. Clouston and Mr. Spens are the District Secretaries on the rota.

*(Mr. Davidson then returned to the Meeting Room.)*

The General President : Now, Mr. Davidson, the Council has given full consideration to all the circumstances of your case, and they have decided to suspend you from membership for a period of three months; so your services will be dispensed with from now.

Mr. Davidson : Thank you.

### IMPLICIT OBEDIENCE TO RULES ESSENTIAL.

The General President : Now that is over, I would like to make just one observation, and it is this. If we are going to have a good governed Union, every man who is a member has got to pay due regard to the Rules and Constitution (Hear, hear.) I would say more. The time has come when we must not allow people to go round and make loose statements with regard to the Officials of the Union and the Union in general, without being challenged. (Hear, hear.) Now, this man Davidson has been villifying and slandering me. Why? I cannot give you any explanation. I have never done a thing to the man in his life. From the time he came on the Executive Council about six months ago I have treated that man with the utmost courtesy and respect; so much so, that I invited him upstairs to my room and gave him an opportunity of saying anything private that he might want to say. I am told that he went away and said he had an altogether different opinion of Mr. Wilson. He said he had been led to believe I was a bully and a blackguard and a domineering cad, and what not, and he had found me a perfect gentleman. I cannot tell you whether I am or not; but that is what he said. Then he went back to Hull and declared that he never saw a Union or an Executive Council with such businesslike methods as we had displayed all through. This same man goes around villifying and abusing people; and I ask you why should I be subjected to this abuse? I may be "dead," but I have the feelings of a man, and that is something. When a man like that comes and insults me to my face I am a man and I naturally resent it, and I will resent it wherever it comes from. (Hear, hear.)

Are Barnes and Hagen there? I think we had better clean the slate now as we are going. One of these gentlemen who is here, an ex-Official, has been elected by a very small and insignificant meeting to attend the Annual General Meeting, and I want to have it cleared up as to whether both of these men are fit and proper persons to attend or not. I would ask you to go ahead with the cleaning-up job, and we will have them in and clean the matter up at once. Do you agree to that?

Agreed.

## CASE OF MR. HAGEN AND MR. BARNES.

*(Mr. Hagen and Mr. Barnes were then called in.)*

The General President : These men, Gentlemen, are Mr. Barnes and Mr. Hagen. They were two Officials of our Union. They remained with us all through the General Strike. They did not take any part in the Strike; they drew their wages all during the Strike; and then some three weeks after the Strike was terminated they talked about resigning their positions. As soon as I heard of it, I said, "Accept their resignations at once"; because, to me, a man resigning means he is tired of his appointment, and I am always ready to accept resignations at any moment, because I have so many hundreds of other applicants on our books who are looking for office; so when a man is tired of his appointment I can always find a few dozen to fill every man's appointment who leaves.

Well, they resigned. They obtained their wages—more than they were really entitled to get; they drew out their superannuation money, and everything else. Then, to my surprise and astonishment, I found them going round the Branches trying to get other Officials to resign. They went to Tilbury, they went to Gravesend, and tried their hands there—that is to say, they thought they might bring off a first-class revolt by leaving me stranded without any Officials, only myself, and then the Union would be closed down. That was the idea they had in mind. Seeing that there is a fair amount of capital, the fact of anyone or everyone resigning would not make very much difference, because there would be enough to go on with for some time, anyhow. But that was their idea of Trade Unionism. But they went a bit further than that. I brought a man named Mr. Dominic Gallagher from Liverpool to London, and Mr. Hagen tried to intimidate Mr. Gallagher by rough language and intimidation to give up his post. That did not happen.

Well, Mr. Barnes, on my return from America last year, was good enough to come up with a deputation and tell me to my face it was time I was out of it, and that it would be a mighty good job for the Union, too. I said, "Well, if you have any charges you would like to bring against me for neglected duty, or anything of that kind, the Executive Council will be meeting shortly and you can put your charges or objections, or whatever you want to do, before the Executive Council." I waited a number of weeks, but never got anything from Mr. Barnes. Then I was approached by his District Secretary, who told me that he was in a very bad state of mind and wanted to know if I would overlook the matter. I said, "As far as I am concerned, I paid little attention, and the best thing I can advise him to do is to forget it." That was taking a very generous view, was it not?

Now, since he has been dismissed with Mr. Hagen he has been indulging in all kinds of loose talk about the "cleaning-up" that is going to be done at this Annual Meeting; the startling exposures that are going to be brought forward against the Union and myself; and I thought it was a very fitting opportunity at this

Executive Meeting to give those gentlemen a chance to tell us all about it—first, why I should be deposed; whether they have any charges they would like to bring against me personally; whether they could prove there is any corruption in the Union, and, if so, to what extent and by whom. This is a good opportunity. Here we are. We have a shorthand writer here who will take it all down, and then after you have given vent to what you have in your minds the Council will consider the charges which you prefer and determine whether there is any justification for them or not. All that, I may tell you, is acting detrimental to the good government of the Union, and anyone making charges who cannot substantiate them the Executive Council are entitled to remove from the roll and register in the Union and suspend them from all further business. I am giving you your chance this morning to justify what you have done.

Mr. Hagen : I ask, for my evidence in particular, to bring the Minutes of the Meeting at Maritime Hall held on June 15th re the election of Delegates to attend the A.G.M. It will be there, in my opinion, where you will see whether it has been for the detriment of the Union or for the interests of the Union whereby a resolution was opposed by myself from the Federated Seamen's Union Official, Clarke; I counteracted his resolution and moved an amendment whereby it was for the interests of the Union and not detrimental to the best interests of the Union. I would be greatly obliged if you would read out that amendment to the Council and let them decide whether that is detrimental to the best interests of the Union or for the interests of the Organisation. Would you be so kind as to read that out?

The General President : It is not my duty to read that. If you have any resolution to read out, please read it.

Mr. Hagen : I have not got the resolution.

The General President : I have preferred charges against you, that you did endeavour to intimidate Mr. Dominic Gallagher from carrying on his work.

Mr. Hagen : Nothing of the kind. I defend myself in this respect. I would like to see Gallagher. Is he present?

The General President : Yes; or, if he is not present, he will be in a few minutes. Bring in Mr. Dominic Gallagher. While we are waiting for him I want to ask you this : Do you know Mr. Clarke?

Mr. Hagen : You mean the Federated Seamen's Union man?

The General President : Yes, that is the man. Do you know him?

Mr. Hagen : Yes.

The General President : Did you invite him to the meeting?

Mr. Hagen : None whatever.

The General President : Do you know he was not a member of our Union?

Mr. Hagen : I knew that he was.

The General President : He was not.

Mr. Hagen : How did I know that?

The General President : You ought to have found out.

Mr. Hagen : I am going to tell you this : I asked Mr. Kimpton to get on the 'phone and find whether his book was clear, because I was of the opinion that if it was clear it was forged; and he had got 55s. from the Samaritan Fund.

The General President : He was allowed a certain amount of money from the Benevolent Fund, or a special grant the Union made. He was allowed £3 or £4—I believe it was £4—aid, and when the book and the receipt were sent on to him he kept the book and refused to sign the receipt. So that money was never paid. Consequently he is not a member, and you knew all about it.

Mr. Hagen : I knew nothing whatever; and I even went so far as to go to the Victoria and Albert Dock and bring evidence whereby he paid his last contributions to Taylor from Green's Home.

The General President : Did you go down to Gravesend and ask Hamlyn and the launchman, Stamp, to throw in their resignation?

Mr. Hagen : No, not at all. I have never been to Gravesend since.

The General President : Tilbury?

Mr. Hagen : At the time I was there with the Aberdeen boat—

The General President : Tilbury and Purfleet?

Mr. Hagen : I went away from the Shipping Office, as I told Bond I would not go near the "Connaught" or any other Shipping Office whereby anyone could say I was trying to cause any disturbance. If I had been out for a disruptive purpose I would certainly have got amongst the men and done that. But I have done nothing of it. In fact, I have never been outside the house only one day a week in three weeks.

The General President : What is your grievance? You resigned your position, did not you?

Mr. Hagen : Exactly, Mr. Wilson, I will tell you the grievance is intimidation from your District Secretary in London whereby we were all doomed to resign. That was the agreement. Now you have got the truth, and I am prepared to face the truth?

The General President : What kind of intimidation, please?

Mr. Hagen : Whereby in the presence of Mr. Nicholas—I hope this will not be forgotten on the Minutes—a blue ticket Branch Secretary of David Hunter's lot, it was spoken in our presence from Harry Bond that this in his opinion was the finish of the Seamen's Union, that there would be a Marine Section formed by the Transport Workers. That is the idea, Mr. Wilson, whereby we were all doomed to resign. And when it came to the question of showing courage with wisdom three men resigned and that is the result of it, and the outcome is nothing else but slander towards us. You have now got the truth.

The General President : I hope it is the truth. But we have had only one side. Will you tell me this : At the time when you resigned did you or Mr. Barnes give any such reasons as the ones you are giving now?

Mr. Hagen : I ask you to call for a letter whereby Barnes sent me to the Strike Committee. Is this in the interests of the Union or to the detriment of the Union, or is it not?

The General President : I know ; but——

Mr. Hagen : I have a clearance from the Strike Committee whereby they appreciated actions adopted by us.

The General President : You are throwing charges at a man who is not here. At the time you resigned, did you give the reasons for resigning that you are now giving to us?

Mr. Hagen : Yes, to Bond.

The General President : Not to Mr. Cathery?

Mr. Hagen : Mr. Cathery knew perfectly well, as far as it goes from our conversation——

The General President : Did you give any reasons to me?

Mr. Hagen : No, no reasons.

Mr. Cathery (General Secretary) : I begged and pleaded with these gentlemen. I begged them to put it off and to go away and think it out. I said, "It does not matter what ship you go in, you will never get a better job than you have got." I pleaded with them, but I never heard any of the reasons for their resignation, and they never told me any of the reasons for it. I begged the men in what I may call their own interests, as a father talking

to a son. I tried to give them the best advice I could, and I never heard any reasons why they resigned.

Mr. Hagen : That is the position.

The General President : And you come here this morning and you want to cast suspicion and doubt on another man who is not here.

Mr. Hagen : Who is the other man?

The General President : Mr. Bond.

Mr. Hagen : I have asked him thousands of times to appear before you and settle this and save further arguments, and he has refused.

The General President : You never wrote me to that effect.

Mr. Hagen : We never have, but we have Mr. Bond, and I naturally thought he would have granted us that.

The General President : Were you up against Mr. Bond last October when you came to see me with Mr. Barnes?

Mr. Hagen : No. Do you mean the time when you came back from the States?

The General President : Yes.

Mr. Hagen : No.

The General President : You were all right then?

Mr. Hagen : Yes, we were all right then. And you know the purport of that, I suppose?

The General President : I do not.

Mr. Hagen : We have to find these things out. We have been intimidated right through, and we are suffering the punishment now.

The General President : I do not know any more than you have told me, that Mr. Barnes thought it was time I was out of it, and you supported him.

Mr. Barnes : That is a lie.

Mr. Hagen : I wish to say this; that in reference to Tilbury Station, whereby we were at Tilbury we were out of the way, furthest away, and the cheapest fare was 1s. 1d. return early in the morning, and we took that to save 2s. 2d., and we want to let you know that. We went to Tilbury to get out of the way, two



hours, whereby we would not be intimidating anyone. Did Mr. Nelson, or anyone from the Tilbury Branch, give you a statement whereby I wanted to go and oppose those at Tilbury?

The General President: They did not. I tell you I have charged you with persuading them to throw in their hands.

Mr. Hagen: The sooner they withdraw their charges the more legitimate I shall think they are; because none of them are true. I have made no statements to that effect, and I am prepared to carry on as I have carried on. I am not made like that.

The General President: Have you any charges, either of you, to bring against me?

Mr. Hagen: No.

The General President: Have you any charges that I have neglected my work and not done it properly?

Mr. Barnes: I should like to read a letter, Mr. Wilson, they handed to me by hand, by your confidential secretary, where I was asked point blank, after he had sent for us at the Victoria and Albert Dock at four o'clock in the afternoon, whether we would be at the Head Office to ask us what was the matter and why we had not been so loyal as we had been in the past, and whether we, or I myself, thought it fit that you should resign. I told the gentlemen present then: Yes, with a pension.

The General President: You never said a word about a pension.

Mr. Barnes: This is a letter I had given to me by Mr. Wilson's private secretary: "The Executive Council meets to-morrow; if you have any charges to prefer against me, let me have them at once, otherwise forget them." That is dated October 29th, 1925.

The General President: That is when I wrote to you. But you never came.

Mr. Barnes: I wrote asking you for a personal interview to explain; and this is the letter I got: "Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, November 5th, 1925. Mr. Barnes.—Dear Sir,—I have your letter of the 3rd instant and expect to be in London this week-end, when I will make arrangements for you to come and see me." Have you seen me?

The General President: I saw you the other day in the passage-way. Did not you tell me that I ran away last year?

Mr. Barnes: I did not. I said it was your place to be here because you always said a leader in the field of battle should be at the head of his army. You have always told us that. I said: Therefore you should have been here; you should have sent someone else there. Those were the words I used.

The General President : You knew why I went away.

Mr. Barnes : I quite understand why you went away. In fact, I never said you ran away.

The General President : Might I ask you what I was doing in America or Canada?

Mr. Barnes : I could not say. I never heard.

The General President : You never read the "Mauretania" speech.

Mr. Barnes : I have read it.

The General President : Then you must have known.

Mr. Barnes : We hear so many things, but we do not get to know what is right. I asked questions at the Branches, but the people in charge of the Branches cannot answer them.

The General President : You did not know I was going aboard the ships addressing large meetings of the men?

Mr. Hagen : No, I did not know; I could not say.

Mr. Barnes : If it was beneficial to visit women at Southampton for distressed seamen's funds, it was beneficial for someone to come down and give an example to the men how to go in after an official strike.

The General President : Have you any charges to make against me personally?

Mr. Barnes : The only charge I have against you is this, that under Rules 18 and 19 there has never been any Head Office official come and visit the Branches—which you will find in your Rule Book; we ought to have one at least every three months; then you ought to send someone down. Not direct, but indirect, the charge must come against you, you being the President of the Union.

The General President : Then the only charge, I take it, that you have got to make against me, is that I do not go down to Tidal Basin. Is that right?

Mr. Barnes : Either I say indirectly it must come against you.

The General President : And you have had no help at Tidal Basin at all?

Mr. Hagen : Mr. Breckenridge has been down.

The General President : This Executive wants to know what your trouble is. Do you know Dick Breckenridge?

Mr. Hagen : Yes.

The General President : Did you ever see him down there helping you for several weeks?

Mr. Hagen : If I went down with him I saw him.

The General President : Then he has been down there week after week, has he not?

Mr. Hagen : I do not know about "week after week." He was down there one week, I know. I know nothing about the weeks afterwards. He was not down there longer than one week with us, when the trouble started and the Strike caused him to go back.

The General President : He was there.

Mr. Barnes : When Mr. Breckenridge was there his two Delegates turned round and said, "You go and give Dick a hand at the Shipping Office; we can manage this ship ourselves." We took £34 out of that ship; so if we are doing anything that is detrimental to the Union—she was only an old tramp, I know—

The General President : You would be far better off if you would listen to my questions and answer them. Have you any charges you would like to make against me with regard to corruption, or any charges to make against this Executive Council?

Mr. Hagen : At present, no.

The General President : You have not?

Mr. Hagen : At present, no.

The General President : What do you mean by that?

Mr. Hagen : At present, no. It has not been under our consideration.

The General President : Do not you think this is the proper place to table those things? I want to be very candid with you and to tell you where you are. If you make charges either against a fellow-Official or against the Executive Council, of corruption and that things are bad, I am now giving you an opportunity to say them. If you do not say them I shall ask this Executive Council to decide that you are two men who make unfounded charges and therefore you are not fit and proper persons to be members of this Organisation, and, according to the Rules, if you cannot substantiate the charges you make, you are liable to expulsion. Therefore I am giving you a chance now to make any charges you

want to make—not later on, but now. If you will not make them now, then the Council will have to decide that you have no charges to make, and the next question they will have to decide will be your expulsion.

Mr. Hagen : It is not a question of us making charges ; it is a question of someone else making charges to us. We are making no charges. We have not made any statements detrimental to the best interests of the Union, so we have made no charges.

The General President : I just want that carefully taken down. You say you have made no charges?

Mr. Hagen : We have made nothing detrimental to the Union.

The General President : And you have none to make?

Mr. Hagen : We have not been insulted yet, but these two charges seem to point in that direction.

The General President : That is on the record.

Mr. Hagen : I was in a "pub" on Saturday and I overheard a remark passed, "There is Hagen." I said, "If there is any court of inquiry to be held on me, Taylor, hold it in my presence, do not talk behind my back; this is a public-house whereby you have got Gallagher's statement."

The General President : We have no concern with public-houses.

Mr. Hagen : No; but when you get these statements coming from a public-house you ought to have a judgment on them.

The General President : I am giving you a chance now to say what you want to say. You have no charges to make?

Mr. Hagen : On top of it all you are asking us different questions which do not appertain to these two charges. You ask us, firstly, why we resigned. We have told you. More, in fact, we could tell you in reference to our resignations, but we were not prepared to bring it up. Our consciences are clear, and we were prepared to let other people find out the same as we suffered to know.

The General President : Do you not think if you have any private reasons for resigning you should give them now?

Mr. Hagen : We will make a statement and come into your presence and let you know it.

The General President : We have nothing yet.

Mr. Hagen : I know you have not; because we have not done anything detrimental.

Mr. Barnes : And we have said nothing detrimental.

The General President : And you can give no reason why you called upon me to resign.

Mr. Hagen : I never did. You said it was false; now you say it is me.

Mr. Barnes : You asked me if I ought to resign.

The General President : Both of you.

Mr. Barnes : There were those who were going to tell you straight when you came home. It puts me in mind of the Last Supper of our Lord; in that Supper Party there was a Judas, and there are Judases still sitting here now, and if they have got the guts let them speak.

The General President : That is a matter of opinion. Now, Mr. Gallagher is here and you asked for him. Mr. Gallagher, will you kindly tell us what Mr. Hagen said to you?

Mr. Gallagher : On June 5th I was going along—that was my first meeting at Poplar after I started at Green's Home—I went into the Dock House, a public-house, in the East India Dock Road in company with Mr. Taylor. I was standing there having a drink when a man turned round to me—I did not know him at the time—and he said, "Are you the Delegate from Liverpool?" I said, "I am." He said, "Do you know you have come up here to scab all the men who were out on principle?" I said, "Not that I am aware of." He said, "You have; and Poplar is going to be too hot for you. My advice to you is to get back to Liverpool." I sent an answer back to him, "Who might you be?" He said, "My name is Hagen; I am one of the men who came out on principle." I said, "I made a mistake in Liverpool, I shall take damned good care I do not make another one in London. I shall see the General President and ask him if I have come up to scab." I was since informed I had not. Hagen had a few words with Taylor, who was standing at my side. The argument got strong as regards the Union, and Taylor was asked why he did not come out of the Union; and I think Taylor said he was looking after himself. Hagen turned round and said, "All right, Harry, get ready on Monday; we are coming down to give you a basinful." I have since seen Barnes and Hagen and they said there was no right to have used their names—

Mr. Hagen : I never said a word. You gave me a note of hand on Saturday morning.

Mr. Gallagher : I have preferred no charge against him.

Mr. Hagen : And you did not blame any of the Officials.

Mr. Barnes : Did not you shake hands with me and say, " You have made the biggest stand against the opposition that was ever made " ?

Mr. Gallagher : I think you are on trial and not me. You turned round and told Taylor you were coming down to give us a " basinful." That was on the Saturday, and on the Monday we were going to get that " basinful."

Mr. Taylor : I was not there.

Mr. Gallagher : No, you did not turn up and we had a very easy day, although we were expecting trouble.

Mr. Hagen : And you have not had that trouble.

Mr. Gallagher : No.

Mr. Hagen : And on top of it all, as the amendment has never been read out—

The General President : Have you any questions to ask ?

Mr. Hagen : Yes, a few.

The General President : Ask them and do not let us have statements.

Mr. Gallagher : After you got up and spoke on behalf of the engagement form at the meeting, you spoke strongly in support of it. I said, " I congratulate you on making such a stand on behalf of the engagement form."

Mr. Hagen : What has been our advice to the men at different places? Speak the gospel truth. Has it not been, " Pay your books " ? Have I not said, " Chance your time to break away when it is necessary, but pay your books whereby you will all be in time."

Mr. Gallagher : I have not been in your company when you have said that ; and Mr. Kimpton can tell you the same. If you recollect, with regard to that meeting, if I had been for any obstructive purposes whatever I should have fallen into line with Clarke sooner than oppose him.

Mr. Hagen : I opposed him, did not I ?

Mr. Gallagher : Yes, you did very strongly. With regard to Mr. Barnes, Mr. Barnes came to me on Saturday morning and said, " Gallagher, have I done you any wrong while you have been in Poplar?" I said, " No, not that I am aware of." He said, " People are saying it." I said, " Who are the people?" He said, " I shall not tell you." I said, " It is only right that I should know." He said I should give a letter in black and white to say he had not

insulted me whilst I had been there. I asked, "If I give the letter would it be detrimental with regard to the Head Office?" He said, "No." The letter I gave was this: "I, the undersigned, hereby declare that Mr. William Barnes individually has not molested me or insulted me in any shape or form, and has always treated me since my stay in Poplar with the greatest civility."

The General President : Any other questions?

Mr. Barnes : The accusation against us is entirely wrong.

The General President : That is all you have to say? You have no other charges you want to make?

Mr. Barnes : I have not made any. The charges have been made against us.

The General President : What is it that you want?

Mr. Barnes : We do not want anything. We are just brought here.

The General President : You are not looking for reinstatement?

Mr. Barnes : We leave that to the Council.

Mr. Hagen : Reinstatement?

The General President : You have not given us any reason why you resigned.

Mr. Hagen : I told you. I will give it to you in writing sooner or later if you so require it; but it will take me about an hour to tell you.

The General President : Is there anything more you would like to say?

Mr. Hagen : No.

The General President : All right. If you have not any more to say will you kindly retire? We will consider our decision privately.

Mr. Barnes : We have been told to get out. What must be our feeling when you speak to members and they say, "Get outside there." The Council heard that.

Captain Tupper : On a point of order. What the President has said is : Will you kindly retire while the Council is considering this? It was not "Get out" at all.

*(Mr. Hagen and Mr. Barnes retired.)*

The General President : Now, Gentlemen, you have heard what I said and you have heard what they have said. First of all, they came up last October and insulted me in a most gross manner. After making continuous and strenuous efforts on the other side I was told by Mr. Barnes, and it was supported by Mr. Hagen, that the sooner I got out of the job the better. I gave them a chance to come before the Executive Committee to say why. They never came before the Executive Committee. I was asked if I wanted to press the charges. I said, "I never made any." It was only dependent on what they said, and that was that I ought to get out. Mr. Bond, as a matter of fact, pleaded with me that I should forget all about it. I said, "Well, as far as I am concerned it is a mere incident; what they have said to me does not amount to much." Well, then, we come up to the General Strike. Those two men never said a word about resignation; but three weeks after, I think it was, I heard rumours of resignations, and I said, "Oh, I hope they will resign." I did not know that Mr. Cathery had been tendering them that fatherly advice for which he is so gifted, or otherwise he and I would have differed. I never believe in that. When a man says to me he is going to resign, I accept his resignation. That is the end of it. No begging and praying of anyone to stop, and I find that the Union gets on just the same, whether they go or not. Just the same with me; if I were out of it to-morrow I am not vain enough to think that the Union would die. Perhaps for a while it might give a bit of a jolt, but it would go on, rest assured of that.

Now, they never said a word about Mr. Bond; and never breathed a word about him. In fact, my impression down there was they were all comrades and brothers; and now they want to throw the onus on Bond. I do not know what your view is, but my view is this, that it is an afterthought. They want to find some reason or other to explain away their conduct. I am not going to take these death-bed thoughts, that it is someone else. I blame the man himself. Now, you have seen these men before you this morning, and I am going to ask you this question : Do you think that their demeanour and conduct is such as would justify any Union keeping them on for five minutes? (Cries of "No.") Why, the whole of their demeanour this morning is that of braggarts and bullies. If I were to say the whole truth it would constitute a very bad picture. Down at Tidal Basin for a long while our Officials—or some of them, anyhow, and you have seen a sample this morning—have depended on bullying methods—not reason, not common sense—and before the unofficial strike of last year there was too much treating of the men as though they were serfs and slaves. You can do that for a while; but the time comes when the men will resent it. And that really was the cause, in my opinion, of a great deal of the trouble down at Tidal Basin last year and of a good deal of the trouble that exists to-day.

Now, I asked a young man to come to this meeting this morning. I have only met the young man twice. He is a sailor; he is a good member of the Union, and he has been serving in ships sailing from the Tidal Basin, and he told me that rumours were prevalent that certain Delegates down at Tidal Basin were not properly enforcing the P.C.5. I am going to ask that young



fellow to make his own statement; but this is what he said to me: He had come up against men who had told him they had paid only 5s., although they were owing £2 or so, and that the Delegates took the 5s. and never made out any receipt at all, and it was 5s. really for getting a job and not Union dues. I am going to ask Mr. Parker, the young man I have mentioned, to tell you what he informed me.

#### EVIDENCE OF MR. PARKER.

Mr. Parker: What Mr. Wilson has said, Gentlemen, is quite right. I have been serving in an Aberdeen boat for some time past, and during the strike of last year we signed on the Aberdeen boat, the "Diogenes." The majority of you know the Aberdeen boats sign on on board and not at the Shipping Office, therefore it is well known that the Officials have every scope to do the kind of thing Mr. Wilson has explained to you. Knowing several men who have been shipmates with me in the Aberdeen boats, who have been in arrears eight or nine months, the Union Official when they have gone to him for P.C.5 has made some stipulation with these men. I know it is a fact, because the men and I have been shipmates and they would not tell me that just for the sake of talking. I will not mention the Delegate's name, but when men have gone to the Victoria Dock Road Branch they have given him 5s. for a P.C.5 and never had a receipt from the Union or a stamp put in their books. I can prove that that business has been carried on. If any man here likes to inquire about it and he asks, I can give the man's name.

During the strike last year I "scabbed," so it was said, but I really did not "scab" because it was an unofficial strike. I was in a good ship, a ship that was home to me, and I went away in that ship under the advice of the Chief Officer, who said it was right to stand by the Owners and they would stand by the Union. When we were signing on there was a good deal of controversy with the pickets. That was in September last. We left Tilbury on September 11th. I know those two Delegates were on board trying to get some of the men to pass up their books; the men would not recognise the P.C. or support the Union. I signed on despite a lot of intimidation, and when we were signing on, or endeavouring to do so—passing the doctor before we signed on—one of these Union Delegates got up—

The General President: Tell us who he was.

Mr. Parker: No, I will not mention any names.

A Delegate: If you make a charge against any Official it is your place to give his name.

Mr. Parker: Then I will give his name. It was Hagen. He got up in the foyer of the "Diogenes" to make a speech, and five or six men walked out of that ship and refused to sign on because they said, "What is the use of being in a Union when you have a Delegate so ignorant that he cannot explain things to you?" I know a man who was a great chum of mine who was in the

" Diogenes " with me ; if we went anywhere we were great friends, but after that business he was so disgusted with the Union Delegate who had tried to make a speech to the men, that he gave it up. I want some of you gentlemen to understand that there is a different class of man going to sea as compared with when I first went. I am only a young man now, but I went to sea in 1916 as a boy, and the men on board ship are now more educated, they have a better idea of things, and better living than the men used to have ; therefore it is my opinion that the men want Delegates who can explain matters to them when questions are asked, in a proper and orderly manner, not try to bully-rag them and endeavour to work backhanded business. I did not come here with the intention of making a speech ; I asked if I could come to a meeting and hear a little of what the Union does. Mr. Gunning has seen me several times, and has been able to inform me of several things that I had been in doubt about ; he has opened my eyes a good deal to what is going on in the Union, and of which the average seaman is in entire ignorance. There is a certain class of men who will make trouble because they do not actually know what is happening and what is being done for their benefit. That is the cause of the trouble.

Well, as I was telling you about this chum of mine. He was so disgusted with the speech of that man that he said, " Let us clear out ; I have heard enough about this." That is a man who had been at sea all his life, but he gave it up and went to his uncle, explained the position, and he is now working at Norwich in a good job. He wrote me and said he would not go to sea again under the conditions the poor men are working under. That is how the Union has lost one very good man, a good Union man, and he has been lost to you through the inefficiency of the Union Delegate.

The General<sup>"</sup> President : Does any member wish to ask any question ?

Mr. Ley : Were there any other Officials you could mention ?

Mr. Parker : Those two who were here to-day are the ones who usually run the signing on of the Aberdeen boats.

Mr. Ley : And you have seen them take 5s. ?

Mr. Parker : I make no accusation that I have seen it ; but I have heard from fellows that they have done it. You know the average seaman to-day ; the class I know would not turn round and make a statement like that for the sake of talking. It came about when we were talking about Union things, and that is that.

Mr. Doxford : Of your own knowledge you do not know anything about it with regard to the 5s. Are you convinced it is done ?

Mr. Parker : Yes, I am fully convinced it is. I made the statement to Mr. Wilson last week that I could not make a direct accusation, because I had no proof ; it was only what I had been told.

Mr. Tearle : How long has our friend been going to sea?

Mr. Parker : I went to sea when I was 16.

Mr. Tearle : Have you been fully employed during that period?

The General President : He would have to serve his time at first as an apprentice.

Mr. Tearle : Have you ever paid anything for a job?

Mr. Parker : No, never. I did receive one job through influence, and that was through the influence of Mr. Wilson, in an Orient boat in which I was on the last trip. The only reason I gave up the "Diogenes" was that it was said I "scabbed"—

A Delegate : You did not "scab."

Mr. Parker : The general opinion was that we did "scab." We had some very bad trouble that voyage, and when we got back home people who did not sail in the ship got their jobs back. I do not know how, but it was not the Marine Superintendent's doings. However, the men went back there, and it would not be policy on my part to say who the men are.

The General President : Thank you, Mr. Parker. Gentlemen, I am now going to say that those men Barnes and Hagen are not true men; they have not told us the truth. I gave them an opportunity of telling us, but they would not do so. "Not now," they said. "Not now, later on." What does that mean?

Captain Tupper : They were conveying to this meeting that they were sheltering someone else.

The General President : Yes. And, furthermore, their idea in resigning was, in my opinion—I am only expressing my own views—that they thought they could have brought about a revolt in London. There is one thing I forgot to ask them, and I will ask them, and that is, whether they are in receipt of £2 a week from the T.U.C. Will you call them in again?

*(Mr. Hagen and Mr. Barnes were again called in.)*

#### RE-EXAMINATION OF MR. HAGEN AND MR. BARNES.

The General President : There is just one question I want to put to you. Are you two men in receipt of £2 a week from the T.U.C.?

Mr. Hagen : Yes.

The General President : You are?

Mr. Hagen : Yes.

The General President : Thank you. I am much obliged. That is all I have to ask, except this : What is the £2 a week for?

Mr. Hagen : A grant.

The General President : For what purpose?

Mr. Hagen : I take it we have got to pay it back; it is a kind of a loan.

The General President : What is the idea of the T.U.C. giving you £2 a week which you are going to pay back? What for?

Mr. Hagen : I take it, it was to save us going to the R.O.

The General President : Do they do that to everyone who has been out?

Mr. Hagen : I can only answer for myself.

The General President : Then you are getting £2 a week from the T.U.C. at the present time?

Mr. Hagen : We were; but it is finished now.

The General President : Did you persuade anyone else to go up and get the £2?

Mr. Hagen : Persuade anyone?

The General President : Yes.

Mr. Hagen : We simply told ourselves to get it. We have told anyone else who has asked.

The General President : Did you persuade George Reed to go and get the £2?

Mr. Hagen : He said, " I wish I could get £2." I said, " It is up there if you go. We have got ours."

The General President : What was your idea in persuading George Reed to go and get £2?

Mr. Hagen : Because he told us he had sold his furniture and it was to keep himself and to save going to the R.O.

Mr. Doxford : Did you ask for the £2, or was it proffered to you?

Mr. Hagen : I never asked for it.

Mr. Doxford : How did you get into communication with them to let them know you needed £2?

Mr. Hagen : We walked up there.

Mr. Doxford : You knew there was a fund for that purpose?

Mr. Hagen : We never knew anything. We walked up there and explained we were poor.

The General President : Does anyone want to ask any more questions about the £2 a week? Very well, all right. Will you please retire again?

*(Mr. Hagen and Mr. Barnes again retired.)*

### THE ALLEGED CONDUCT OF THE T.U.C.

The General President : Now, Gentlemen, where are we? What is the £2 for? Is that what we are subscribing to the Trades Union Congress for?

Several Delegates : No.

The General President : I understand that the T.U.C. has been giving the Liverpool ex-Officials £2 a week—that is, men who are supposed to have been victimised through the Strike. Those two men were not victimised through the Strike. But they go up to the T.U.C. and they get £2 a week. What is the game?

A Delegate : To kill this Union.

The General President : What are you going to do about them?

Mr. Martin : After all that we have heard about these two gentlemen, I do not think we can discuss it any further; it would be simply a waste of time, and I would like to move that are fit to be in the Organisation.

The General President : Their resignations have been accepted some time ago. What we have to consider is whether they have been acting detrimentally to the Union, and, if so, whether they are fit to be in the organisation.

Mr. Flett : I move that we suspend Barnes and Hagen for three months from all participation in the Union.

The General President : To take no further part in the Union for three months?

Mr. Flett : Yes.

Mr. Sprow formally seconded

The General President : I will now put the resolution. Those in favour hold up their right hands.

On a show of hands, there voted :—

In favour of the resolution	...	32
Against	... ..	0

The General President : The resolution is carried unanimously.

*(Mr. Hagen and Mr. Barnes returned to the room.)*

The General President : Now, Mr. Barnes and Mr. Hagen. The Council has found you two men guilty of acting detrimentally to the best interests of the Union, and, furthermore, that you have failed to give an explanation as to why you are in receipt of £2 a week from the T.U.C.

Mr. Barnes : I do not think you or the Council realise our position. Being Trade Union Officials, it was a very, very sore point to have to go and put ourselves on the R.O., as they call him ; and we thought the best way out of it was, if there was a trust fund provided, to go to the T.U.C. and see whether they could assist us with a grant until we found work—as at the present time no one will employ us. I think if the Council takes that into consideration they themselves will find it is a true statement. Tell me what firm or what ship is going to employ an ex-official? The first thing they say is, "An agitator."

The General President : Have you anything to say, Mr. Hagen?

Mr. Hagen : In reference to what?

The General President : You are suspended for a period of three months because you have acted detrimentally to the Union, and you are in receipt of £2 a week from the T.U.C., and about which you have declined to give any explanation up to now.

Mr. Hagen : If you want any explanation of the £2, the explanation is that we simply told them the poor circumstances we were in, and in all probability they have looked upon that. I get 30s.—15s. in tickets and 15s. in money—for my wife and three children. You cannot conjure on that.

The General President : Is it true that when you resigned the Union gave you three weeks' wages?

Mr. Hagen : Yes.

The General President : Did you, in addition to that, draw from the Union between £20 and £30, your Superannuation money?

Mr. Hagen : No.

The General President : How much was it?

Mr. Hagen : I had somewhere about £15, I think it was. I think I had £15 from the Superannuation Fund, as a matter of fact.

Mr. Catherly : I can tell you exactly what it was.

The General President : You got three weeks' wages and £15, on your own statement, so you could not have been very hard up. You said you went to the T.U.C. because you did not want to go on the R.O.

Mr. Hagen : Not if I could avoid it.

The General President : And I only want the Council to know you had three weeks' additional wages, and you also received somewhere about £15, according to your own statement, on the top of the three weeks' wages.

Mr. Hagen : That was our own Superannuation money, was it not?

The General President : That is all I want. That is all right. Well, you are suspended from the Union for a period of three months; you are to take no part in the business of the Union for that time.

Mr. Hagen : Can we appeal?

The General President : I will look up the Rules carefully, and if you are entitled to an appeal to the Annual General Meeting you will be notified to that effect. I am not sure of it, but I do not think you can.

*(Mr. Hagen and Mr. Barnes again retired.)*

The General President : I think we shall have to consider seriously to-day, Gentlemen, what is the motive of the T.U.C. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Damm : Seeing the statement that Mr. Findlay, one of the Executive Councillors of the T.U.C., made in Geneva, I am not surprised at the T.U.C. paying money to some of those dissatisfied men. Mr. Findlay said there in one of his speeches that he would not discuss Havelock Wilson at Geneva, but he would be dealt with by the seamen, by the members, when the time came, and they would know how to deal with him. That gave the impression to all who were present at the International Labour Conference that there was a movement on foot to deal with Mr. Wilson, or anyone connected with this Union. I think it was a wrong statement for an Officer of the T.U.C. to make at such a Conference.

The General President: I am very pleased we got that information.

Mr. Damm: It is in print.

The General President: Because if the T.U.C. wants to contest the policy of this Union, I shall be just delighted to accommodate them. (Hear, hear.) There is such a thing as a conspiracy to do an unlawful act, and in my opinion the T.U.C., in acting as alleged committed a most unlawful act, and if they want a contest I will give them all they require. (Hear, hear.)

#### EXAMINATION OF MR. ROGERS AND MR. JOHNSON.

After a short adjournment, Mr. Rogers and Mr. Johnson were called in.

The General President: You have been summoned here to-day to answer for your conduct during the recent General Strike. It is alleged against you that you brought men out on strike at Newcastle, that you picketed the ships; and with regard to one man in particular, Mr. Knight, who had been 21 years in the same ship, you brought him out on strike; he has lost his employment and he cannot get back—that is after 21 years' service, and he cannot find any employment anywhere; no one will take him. That was a very bad case. But since the close of the Strike you have persisted in what I call your treacherous conduct. You have attended meetings, Mr. Rogers, and you have told deliberate untruths at those meetings; you have endeavoured to stir up trouble in the Branch, and that course of conduct has continued right from May 1st up to date. It was in consequence of your illegal conduct that I was compelled to suspend you. Suspension really means dismissal, because if this Council upholds what I decide then you have no further connection with the Union since the time you were suspended. It is up to you to make good if you can. But I would like to ask you one or two questions first. Did you tell a meeting in Newcastle that you had brought more money into the Union than ever Havelock Wilson did?

Mr. Rogers: No.

The General President: You are charged with breaking the Rules of the Union, defying the Executive Council, and I would like to know, and I suppose the Council will, what you have got to say in your defence.

Mr. Rogers: The only thing I can say is, exactly in the wording of the resolution which was passed by our District Committee, which was endorsed fully by the whole of the Officials on the North-East Coast. Every Official on the North-East Coast did endorse that, and signed the resolution; and that was to the effect that in the absence of instructions from Head Office—I want to say this emphatically and clearly now—that as far as instructions from the Head Office were concerned, I, as



Secretary of the Newcastle Branch, and all the Secretaries of the other Branches on the North-East Coast, understood exactly the same—that there were no instructions from Head Office regarding the Strike at all—the whole of the Press stated that the sea transport Unions had to “down tools” with the rest of the rank and file. You have the resolution; I know it has been sent to you, though it has not been read. But simply carrying out that resolution, the members on the North-East Coast, and not only Newcastle, were advised of the same thing. The picketing business is nothing but lies. I never did any picketing; it was not necessary; there were no men to bring out. The men of one crew did come out, and they came out, in my opinion, quite rightly, that ship being worked by blacklegs, and they were entitled to come out as Trade Unionists. In spite of what anyone might say, their ships were being worked by blacklegs at the Tyne and Tees. As proof of that point, the crew of the “Hadrian” and another ship belonging to the same people lay in London for nine days. Our men did give proper notice; they gave 24 hours’ notice and said they were not going to work with blacklegs. The crew of the “Hadrian” came into London and received nine days’ pay from the ship-owners, but did not do any work, and after the expiration of nine days they commenced to work with blacklegs, and the crew refused. The men came along to your office and signed statements. They were told by the Officials that they were justified in refusing to work with blacklegs. The only people who came out on strike on the North-East Coast were the crew of the “Grecian.” With regard to the other charges of picketing, we had nothing to do with it, because we did not do any. I deny the charges in the main, excepting that we did have that resolution, and if it had been tested, if there had been anything to do, I should probably have carried out the resolution. With regard to the other point about the meetings; I attended two meetings of the members in Newcastle from the time I had finished. I was suspended on May 11th or May 12th, I would not be certain to a day. From that day your telegram said I had to keep away from the office. I have kept away from the office; I have not been inside that door since. Mr. Tarbitten is here—they asked me to come into the office—I was not asked personally—but we were asked to come inside, and I said “No.”

The General President: You did attend some meetings where Mr. Tarbitten was.

Mr. Rogers: Excuse me, I will come to that point. The members at Newcastle themselves called a meeting; they invited Mr. Tarbitten and Mr. Ockleton, and they sent to me at my house and asked me to come, and I went as an ordinary member of the Union. It was not on the Union premises; it was away from the Union altogether. I attended two meetings, and these are the only times I attended meetings at Newcastle.

The General President: Did you attend a meeting where Captain Davis was?

Mr. Rogers : Yes. That was the second one when Captain Davis was there.

The General President : Were you present at the meeting at South Shields on May 3rd?

Mr. Rogers : Yes, May 3rd.

The General President : Did you at that meeting advocate a strike?

Mr. Rogers : Certainly.

The General President : When did you get your circular of instructions from this office dated May 2nd? When did you receive it?

Mr. Rogers : On May 4th, in the afternoon.

The General President : When you were at the South Shields meeting, was there a telephone message received from me and taken down by a clerk named Barker?

Mr. Rogers : Not that I know of.

The General President : You did not hear of it?

Mr. Rogers : No.

The General President : Did Mr. Walsh say that he had that message?

Mr. Rogers : Not that I remember.

The General President : And you deny that you called the men out on strike?

Mr. Rogers : There was no one to call out.

The General President : Not even the crew of the " Bernicia " ?

Mr. Rogers : They were called out because they were working with blacklegs. There were three other crews of the same Company's ships who wanted to down tools on the same day, and I said, " You must not, because you are on Articles and must give 24 hours' notice."

The General President : Do you remember a boat called the " Alistruther " ?

Mr. Rogers : Yes.

The General President : Did you have anything to do with her?

Mr. Rogers : No.

The General President : During that week what were you principally occupied in—from May 3rd up to May 10th? What were you doing all that time?

Mr. Rogers : Quite a good deal of the time I attended the Strike Committee at Newcastle. There were no ships.

The General President : Were you using a motor-car?

Mr. Rogers : Was I using a motor-car?

The General President : Yes.

Mr. Rogers : For some days I would be.

The General President : Do you know Will Lawther?

Mr. Rogers : Yes.

The General President : Were you riding about with him?

Mr. Rogers : No. I took him home one morning about one o'clock; that is the only time he has been in my company. I took him to Chapel, because there was no other means of conveyance.

The General President : I had better read some of the evidence to you. Do you know Mr. Willis, of the Shipping Federation?

Mr. Rogers : Yes, he offered to come here for me to-day.

The General President : This is what he says in an affidavit :—

“ Last week ”——that was referring to May 3rd and 4th ——“ on a day which I am unable to remember, the said Johnson informed me that he had been on board all the boats owned by the Tyne Tees Steam Shipping Company, Limited, of 25, King Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne aforesaid then in Newcastle-upon-Tyne aforesaid, and had endeavoured to persuade the sailors and firemen and catering staffs to cease work. He said that in all cases except that of the said Tyne Tees Steam Shipping Company, Limited's, steamship ‘ Bernicia ’ he had been unsuccessful. I know that the sailors and firemen and catering staff of the said ‘ Bernicia ’ came out on strike. (9) On Thursday, the 6th day of May, 1926, the said Rogers informed me that the sailors and firemen had decided that they would not sign on the Articles of any vessel whose cargo was likely to be handled by the ‘ Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies,’ which they considered to be blackleg labour. In referring to the ‘ Organisation for Maintenance of Supplies ’ I understood him to be speaking of voluntary labour generally, and I pointed out that what he said would exclude

all vessels, as all cargoes were being handled by voluntary labour, the transport workers being on strike. He agreed with this. (10) On Friday, the 7th May, I told the said Rogers that the steamship 'Alistruther' (owned by Medomsley Steam Shipping Company, Limited, of Milburn House, Newcastle-upon-Tyne aforesaid), then lying at Dunston in the County of Durham, intended signing on a crew that afternoon. I asked him if he was in a position to supply a crew, but he said he did not know. He said he was going to consult the 'Strike Committee' as to whether or not they would grant a permit to allow a crew to be signed on for the said steamship 'Alistruther.' The 'Strike Committee' he referred to is a committee with offices situate in Higham Place, Newcastle-upon-Tyne aforesaid, which consists of local representatives of the Trade Unions who took part in the General Strike of workmen in the United Kingdom. The said Rogers advised me that it would be unwise for me personally to take any action in connection with obtaining a crew for the said steamship 'Alistruther.' He said that he would let me know as soon as possible whether or not the 'Strike Committee' would grant a permit. I made no reply to this as I resented the matter being referred to the 'Strike Committee' at all. (11) In the circumstances the said steamship 'Alistruther' was sent to South Shields in the County of Durham to obtain a crew there instead of at Newcastle. (12) The said Rogers telephoned to the Shipping Federation Office at Collingwood Buildings aforesaid at 5 p.m. on the night of the 6th day of May, 1926, and said that a permit would not be granted for the said steamship 'Alistruther.' This message was received by a clerk as I was not in the office at the time, but in the meanwhile the said steamship 'Alistruther' had obtained a crew at South Shields aforesaid and sailed. (13) On the 8th day of May, 1926, the said Johnson informed me that it had been suspected that the said steamship 'Alistruther' was likely to sail and that they (meaning, I understood, the said Rogers and himself) had tried to get pickets from among members of the said National Sailors' and Firemen's Union to prevent her from obtaining a crew. I understood from Johnson that they had not been able to get a sufficient number of pickets from this source, for he told me that they had telephoned the 'Strike Committee' above mentioned for additional pickets, which were sent in large numbers to the Shipping Office aforesaid, where doubtless the said Rogers and Johnson had expected that the crew would be signed on ship's Articles. (14) On Tuesday, the 11th day of May, 1926, I was in the Union Office aforesaid, when the said Johnson came in and said that the motor vessel 'Lenfield' was due to sign on a crew. This vessel is owned by E. J. Sutton and Company, of Cathedral Buildings, Newcastle-upon-Tyne aforesaid. (15) I asked the said Johnson what was to be done in the matter, and he said that he was going to post his pickets. He then distributed picket tickets to men outside the Union Office. He told me

that we would not get men for the said motor vessel 'Lenfield,' and that he had telephoned the 'Strike Committee' above-mentioned for more pickets. This, of course, meant that it was not intended to allow the said motor vessel 'Lenfield' to obtain a crew. (16) I then left the said Union Office and went to outside the Shipping Office aforesaid, which is directly opposite the said Union Office. There I saw the Chief Officer and Second Engineer of the said motor vessel 'Lenfield' and asked them their requirements as to crew. They replied that they had all their crew selected and collected ready to sign on. I then told them that they had better bring their men to the said Shipping Office to be signed on; that there were pickets about and there might be trouble, but that there were plenty of police handy. (17) The said Chief Officer then went to where the intended crew of the said motor vessel 'Lenfield' were collected nearby, but returned and said that they were afraid to come and sign on because they were being watched by pickets who had threatened 'to smash their heads in' if they signed on. (18) There was a crowd of people in the vicinity and I could see the pickets, who were distinguishable by their wearing picket tickets. The said Johnson was standing with one group of pickets immediately opposite the door of the said Shipping Office and another group of pickets was some little distance away and collected round the intended crew of the said motor vessel 'Lenfield.' (19) On my suggestion, the said Chief Officer attempted to persuade the crew intended for the said motor vessel 'Lenfield' to come and sign on, and pointed out that adequate police protection was available, there being many policemen about. I understood from him, however, that they were still afraid to do so owing to the pickets and the threats made by them. (20) I then sent a message to the Shipping Federation Office at 20, Collingwood Buildings aforesaid, explaining the position. On receipt of this message, Mr. W. T. Todd, Secretary there, got the Chief Constable in Newcastle-upon-Tyne aforesaid to arrange for extra police to be sent to the Shipping Office aforesaid. Meantime, however, the said Chief Officer sent the crew intended for the said motor vessel 'Lenfield' back to the ship in driplets with a view to making arrangements for them to be signed on on board at 9 a.m. next morning. (21) At this time I spoke to the said Johnson and complained that the crew intended for the said motor vessel 'Lenfield' had been prevented from signing on by the threats of his pickets. He denied that any threats had been made, but admitted that the pickets had persuaded the men not to sign on. (22) I also saw the said Rogers making his way from the said Union Office through the pickets, and asked him what was, in the circumstances, to happen in connection with unemployment benefit for members of the said National Sailors' and Firemen's Union. He replied, 'I suppose the climax had to come sooner or later, and it may as well come now.' (23) I am informed that the crew intended for the said motor vessel 'Lenfield' was signed on on board

the vessel (which was then lying at Wallsend in the County of Northumberland) as arranged at 9 a.m. on the 12th day of May, 1926, with one or two exceptions. (24) On the morning of the 12th day of May, 1926, I spoke to a man named Coutts, who had been one of the crew intended for the said motor vessel 'Lenfield,' but who had become one of the pickets, and he informed me that he had been to Wallsend aforesaid with the said Johnson and pickets. He said that the pickets had been unable to persuade the crew intended for the said motor vessel 'Lenfield' not to sign on as they, the pickets, were not large enough in numbers. (25) On Tuesday, the 11th day of May, 1926, the Shipping Federation Office, at 20, Collingwood Buildings aforesaid, was informed that the said Rogers had been dismissed from his post as Secretary of the above-mentioned Newcastle Branch of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union. I understand that the said Johnson has succeeded to this post. (26) On Wednesday, the 12th day of May, 1926, I was instructed by Mr. W. T. Todd—that is, the Registrar—"above-mentioned, that the system of arranging for crews through myself as port consultant and a port consultant of the said National Sailors' and Firemen's Union was to be discontinued, and that henceforth crews would be obtained by me alone in my above-mentioned capacity of Registrar."

There is a good deal more. But do you say that that is untrue? This is sworn on oath before a Commissioner of Oaths.

Mr. Rogers: The statement is so long, and you have read it so that I cannot remember it; I am sure you cannot expect me to remember it all—some of those statements are not true, and some of them are a diversion from the real facts, and it makes them appear quite different from what actually happened. Regarding the "Alistruther," the Shipping Federation along with the owner of the vessel, Mr. Sutton, asked me if it was possible to get a permit from the Strike Committee for that ship to sail, and I went to the Strike Committee purposely that day—I would not like to be positive—to see whether it was possible to get a permit for the ship to sail. The Strike Committee refused to give permission. Rightly or wrongly, the position was there. But eventually, at five o'clock, that was the earliest possible moment, I rang them up to tell them the Strike Committee had refused to give them a permit. Their ship was supposed to be going to carry food; whether it was or not I do not know; you have gone into so many small details that I cannot remember them all; some of them are partially correct, some of them are not even that.

The General President: You said on May 3rd you had no instructions from Head Office.

Mr. Rogers: That is correct.

The General President: But you received a circular dated May 4th?

Mr. Rogers: I received it on the 4th.

The General President: You got a circular at two o'clock in the afternoon?

Mr. Rogers: I did not see the time. It was in the afternoon.

The General President: You will notice those dates relate to May 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th?

Mr. Rogers: Some of them, yes.

The General President: And you had my circular on May 4th?

Mr. Rogers: Yes.

The General President: Will you explain to the Council why on receipt of my circular you did not alter your tactics and carry out the instructions of the E.C?

Mr. Rogers: There is one explanation that is possible to be made, and that is, that according to that circular there had been an Executive meeting ten days before it, and in ten days our Head Office had not taken the slightest regard of the local Officials at all; they had not been informed of anything; and after ten or eleven days after the Executive Meeting—after the General Strike had been called, after that resolution of May 3rd which was passed by the whole of the Officials—you cannot turn round and ask me to blackleg the rest of the Officials who had put this resolution into effect on May 3rd in the absence of information.

The General President: Do you know Mr. John Ash?

Mr. Rogers: Yes.

The General President: He is a member of the Executive Council, is he not?

Mr. Rogers: Yes.

The General President: Did you see him?

Mr. Rogers: I never saw him.

The General President: At any time?

Mr. Rogers: Not during that period.

The General President: After May 3rd?

Mr. Rogers: Not during that period.

The General President: Eh?

Mr. Rogers: Not that I am aware of. We certainly had no conversation about Union business. If I saw him—I may have seen him—excuse me, Mr. Ash was not at that meeting; he was at sea.

The General President: That may be. Anyhow, did you see Mr. Walsh on May 3rd?

Mr. Rogers: Yes, on May 3rd.

The General President: Did Mr. Walsh tell you that the Executive Council had decided there should be no strike without a ballot of the members?

Mr. Rogers: Mr. Walsh did make something of a statement. You have the Minutes of that meeting.

The General President: Did he, or did he not tell you what the resolution was?

Mr. Rogers: I said Mr. Walsh did make something of a statement to that effect.

The General President: So you did know on May 3rd that the Executive Council had decided there must be a ballot of the members before a strike?

Mr. Rogers: I am stating what I said before, that we had no official instructions from Head Office at all.

The General President: Then what is Mr. Walsh?

Mr. Rogers: He is District Secretary.

The General President: What are you?

Mr. Rogers: I was Branch Secretary at Newcastle.

The General Secretary: Will you explain this? Have you seen that?

Mr. Rogers: No.

The General President: Did not you read it?

Mr. Rogers: Very occasionally when I got hold of it. I have not seen that yet.

The General President: Will you explain this: "Mr. James Rogers, the Regional Organiser of the North-East Coast"—what is that?



Mr. Rogers: I do not know. Regional is, of course, an area, is it not—a region?

The General President: Have we any such fellow in our Union?

Mr. Rogers: Not that I know of.

The General President: I will read it.

Mr. Rogers: That is the position I was in—

The General President: I will read this for your benefit: "Another unofficial representative welcomed was Mr. James Rogers, the Regional Organiser for the North-East Coast for the Sailors' and Firemen's Union. This Union as well as another had decided to take a ballot, but its Officials in this region, and as we afterwards found in almost every other area, had decided to obey the orders of the Trades Union Congress General Council. In the special circumstances of this Union it was decided to accept Mr. Rogers on the Joint Strike Committee." Will you explain that?

Mr. Rogers: It explains itself, I think, does not it?

The General President: Would you like to read it yourself? (*Handed.*) Will you explain what it means?

Mr. Rogers: It means exactly what it says. The representative of the National Union of Railwaymen rang me up on the telephone and asked me if our men were out on strike. I said: "No, there are none of them out on strike; as it happens, there are none to come out on strike." Then he invited me to come up to the Trades Union Congress, which was being held that night. I went, and that resolution, apparently, was passed, the next day, inviting me to sit on the Strike Committee because of the fact they were of the opinion, rightly or wrongly—

The General President: What date was that?

Mr. Rogers: That would be May 4th, I think.

The General President: No, it was before that.

Mr. Rogers: I beg your pardon; I know definitely it was not. May 3rd was the day we held our meeting. I know for a positive fact that there was no meeting of the Strike Committee before that. It would be May 5th if I was to bet on it—two days after the midnight of May 3rd. I was invited on that Strike Committee, and I went—it was May 5th, and I was invited on May 6th.

The General President: Do you want us to believe this: A great strike was impending from May 1st, and you had

your Councils of Action in Newcastle and you took no action from May 1st until May 5th to get into business?

Mr. Rogers: There was no Council of Action formed in Newcastle until May 5th, and that Council of Action was simply the very Union of which we are members who turned themselves into a Trades Union Congress for the purpose of the Strike; they turned themselves into a Council of Action that was formed on the night of May 5th. Whether you believe me or not, that is up to you; I hope the members of the Executive will believe me whether you do or not, that I did not attempt to take any part, did not see anyone, nor meet anyone, until after our meeting on May 3rd. I went home about eight or nine or ten o'clock that night. I saw no one that night; and some time during the next day the N.U.R. representative rang me up and asked me to attend the Trades Union Congress meeting which was being held that night. I went. It was either May 5th or 6th. I will say it was May 5th—I will give you the benefit of the doubt—when I attended the meeting of the Strike Committee. Up to that time I had nothing to do with it at all.

The General President: On May 3rd you attended a meeting in South Shields and you advocated a strike, and you did not think it was worth your while to ring up Head Office to inquire whether you were doing right or wrong?

Mr. Rogers: Surely that is a question for the meeting to decide. I am only one of the Officials out of sixteen who attended that meeting.

The General President: Never mind, I am asking you to account for your conduct. The others will account for theirs. Answer for yourself.

Mr. Rogers: I do not suppose it struck me at all.

The General President: You never thought?

Mr. Rogers: I do not know whether it was suggested in the discussion. I cannot remember it exactly.

The General President: You never thought it was worth your while? Now, I sent a telegram.

Mr. Rogers: The Minutes of the meeting prove it. I cannot remember whether I suggested it or not.

The General President: Did you have any telephone message from Liverpool?

Mr. Rogers: When?

The General President: Between May 3rd and May 5th.

Mr. Rogers: No.

The General President : Are you sure?

Mr. Rogers : Certainly.

The General President : If I were to produce the telephone records for which charges have been made showing that there was a telephone communication between the Liverpool Central Branch and yourself, would you say that was untrue?

Mr. Rogers : Between Liverpool and myself? Yes, I would say it was untrue.

The General President : Do not make me say what I did not say—between the Liverpool Branch and the Newcastle Branch?

Mr. Rogers : As far as my knowledge goes, from May 3rd to May 5th—Monday was the 3rd, until Wednesday—as far as I know there was no communication whatever between the two Branches.

The General President : Was there any after the 3rd?

Mr. Rogers : Yes, certainly, after I was suspended.

The General President : Before you were suspended?

Mr. Rogers : There might have been. I will not say definitely there was or was not.

The General President : You will not swear there was?

Mr. Rogers : No, I will not swear it.

The General President : Will you tell us, as far as you can remember, who it was spoke to you on the 'phone, and what was the purport of the conversation between Liverpool and Newcastle?

Mr. Rogers : If anyone spoke to me on the 'phone it would be because—is that a message from Liverpool to Newcastle?

The General President : Yes, to Newcastle.

Mr. Rogers : I should imagine it would be Mr. McVey.

The General President : What did he say?

Mr. Rogers : What did he say then?

The General President : Yes.

Mr. Rogers : At that conversation?

The General President : Yes,

Mr. Rogers: I could not tell you exactly, because the conversation—

The General President: Did he ring up simply to say, "It is a fine day" or, "It is a wet day"?

Mr. Rogers: We were talking about the situation. It would be talking about the situation.

The General President: That is what I want to know. What did he say about the situation?

Mr. Rogers: What did Mr. McVey say about the situation?

The General President: Yes.

Mr. Rogers: He said the Officials in Liverpool had been suspended.

The General President: I want to get down just what he said.

Mr. Rogers: I cannot swear to what he said, but the conversation would be naturally about the general situation of the Union as it was.

The General President: Am I right in saying this, that it was on the situation of the strike? That is to say, they were taking part in it, and he wanted to know just what you were doing. Is that right?

Mr. Rogers: Probably that would be it.

The General President: That is all I have to ask you. Now, Mr. Johnson. Do you deny that statement which has been read out?

Mr. Johnson: What statement is that?

The General President: What I read out to Rogers. Your name was mentioned all over the place.

Mr. Johnson: I will get the situation from the first. I was at the meeting on Monday at Shields. On Tuesday I went down to the Tyne Tees boats, which were being discharged by blackleg labour. I went on board the "Bernicia" on Monday, and they asked me what they had to do. I told them I could not give any instructions as we had had none from the Head Office, but we were having a meeting at Shields at three o'clock in the afternoon, and that I would come down between eight and nine in the morning and visit the ships and let them know the position. The position was that we believed, on account of the lack of instructions from Head Office we were to abide by the T.U.C. decision.

The General President: Will you repeat that? I did not quite get it.

Mr. Johnson: Owing to lack of instructions from Head Office I could not tell them anything; I said that there was a meeting at Shields at three o'clock in the afternoon, and I should come down at eight o'clock in the morning, and let them know the decision that we had come to. The decision was to abide by the T.U.C. decision on the reports of the week-end papers, which mentioned that sea transport was included—which was never denied by anyone. I went aboard to tell them the true position, that we had come to that decision, and advised them to give their notice in, also on account of the boats being discharged by blackleg labour. The other two boats I went aboard of; they were on provisional notice to the Tyne Tees people. They asked me what they had to do. I said, "There is some talk about the ships getting away." I told them they would have to abide by their agreement, and go to sea in the ship as their agreements were not terminated. That was the "Dunston" and the "New Minister." At four o'clock in the afternoon the "New Minister's" men did not agree with my decision. They came to Mr. Rogers and asked what they had to do, and Mr. Rogers advised them to go in the ship. There was also a report made about me in regard to the "Bamborough," which is a deliberate lie. I think I know where the information came from.

The General President: I have never mentioned the "Bamborough."

Mr. Johnson: You did in a letter to me.

The General President: I have not mentioned it to-day.

Mr. Johnson: No, not to-day. I did attempt to withdraw the men from the Tyne Tees boats, which were being discharged by blackleg labour. In the German seamen's strike I had to go to the different organisations for their support, and when they had come for my support was I not bound to give it to them when there was blackleg labour introduced? There was a statement made to me about the German seamen's strike, that the members of the different organisations had been paid for what they had done. It is a deliberate lie. The members of the organisations—the N.U.R. and the General and Municipal Workers—never got a halfpenny for giving us their support. With regard to the "Alistruther," she never came to Newcastle to sign on; she went to South Shields. With regard to the "Lenfield," she came later; and it was me who saw the Captain, not Mr. Willis; and I told the Captain that there were pickets—they were not our pickets—and that there was likely to be trouble if they attempted to sign on. The Captain decided not to sign on then, but to sign on the next day, and the men who got the jobs all went into the ship.

The General President: Do you know Mr. Mason?

Mr. Johnson: Yes, I know him.

The General President: Did you have any conversation with Mr. Mason during the Strike?

Mr. Johnson: No.

The General President: Not a word?

Mr. Johnson: No, not one word.

The General President: He says that you went to him and begged him to take back the crew of the "Bernicia."

Mr. Johnson: During the Strike?

The General President: Yes.

Mr. Johnson: I never saw Mr. Mason during the Strike.

The General President: When the Strike had been declared off?

Mr. Johnson: Yes.

The General President: When it was declared off did you go to Mr. Mason and beg of him to take the men back?

Mr. Johnson: No, I did not beg of him. I asked him.

The General President: Do not fence with the question.

Mr. Johnson: I am not fencing.

The General President: You are, when I said did you speak to him and you said "No."

Mr. Johnson: You said during the Strike, and I said "No." I saw him after the Strike, and I appealed to him to reinstate these men, which he refused to do.

The General President: But you did have a talk with Mr. Mason?

Mr. Johnson: Yes, after this Strike.

The General President: Did you tell him that if he would take those men back you would resign your position in the Union?

Mr. Johnson: I told him I was quite willing to put myself in the same position as those men, provided he took them back. He threatened me, and I said, when he threatened me, "I

will not do anything; I will leave it for you to do"—which was to get me imprisoned and fetch me down in the gutter.

The General President: But did you have a conversation with him?

Mr. Johnson: Yes, after the Strike.

The General President: Then you did ask him to take the men back and you would resign your job?

Mr. Johnson: No, I never mentioned the word "resign."

The General President: What do you mean by saying, "Putting yourself in the same position as the men"?

Mr. Johnson: That is what I did mean—I would put myself out of work if he would reinstate them.

The General President: Then you might as well have said that in one word as in half-a-dozen. Now, did you have any pickets?

Mr. Johnson: No.

The General President: Never?

Mr. Johnson: No.

The General President: Did you go up to the Labour Party, or the Council of Action, or whatever you call it, and did you telephone up for more pickets?

Mr. Johnson: No.

The General President: Were not you along the "Bernicia" with pickets?

Mr. Johnson: No, never; and I will defy Mr. Mason, or anyone, to get 100 pickets in Newcastle, which was the statement he made.

The General President: There are plenty of men who do not belong to the Sailors' and Firemen's Union, and who were pickets.

Mr. Johnson: There were plenty of men picketing. There were some men who went up and reported as pickets who were not in the Union, and they came down to see me to see who was going to pay them.

The General President: Then there were pickets?

Mr. Johnson: Yes.

The General President: And they thought you were the paymaster of the pickets?

Mr. Johnson: Yes; but I did not associate myself with them.

The General President: They thought they had a claim on you?

Mr. Johnson: Yes, they thought that; but I did not appoint them.

The General President: But they came to you for the money?

Mr. Johnson: Yes, that is so.

The General President: Have you anything else you would like to say in your defence?

Mr. Johnson: I do not know that it is any use saying any more.

The General President: All right. Bring in Mr. Knight.

*(Mr. Knight entered the room.)*

The General President: You know Mr. Knight?

Mr. Johnson: Yes, I know Mr. Knight.

Mr. Rogers: That part of the charge has been admitted; is this necessary?

The General President: Leave the Chairman to carry on his duties. Now, Mr. Knight, you are a steward, I believe?

Mr. Knight: Yes.

The General President: And you have been in the "Bernicia" how long?

Mr. Knight: Ever since she went out.

The General President: How many years?

Mr. Knight: She has been out about five years; but I have been with the Company 21 years.

The General President: Did anyone ask you to come out on strike in Newcastle?

Mr. Knight: Yes.

The General President: Who were they?



Mr. Knight: Mr. Johnson.

The General President: Was Rogers anywhere about?

Mr. Knight: No, not at the time.

The General President: Was there anyone else brought out along with you?

Mr. Knight: The rest of the crew.

The General President: Have you been able to get a job since?

Mr. Knight: No.

The General President: Would you have left that ship if Johnson had not asked you to come out?

Mr. Knight: Certainly not.

The General President: Have you any question to ask him, Johnson or Rogers?

Mr. Johnson: I advised them to come out on account of the T.U.C. decision.

The General President: You did advise them?

Mr. Johnson: I am admitting that. I have admitted that all along, in regard to the "Bernicia."

The General President: You know what it means to that man, do not you?

Mr. Johnson: Well, I know what it has meant for them now.

The General President: Did not you know before?

Mr. Johnson: No, I did not.

The General President: You know what it means now?

Mr. Johnson: Yes. But he has been victimised?

The General President: Are you prepared to compensate him for his loss?

Mr. Johnson: I have not got the money to compensate them. At your instigation, or at Mr. Cathery's instigation, by your telegram, this man took proceedings against me.

The General President: He will be foolish if he does not.

Mr. Johnson: The opinion of the men is that when this man took proceedings against me they came and made a voluntary statement. I will read the statement.

The General President: Please do.

Mr. Johnson: When this man took proceedings against me—

The General President: He has not taken proceedings up to now.

Mr. Johnson: No, he has not, but he has had it in a Solicitor's hands. This is the statement: "We, the undersigned"—and this was voluntary, I did not ask them for it—"hereby certify that we were serving on board the s.s. 'Bernicia' up to the 4th May, 1926. The Delegate of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union, D. Johnson, came on board on Monday, 3/5/26, and we asked him for instructions regarding the Strike. He stated he could not give any as he had not received any from Head Office, but that there was a meeting at South Shields in the afternoon at three o'clock, and he would come down on Tuesday, the 4/5/26, between eight and nine and let them know the position. He came down and recommended that we should abide by the Trades Union Congress decision, but at the same time pointed out that he could not guarantee any payment on account of anyone terminating their employment. We came out quite voluntarily."

The General President: You think that statement is helpful to you?

Mr. Johnson: That is a matter of opinion.

The General President: Mr. Knight, did I advise you to take any action?

Mr. Knight: No.

The General President: Not up to the present.

Mr. Johnson: I will read the telegram to the Executive. I did not say that you had advised Mr. Knight.

The General President: I thought you did.

Mr. Johnson: This is the telegram: "No man to be entitled to lock-out pay," etc. (*reading down to the words*) "or called upon to cease work and lose their employment.— (Signed) CATHERY."

The General President: Why did you blame poor old Wilson?

Mr. Johnson: I suppose you are both in the same boat.

The General President: Tell us the date of that telegram.

Mr. Johnson: May 8th.

The General President: Do you know that on May 8th I was lying between life and death?

Mr. Johnson: I do not know all these facts. You did not write and let me know that.

The General President: Nobody ever told you?

Mr. Johnson: Yes, a man called Benfield told me.

The General President: He told you I was very ill?

Mr. Johnson: Yes, he did. He said you were very ill.

The General President: Then you did know?

Mr. Johnson: No, I did not, because I would not believe a word Benfield says.

The General President: He is a friend of yours now?

Mr. Johnson: No, he is not a pal of mine. I have always ignored him. He is no pal of mine.

The General President: Have you anything more to say?

Mr. Cathery: I took it upon myself—

Mr. Johnson: Excuse me, Mr. Cathery, the telegram was sent to Mr. Wilson; evidently it must have been handed to you and you replied to it.

Mr. Cathery: That is quite beside the mark. The only ship's crew that I advised to do the same, because if you take the bread and butter away from a lot of poor innocent women and children when you had no authority whatever to do so, and in the face of the resolution of this Executive Meeting whereby we had to act according to our Constitution and take a ballot vote of the members before we could order any strike—you like to go right against that resolution, then the best thing I could advise any ship's crew to do in the circumstances was to take action against you, or any other person who authorised the men to "down tools."

The General President: It is perfectly true you have robbed that man Knight of his job; you have put him in straitened circumstances, on the streets, and you can do nothing for him. Tell me this: Who paid your wages up till the time you were suspended?

Mr. Johnson : The members of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union paid my wages.

The General President : The National Union of Seamen?

Mr. Johnson : Yes, the National Union of Seamen paid my wages.

The General President : Will you explain why you did not pay attention to the Union that paid your wages, instead of to the T.U.C.?

Mr. Johnson : The T.U.C. has not paid my wages; the Seamen's Union has.

The General President : You are not so dull as all that. You are not a stupid man. We know perfectly well that the T.U.C. did not pay your wages. But why did you take instructions from those who did not pay your wages and disregard those who did?

Mr. Johnson : I did not take instructions from them. They never gave me any instructions.

The General President : What do you mean?

Mr. Johnson : I took my instructions from the District Committee.

The General President : Did not you tell the crew that you were going to carry out the instructions of the T.U.C.?

Mr. Johnson : I advised them to carry them out.

The General President : That is, you advised the men——

Mr. Johnson : On the Press reports.

The General President : That is to say, you advised the men to carry out the instructions of the T.U.C., but your own Union, which was providing you with bread and butter, did not count. Now, you cannot say that is right. Do not you think the Union paid you good wages?

Mr. Johnson : They paid me a fair wage, I admit that; and I have had to work for all I have got.

The General President : I hope so. Is there anything more you would like to say?

Mr. Johnson : Are there any questions you would like me to answer?

The General President : No, I think I have asked all the questions I want to. All right, you can retire, please.

Mr. Gunning : I should like to ask one question before they retire. I would like to ask Mr. Rogers if Mr. Walsh was present at the meeting of May 3rd.

Mr. Rogers : Yes.

Mr. Gunning : Did he tell you anything at all about what happened at the Executive Meeting that he was present at previous to that?

Mr. Rogers : I have already answered that question to the Chairman.

Mr. Gunning : I cannot remember having heard it.

Mr. Rogers : To the effect that Mr. Walsh did say something about the resolution, and the President has already got the Minutes of our meeting, and the exact words are there. I cannot say what the exact words were.

Mr. Gunning : My point was this. Mr. Rogers told you that he had received no instructions from Head Office. Mr. Walsh would be representing Head Office as a District Secretary, and as such, give the instructions that were ordered by the Executive Council; and, if so, why did not he carry those out?

Mr. Martin : I should like to ask what it was that actuated him, after hearing Mr. Walsh's statement about the Executive Council's decision—why he accepted a position on the Strike Committee?

Mr. Rogers : Simply as an adviser about seamen's affairs. I could not do anything else. I had no power.

Mr. Martin : After hearing what Mr. Walsh said to you, or the instructions given as from the Executive Council. We were not concerned with the Strike Committee.

Mr. Rogers : The first reason why I went there was that I thought it would be an advantage to our men by going there.

Mr. Martin : You thought so?

Mr. Rogers : Yes. As I mentioned about the "Alistruther," I went to get permission, and it was going there for them that they invited me on the Strike Committee.

Captain Tupper : You admit that on May 4th you got the circular from the Head Office, and on May 5th, in contravention of that circular, you joined the Strike Committee?

Mr. Rogers : Nothing in that circular says we should not be on the Strike Committee.

Captain Tupper : We were to have nothing to do with the Strike, therefore I do not see what right you had on the Strike Committee.

Mr. Rogers : That is your opinion.

The General President : You were on the Strike Committee.

Mr. Rogers : Yes.

The General President : Were you going around the county of Durham with Will Lawther in a motor-car?

Mr. Rogers : I say definitely, no.

The General President : You said you had taken him home one night.

Mr. Rogers : Yes, at one o'clock in the morning.

The General President : That was the only time?

Mr. Rogers : That was the only time he was ever in that car, or with me.

Mr. Doxford : Having been at this District Meeting, I should like to ask Mr. Rogers one question. Did Mr. Rogers join in the discussion before the vote was taken as to what the resolution should be, or not; did he say he did not care a damn what the rest of the delegates did, but he would declare a strike at twelve o'clock that night?

Mr. Rogers : I would much rather you read the Minutes of the meeting.

Mr. Doxford : Did you say that or not?

Mr. Rogers : You are asking me to say something about certain words I am not going to pin myself down to.

Mr. Doxford : You do not deny it.

Mr. Rogers : I do not deny it; I do not agree with it; the Minutes of the meeting are here and I shall not tie myself down to a particular word.

Mr. Doxford : I have never seen the shorthand notes; I do not know what is in them. Do you remember there was a talk about ringing up Headquarters?

Mr. Rogers : Yes.

Mr. Doxford : And it was said, I think by you, or if it was not you it was——

Mr. Rogers : Someone else.

Mr. Doxford : No; I have it in my mind the Secretary for South Shields—or one or other of you said, “ We will not bother about ringing up Headquarters to find out the state of affairs.” Also, do you remember me telling you as an Executive Member what was the resolution which had been already passed in April, that before there was a strike there had to be a ballot; and the question that went round was this : Yes, but we do not know it officially, therefore we are taking no notice of it.

Mr. Rogers : I think there was some of opinion like that. If I remember correctly, you were not at the meeting, were you?

Mr. Doxford : I raised that question myself. I said, “ Gentlemen, are you aware that the Executive passed a resolution for no strike—a ballot before a strike ”—and Mr. Walsh agreed with me from the Chair. That was the position.

Mr. Breckenridge : Did Mr. Rogers act contrary to the District Secretary’s advice on the North-East Coast?

Mr. Rogers : If I were to say “ No ” definitely it might be misleading. If I were to say “ Yes,” it might be misleading. The whole point is that there was no necessity to act in contradiction to anyone’s advice, because there was no one to give the advice.

Mr. Breckenridge : I asked you a straight question : Did you act contrary to the District Secretary’s instructions?

Mr. Rogers : I do not want to mislead you.

Mr. Breckenridge : Answer the question.

Mr. Rogers : Did I act contrary to the instructions of Mr. Walsh?

Mr. Breckenridge : Yes.

Mr. Rogers : That was that we had not to bring anyone out on strike?

Mr. Breckenridge : Yes.

Mr. Rogers : We did not bring anyone out on strike except the crew of the “ Bernicia.” This whole question hinges on the one ship, the s.s. “ Bernicia.”

Mr. Breckenridge : Did not Mr. Walsh convene a District Meeting and advise you of the decision of the Executive Council?

Mr. Rogers : Yes, on May 3rd.

Mr. Breckenridge : And you acted contrary to your District Secretary, who was the mouthpiece for that district to this Executive Council?

Mr. Rogers : In so far as the " Bernicia " is concerned ; we are taking the blame of that.

Mr. Breckenridge : Is it a fact that you were advised, contrary to the Executive Council's decision, to support the miners?

Mr. Rogers : Were we advised by Mr. Walsh?

Mr. Breckenridge : Yes.

Mr. Rogers : No, we were not advised by Mr. Walsh.

Mr. Johnson : I would like to point out that Mr. Rogers had nothing to do with the " Bernicia." It was I who took action in that matter.

The General President : I gave you a fair opportunity to say all you had to say—

Mr. Johnson : I think that is quite correct.

Mr. Flett : Does Mr. Rogers want to make us believe that, having been an Official as long as he has been, yet he lost sight of the fact that he was acting contrary to the Constitution of the Organisation? Does he want us to believe he is so ignorant—apart from any instructions from Head Office until a matter of a few days from the Executive arriving at their decision—?

Mr. Rogers : Ten days.

Mr. Flett : Do you mean to say that you, a Branch Official, ought not to have known that you were acting contrary to the Constitution of your Organisation? Can I have a clear answer to that? There should be no difficulty in giving it.

Mr. Rogers : Did I, as a Branch Official for so many years—I ought to have known it was contrary to the Constitution—my answer to that is this: That if the Constitution of this or any other Organisation as a Trade Union is going to force our men to work with blacklegs, then I am against the Constitution.

The General President : Anything else?

Mr. Flett : Are you sitting still on the Maritime Board?

Mr. Rogers : I have been for many years, but not since I was suspended.

Mr. Flett : Are you on good terms with the Shipping Federation?

Mr. Rogers : I think I am. Mr. Willis offered to come down in my support, but I said I would rather he did not, as he represented the Shipowners. I did not want a Shipowner here knocking about.



The General President : Any more questions? Then will you kindly retire?

Mr. Rogers : I do not want to be unfair, but you made a little bit of a case against me, and then when I replied to that you read out a lot more which I did not know you were going to bring forward. But I am sure I never made a statement; I answered questions. My statement is this, fellow Trade Unionists. Our position is quite clear; we are not bilking it at all. With regard to the statement about the O.M.S., you may think what you like, but voluntary labourers are blacklegs as far as I am concerned; I would not work with them; and if I could advise anyone else who wanted to refuse to work with them I would say so. I have been 15 years in this Organisation.

The General President : We do not want your opinion on working with blacklegs, or anything else. What we want to know is this : Did you, contrary to the Rules and Constitution, break them? That is what we want to know; and if you want to say anything on that point go on.

Mr. Rogers : If you will allow me five minutes I will finish with it altogether irrevocably. The whole position, as I have said, is that I have been on with the Organisation for 15 years. The only charge that has been laid against me in that period of time is the fact that perhaps I may have overstepped the mark, according to your opinions with regard to Trade Unionism. I have gone a little further than some people think I ought to have gone. Well, as I have said before, if breaking the Constitution of this Organisation is advising men to refuse to work with blacklegs, I am afraid I shall break it again to-morrow. That is the only part of the Constitution I have broken. We have had men who advised the crew of the "Bernicia," the only crew in connection with which there is a charge against us—the others are nothing and they are unsubstantiated—

The General President : This affidavit is on oath.

Mr. Rogers : I do not care anything about oaths. I am denying it.

The General President : If that man has told a lie you are at liberty to bring an action against him for libel.

Mr. Rogers : I am making a statement. My statement is as good as his. I do not care whether it is on 20 oaths or not. The only charge is the one charge of the "Bernicia," backing that charge up. I have given you the case of the "Hadrian," where exactly the same thing happened. It was worse; they took nine days' pay before they booked up; the other men took nine days' pay off the shipowners; and as soon as the ship touched the quay they came up here and got their fares to Newcastle Head Office. I consider that those two cases are practically on a par. If we did wrong, surely someone else has

done wrong; if they did right, surely we must have done right. There is no difference in the two things, except that one crew took nine days' pay for doing nothing—at any rate, not doing their ordinary day's labour, and then they packed up and left the owners in the lurch. Our men did not. They gave in 24 hours' notice to finish their employment in a proper, orthodox manner. I consider that the charges Johnson and I are brought here upon are too small for a Trade Union Executive of your character really to take much notice of. The only charge is that we have overstepped the Trade Union ideal that possibly you may have been looking at at the moment of the resolution. We thought that in ten days there could have been a ballot taken possibly of the Organisation. Instead of that, we know nothing; we are kept in the dark; and as Secretary of the Newcastle Branch, the information I received on that position was nil; therefore, we were entitled under the circumstances of a similar character to use our own opinions. I am not begging anything. I have always stuck by my own opinions, and I hope I shall always carry on in the same way. If you do not follow out the wishes of the General President, who said at the beginning unless I seriously alter the position he would practically demand my dismissal—if you gentlemen follow out that opinion, I cannot help it. I do not think there is any member of this Executive or Official of the Head Office who can say that during my 15 years I have not worked consistently and conscientiously for the good of the Organisation. This is my first supposed slip. Mr. Johnson has been for a number of years similar. I could not wish to work with a better colleague; he is a good, honest, consistent worker. We lifted a Branch from £13 a week up to £50 a week, and you have the figures upstairs. That is my case, and that is Mr. Johnson's case.

The General President : I think you will admit you have had a fair hearing.

Mr. Rogers : The Executive have heard all I have got to say.

The General President : Are you receiving £2 a week from the T.U.C.?

Mr. Rogers : I have never received one farthing from the Trades Union Congress, neither has Johnson, so far as I am aware.

The General President : Have you received £2 a week from the T.U.C., Mr. Johnson?

Mr. Johnson : I have never received a copper from the T.U.C. or any other body.

*(Mr. Rogers and Mr. Johnson withdrew.)*

The General President : Now, Gentlemen, you have heard the evidence, and you have heard the two defendants. Now we have

to weigh up their evidence. To me there is not a shadow of doubt but that those two gentlemen, and more especially Rogers, deliberately and wilfully broke the Rules and Constitution of the Union. I do not think there is any shadow of doubt about that. On the one hand, we have the sworn affidavit of a man who knows what it is to make an oath; and as I pointed out to Mr. Rogers, if those statements are untrue in that affidavit he has a remedy, and that is to take to a Law Court the man who swore the affidavit and prove whether it is true or not. Now, Rogers's evidence, to my mind, was a shuffling business from beginning to end. He would not give a straight answer to a straight question at any time. The other man was, in my opinion, imprudently swayed; he was the victim of the other fellow. That is quite apparent. But nevertheless, victim as he was of Rogers, he did great damage in depriving the man Knight of his employment—and not only Knight but several other men.

Now, Trade Union Officials may be very good up to a point; but when it comes to depriving men of their bread and butter in an unconstitutional manner, they have no right to do that—none whatever. (Hear, hear.) But that is what they did. Now, Rogers says he is a member of the Union. When I heard of that it was news to me, because Rogers is not a seafaring man, and never has been. He is a moulder, I think, by trade, and has never been to sea in his life. The other man, Johnson, is a sailor. Now, it is quite evident from what has transpired that the case of Rogers must be dealt with in a very severe manner, so severe that I am of the opinion the case cannot be met without expulsion from the Union entirely.

In the case of Johnson, he has been more the victim of Rogers than anything else. I think three months' suspension as a member of the Union and the loss of his appointment ought to fit his case. Now, Johnson might have saved himself if he, when he found he was wrong, had come along and said, "Well, I did a foolish thing and I was wrong, and I throw myself on the mercy of the Executive Council." If a man does that, there is room to consider his case leniently. But when they come along with defiance right up to the twelfth hour, then I say no consideration should or could be shown to such men—none whatever.

I want your views. I think Rogers ought to go out of the Union for ever. He is no good to the Union. He is a dangerous man. You heard me ask whether he was going about the county of Durham in a motor-car; he said, "No"; he said only on one occasion did he ride in the car taking Will Lawther to his home. Now, I am informed that during nearly the whole of the time he was racing over the county of Durham in that car. Apparently it belongs to him. He is very fortunate to be able to run a motor-car on £5 12s. 6d. a week. That is better than some of you can do, anyhow. But I want you to make that distinction between Rogers and Johnson. I think Rogers is a dangerous man, and is not a fit and proper person to be a member of this Union, much less an Official. I shall be glad to have your views.

Mr. Tarbitten : I should like to enlighten the Council a little as to what had happened after the General Strike was cried off, when you were lying on your death-bed, as we thought, and you were practically a gone man. My instructions were to take charge of the North-East Coast, which I did with Ockleton. A meeting was organised in Newcastle by Rogers. We have an Executive member present who was at that meeting. I think you should know some of the actions of that man Rogers, which naturally embittered me, as having been a seaman from the time I was a boy of 14 years of age, to be called a blackleg by a scallywag of a shore worker. He said that Mr. Wilson was holding hole-and-corner meetings at week-ends; that he, Rogers, had brought more money into the Union than Wilson had. That he, Rogers, had started the Newcastle Branch when it was down and out, and had had no assistance, and now, when there was nothing doing, the President was wasting money by sending two men up. That it was the chance Wilson had been waiting for for years to get at him because he was a Socialist and did not agree with Mr. Wilson's policy; and if a member of the Executive Council or Annual General Meeting got up to speak he was told to sit down by Wilson. We were "scabs" and blacklegs of the first degree by going up and taking these men's jobs. He also said Wilson had been working dirty for years; that Wilson was always preaching to study economy in the Branches but was spending money at Head Office just as he liked. That the ballot *re* the General Treasurer had been a faked ballot, and there was too much of the Wilson family about it.

These statements were supported by several men. After the meeting Ockleton and myself got in touch with several of the men and found they were anywhere from one to two years in arrears, and these men were asked to roll up to the meeting and chase us out of the Tyne. They gave me 24 hours to make up my mind to get out of the Tyne. I told them right there and then my mind was already made up and that I was there to remain on the Tyne. I do not like to speak against an Official, but certainly this Council ought to take a strong stand against Rogers, because we cannot shout the odds outside about men not being seamen when we have men like Rogers, who has never been a seaman, holding a seaman's position; and the abuse he levelled against the President was simply shocking.

With regard to Johnson, I want to give him a little sympathy, because while I was working Newcastle, Johnson, with all his faults and what he had done during the Strike, stood by me loyally; he never interrupted at one meeting and he carried out his duty conscientiously. I do agree with the President that these two men should be dealt with separately, and I think there should be a certain amount of sympathy extended to Johnson. But with regard to the other man, Rogers, we should expel him from the Organisation altogether.

Mr. Breckenridge : I want to associate myself with what Mr. Tarbitten has said. I have known Johnson for a number of years and the good work he did on the Clyde, especially with

regard to the Anchor boats. I think the man has been misled. I have sympathy with anyone who has been misled by any responsible Official of the Union, and I would ask you to deal leniently with Johnson because he has been an earnest and enthusiastic worker on behalf of the Union.

The General President : We will deal with Rogers first. What decision shall we impose in the case of Rogers?

Mr. Allen : I move that Rogers be expelled at once from the Union.

Mr. Mitchell : I will second that.

The General President : The resolution is that in the case of Rogers—he is not a seaman, and he has acted unconstitutionally and carried on his opposition right up to the last minute—under those circumstances the Council are of the opinion that he is not a fit and proper person to be a member or an Official, and under those circumstances we expel him from the Union. Is there any amendment to that? Then, those in favour of the expulsion of Rogers from the Union put up your hands.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	...	...	32
Against	...	...	...	...	...	...	0

The General President : The resolution is carried unanimously. Now with regard to Johnson. What are your views?

Mr. Higgins : I think we ought to give a little leniency to Johnson; in fact, all the leniency we can give to him. He was a good man at Glasgow and a terror to the hooligans of Shinwell.

The General President : I am in favour of that. But I do not think you can do less than suspend him for three months—that is, from the Union, not from his job. His job is filled; understand that; there is no vacancy. Mr. Cathery has suggested that in the case of Johnson we dismiss him as a Union Official but do not suspend him from the Union. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Flett : I was going to move on similar lines to those Mr. Cathery has outlined.

Mr. Cathery : I cannot move it; I only made a suggestion to the President.

Mr. Lang : I beg to second the motion moved by Mr. Flett.

The General President : It has been moved by Mr. Flett and seconded by Mr. Peter Lang, that Johnson be dismissed from his position—it has been already filled, I may tell you—but that he

be allowed to remain a member. We do not suspend him from membership. Is there any amendment? Then, those in favour put up your hands.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	36
Against	...	...	...	...	0

The General President : That is carried unanimously.

### EXAMINATION OF MR. WALSH.

*Mr. Thomas Walsh called in.*

The General President : Now, Mr. Walsh, you are called here to explain your conduct in connection with the General Strike. It is alleged against you that on May 3rd you convened a meeting at South Shields of the Officials of the Union, and that at that meeting, although you knew, as a member of this Council, what determination the Council had arrived at—that is, that there would be no strike without a ballot—you, holding the responsible position of District Secretary, did not give any guidance to that meeting at all. As a matter of fact, I am told that Rogers practically ran the meeting.

Now, some say there was a resolution passed. Others say there was no resolution passed; that it was a kind of informal talk and a resolution was suggested but was never properly put to the meeting, and that you told them there were no instructions from Head Office. Well, in your case there was no necessity to be any instructions; because you were a member of the Council, being a District Secretary. You helped to carry the resolution; you never protested at any period that I know of; the resolution was carried; you attended the Conference called by the T.U.C., and therefore you were fully informed as to our intentions and also on the Rules and Constitution. You knew very well, better than any man I know in the Organisation, that in 1912, in consequence of our calling the men out on strike—not an unofficial strike—the Trustees and Mr. Cathery and myself were sued for £15,000 because we did not take a ballot of the members before calling them out on strike. You knew that. No one knew better than you that that was the position. It had been explained at the Executive Meetings in your presence that we could not in any circumstances call out the men on strike before a ballot had been taken. Now, knowing all that, it is difficult for me to understand—it is difficult for us to understand—how an old and experienced man like yourself could have allowed a meeting of Officials to take such an important decision without warning them of the consequences of it, without endeavouring to guide those men on the right road. I myself cannot imagine a more serious offence than that. There is more responsibility, in my opinion, lays on your shoulders in that connection than on anyone else's.

Now, you said you never had any instructions from Head Office—at least, you would say you heard nothing. I do know

that some of the Delegates at that Conference received a circular letter from the Head Office, dated May 2nd, which was a Sunday, giving full instructions as to how each and every Official had to act. In addition to that, I was on the telephone myself while that meeting was sitting at South Shields, and a young clerk named Barker took my message; that message was conveyed to you but not to the meeting. I cannot understand under what circumstances you allowed those Delegates to get the impression that you were devoid of information, that you had no instructions, and how you allowed that resolution to be passed. If those facts as I have stated them are true, I express the opinion that you are not a fit and proper person to hold the position of a District Secretary. You must have known, being a member of the Maritime Board, what was the consequence that was likely to follow through such conduct. You must have known it meant the scrapping of the Maritime Board; you must have known that it meant the scrapping of all agreements; and if we went into the Strike you ought to have known that it would have meant the total depletion of our funds in the same manner as has occurred to all Unions, the Transport Workers in particular; and instead of meeting here to-day to listen to what you or anyone else had to say the Union would have been a thing of the past, and no meeting would have been possible to have been held, because there would have been no money left to hold a meeting with. I consider that those are very serious things, and the Council would be pleased to have your explanation.

Mr. Walsh: You want my explanation now?

The General President: Yes.

Mr. Walsh: Mr. President and Gentlemen, I object, in the first place, to the manner in which the case has been placed before you. But I will waive that point. You have not produced any proof at all, not the slightest, that I have done any of these things that are said. Who is the man that accuses me of having done these things? Where is he? It is a rumour which has been reported. Is that the line of action that I have to defend? Is that the line of action you are going to take? But I frankly say here and now that if I were guilty of the things that are imputed to me I do not deserve to be not only a District Secretary or an Official of the Union, but a member of the Union at all. Because, though I am an old Official—old in years and old in service—that should be no palliative to any crime I commit; rather it should make the offence tell more heavily against me. Because what could be forgiven in a younger and less experienced Official should not be forgiven in regard to me. But you wrote me a letter, sir, in which you asked me to answer the three points that you gave. I answered those three points categorically; and the first point was—I do not know whether the Executive have heard the letter—

The General President: You can read it if you want it read.

Mr. Walsh: I would like it read in my own defence,

The General President : Then it will be read.

Mr. Walsh : I can give you the gist of the letter. I had to answer three points. The first was that, being a District Secretary and knowing what had taken place at the Executive Meeting, and knowing also that I should have known what had actually happened in 1912, my answer to it was this : " I have yours of the 3rd instant, for which I thank you, and as you suggest I will answer the points one by one. In No. 1 there is nothing to answer here, as I freely admit that, as District Secretary, I not only knew of the resolution by the Executive but actually voted for it. I am also well aware of the action taken by Shinwell and company in 1912 and 1913. Therefore No. 1 is merely a statement of fact ; it is not a charge. You do not charge me with being a District Secretary, there is no offence in that, I hope.

The second was that I held a meeting, this much-talked-of District meeting, and at that meeting I had not told the men anything about the Strike ; that I had been asked if I had any information, and I said " No." Fortunately, there are persons here present who were at that meeting and know that what I am saying is true.

No. 2 : This is a definite charge and has to be met very fully. You will remember when the Executive Committee attended the meeting of the Trades Union Executives at the Memorial Hall on the morning before the Strike you did not attend the meeting held at St. George's Hall on the morning of that day, and we decided that Mr. Henson should be our spokesman. You will also remember that at the meeting of the Executive only very short speeches were made by the Chairman, Mr. Thomas, and, I think, Mr. Bevin, and we adjourned between that time and seven o'clock that evening ; there were several adjournments, but no decisive action, no decision arrived at. Mr. Henson then informed me that I, with the other Delegates, had to return to our respective Districts. I asked Mr. Henson if he had seen you and if there were any further instructions. He said he had seen you but you gave him no further instructions. I left London by the last train on Friday night and arrived in Shields on Saturday. I am labouring this point because of the statement in the charge that I pointed out to the meeting that I had received no instructions from Head Office. This was in answer to a question asked by one of the Delegates at the District meeting as to whether I had received further instructions—that is to say, one of the Delegates got up and said : " Since the meeting of the Executive in the Memorial Hall, have you had any instructions from London?" I said, " No." I had not any, had I?

Now, with regard to the District meeting itself. Rule 24 says that a District Committee meeting shall be called once a month if necessary, and surely if it is necessary to call a District Committee meeting at all it is on the eve of a General Strike in which we are likely to be implicated. Therefore the calling of the meeting was simply in accordance with the Rule. What took place at that meeting was this. I took the Chair, and I did not leave the room at any time during the meeting, which lasted about one and a half hours. The statement that Rogers practically ran the meeting is not true. I have been too long an Official of the Union to



allow Rogers or anyone else to run a meeting for which I am in part responsible. As a matter of fact, Rogers had less to say than the majority of the other Delegates. You have also been misinformed as to his acting for the Communist Party. No Official in this district has opposed the Communist Party so strongly or so successfully as Rogers; and it is due to him almost entirely that the Communist element here was defeated during the unofficial strike. After telling the meeting the result of the voting for the General Treasurership, and after the discussion thereon, I explained fully the proceedings at the Executive Council meeting and the resolution passed by that body re a Strike. One or two of the Delegates commented unfavourably on the resolution passed by the Executive Council and on myself personally for having voted for it, and they were of opinion that we should have thrown in our lot with the T.U.C. In my reply I stated that the Executive Council had two things in mind when they passed the resolution—and this bears on what the President has been saying—first, the Rule says that before a General Strike can be declared a vote of the members on shore at the time must be taken. Otherwise we might have a repetition of 1912, when action was taken against the Head Office Officials for paying strike pay during a sympathetic strike. I distinctly told them that. Second, the Executive Council were satisfied that if we took part in an unconstitutional strike we would lose the Maritime Board and all the benefits we got from it, not the least being P.C.5. I also said, apart from these two considerations, consider how it would affect us locally; that is, that we had a large number of our men on the dole, and the moment we declared a General Strike all those men would be deprived of benefit. I am satisfied that nearly every Official at the meeting agreed with me, and the events of the the next few days showed that I was correct. Nevertheless, a round robin was signed by the Officials present that we should, not would, throw in our lot with the other Transport Workers, etc. I am also satisfied that this was taken as a pious expression by all the Delegates present. My last words to them were: You must not call any man out on strike, as such action is entirely out of order. The circular letters that you spoke of were received by the Officials here, a few, I believe on Monday night and the others on Tuesday or Wednesday; and in no case, as far as I know, were they departed from.

I think the best way to answer the third point is to let you know what happened after the General Strike was declared. The third point was that I took no steps to prevent the General Strike being effective as far as our men were concerned. On Tuesday, May 4th, I arrived at the District Office, South Shields, early. About nine o'clock I had a call on the telephone from the Superintendent of one of the leading shipping offices at Newcastle asking me if our men were coming out on strike and to let them know the exact position. I replied that a ballot of the members was being taken, and until the result became known our men were carrying on as usual. He asked if this was authoritative and if he could tell the other shipowners. I said, "Yes." A few minutes later the Labour Exchange rang up and asked practically the same question. Murray answered the 'phone and gave the same reply that I had given to the Newcastle shipowner. I got on the 'phone to

Emms, at Sunderland, and he informed me things were working normally, that no ships were hung up and he was taking no notice of the resolution of the District Committee. I also 'phoned Johnson at Hartlepool; he answered the same as Emms had done. I then went to North Shields and saw Graham, and I got from him an assurance that there would be no calling out of the men as far as he was concerned. I then 'phoned to Middlesbrough and was informed by the Delegate that he had called a meeting of the men and they had turned down the District Committee's resolution. I told him he had no right to call a meeting of the men, as the matter had been settled by the Executive Council and their instructions had to be carried out. In the afternoon of the same day the "Shields Gazette" reporter 'phoned—he did call personally, but the published account in the paper is what was given over the 'phone—he called and was given an interview which was published in the evening paper. I have the paper with me. On Wednesday, May 5th, a member of the crew of the s.s. "Hadrian" called and asked if we were officially on strike. I said "No; who called you out?" He said, "The Bo'sun." I said, "You go back and tell the other members of the crew that they have to carry on until the ballot is declared."

I went to Newcastle the next day and found that the crew of the "Bernicia" or the "Hadrian" (I am not sure which, but it was one of the two) had refused to work because blacklegs were discharging or loading the cargo. Members of the crew stated that while they were in London they refused to work with blacklegs and they were told at St. George's Hall that they did quite right. The action of those men was in accordance with your circular, and I did not interfere. You wired me on May 6th asking if it was true I was advising men to go on strike, and I answered you at once that the report was untrue. All your telegrams were answered as soon as I got them.

The best answer to the three points, I think, is the fact that no man had been called out on strike on the North-East Coast, to my knowledge, no ships have been held up, nor has there been any untoward incidents beyond what I have mentioned. The income of the District has remained normal, and if there has been any loss to the Union, either of money or of prestige, it has not been through the action of the Officials on the North-East Coast. That is the letter I sent to the President. I thought that statement would have been in your hands long ago and would have saved me from reading it.

But I wanted to say that there is no truth at all in the allegations which have been made, or, if there is any truth, it is a modicum of truth which makes the lie originally a great deal worse than it would otherwise be. I would appeal to men who have held official positions, or are holding them, that a District Secretary's position is not always a bed of roses. If you are dealing with about twenty men or more—I have had to deal with thirty in some districts—all with different opinions, different views, and different temperaments, you have got to be very, very careful how you handle those men to get anything like harmony in your district. The District Secretary is practically in the same position as the General President, only in a lesser degree. The President

has to deal with all the Officials; the District Secretary has to deal with the men in his own district. He is handicapped in the respect that he has not the drastic powers that the General President has got. Therefore, when you get a meeting and you know that a certain portion of those Officials are up against one another, that you know this man is a Conservative and that man is a Liberal, and that other man is a Labour man, and yet another man is a Socialist—when you know they have all different views—the man in South Shields is continually growling about the pensioning of his members and not getting the money he should get, and so on—the same applies to Middlesbrough and to Hartlepool and to the other ports—when you have all these contending factors to deal with, I have always discovered—and, as the President has reminded me, I am an old Official and an old man, I have gained experience—that just the same as he himself has done on many occasions, and boasted about it, the best way when you get a meeting like that is to let them blow off their gas, and then they are afterwards friends again. I do not care what resolutions are passed at the district meetings, I do not care what they say they will do, except to take care that they do not do it. That is my duty. You cannot stop men from thinking or speaking; therefore if no action had been taken from Head Office, what would have happened? What have you lost on the North-East Coast in money or prestige? Nothing, in my opinion. There would not have been a word about this if it had not been for the Secretary at Middlesbrough sending up a report to the General President. As a matter of fact, there was no official report of that meeting, I took care of that; you have no official report of that meeting, therefore as far as the meeting was concerned there might have been no meeting at all. But immediately in the morning I took steps to see before anything could be done that the whole district was working normally, and I kept it working normally, as far as it was humanly possible, until I got the notice of suspension. Suspension means for me different from what it would mean to an honorary Secretary. I have a great many activities on the North-East Coast; I am Vice-Chairman of the Employers' and Employed Association, not a very revolutionary body, not likely to call men out on strike. I am also Vice-Chairman of the Co-Partnership Association; I am Chairman of the Dole Committee, and various other social and Trade Union activities. As soon as I was told I was suspended I had to stop all these things. The result is that in Newcastle or in Shields to-day the men who know me for what I am—when I tell them, "I am sorry I cannot attend your meetings because I have been suspended," they say, "Suspended?" "Yes, because I called the men out on strike." They say, "Nonsense, you did not call the men out on strike." I say, "That is what I am charged with." Then those men think there is something else; they think that I have been dabbling with the money or running away with the money; you will never get them to believe I was suspended for calling the men out on strike. Of course, the "Bolshies" say, "Serve you right"; the men I have fought say, "You are worse off even than if you had thrown in your lot with us."

That is my answer. Now, I have been a long time in the Union; I have been in charge of more districts than any District

Secretary in the room, and in charge of more Officials. I have never had a single complaint lodged against me; I have never known the General President or the General Secretary to send one letter of reproach for anything I have done. I have carried through some stunts, as the Finance Committee know—in Glasgow, in Manchester, in London here, and in South Shields. I have never had anything else against me personally, not the slightest thing. Another thing I want to impress on you is that for fifteen years, though I have had more Officials under me than anyone else, the Union has not lost a single penny-piece, not a copper, through the dishonesty or defalcation of any Official who has been working under me. That is something to be proud of.

The General President : I would not stretch that too far. I do not want to bring in extraneous matters, but I would advise you not to stretch that point.

Mr. Walsh : I am not stretching it; I am merely making it as a statement of fact; and when one is on one's defence anything one can say in one's defence he ought to be allowed to say. That is what I say. No man has accused me of being in that way inclined. Have I ever done anything against the decisions of the Executive Council? Who has carried out their mandates more loyally than I have, even though I have not agreed with them sometimes? But still they are the mandates of the Executive, and I have to carry them out. You have appointed me as a District Secretary; I am paid by you to do certain work, no matter what I think about what you do. If the resolutions are passed by you they are sacred to me and have to be carried out. That I have done in this case, and I am satisfied there would have been nothing about it if it had not been for the blunder of a man writing from Middlesbrough.

The General President : Let us get this case put on its feet properly. Mr. Walsh says if I accuse him of certain things I am to prove my case. I think I will make a very good job of that when I get to it, without much trouble. Mr. Walsh says he has been a long time a District Secretary. That, in my opinion, makes his offence worst of all. See what the Rule says : " District Committees.—A District Committee, composed of the respective Officials in each Branch in the British Isles only, shall meet once a month, if necessary, for the transaction of Union business. The expenses of each Committee shall be met proportionately by each Branch in the District from the funds of the Union. (2) The District Committee shall have power to deal only with the following questions affecting the Branches in the respective Districts, namely—Rates of Wages, Hours of Labour, Conditions of Agreement between Shipowners and Seamen, and to receive the reports of representatives of the District, and cause the same"—mark those words—" to be forwarded to Central Office." That is the Rule. " No District Committee shall have power to authorise any stoppage of work or strike without the sanction of the Executive Committee." I want you to fix that in your minds. Let us look at this job. Mr. Walsh has made a very plausible statement, but I am going to take that statement and dissect it, and I think I

shall prove to your satisfaction that the story told by Mr. Walsh will not hold water. First of all, it is admitted as common ground—we need not debate it—that Mr. Walsh knew the intention of this Council.

Mr. Walsh : I admit that.

The General President : That is not disputed. Very well. So whatever you did could not have been done in ignorance; it was done with the full knowledge of exactly what the position was. Now, on May 3rd a District meeting was convened at South Shields. It is not clear in my mind yet whether you were the Chairman or whether Rogers was the Chairman.

Mr. Walsh : I was the Chairman.

The General President : My information is that Rogers ran the meeting, not you; that he had all the say. He has admitted this afternoon that he said at that meeting they were going to strike in spite of the Executive Committee or anything else. I am going to ask this very important question : Why was I not supplied with a report of that meeting? I have further proof than on May 3rd, while the meeting was sitting at South Shields, I myself, ill as I was, was on the telephone to South Shields; Barker was the clerk who answered the telephone. You are supposed to have received the message from Barker. Whether you did or not I cannot tell, because I was not there. But I think I have got evidence here to prove that you did receive that message from me, and you never conveyed it to the meeting; you never told the meeting what I said. That does not look too good. Now, on May 3rd—

Mr. Walsh : Might I—

The General President : Now, Mr. Walsh, I kept very cool and calm while you made your statement; as a matter of courtesy I did that; and as a matter of courtesy you will extend to me the same consideration that I gave to you. If there are any points, make a note of them and you can bring them up later. On May 6th I wired you. I did not get the information for two or three days after the District meeting was held, so I could not say anything about it until I was furnished with the information. I wired you, "It is reported that you are advising men on the North-East Coast to strike. Kindly reply by wire as to whether this is true, as such is contrary to Executive Committee resolution and Union Constitution." You admit you got that?

Mr. Walsh : Certainly.

The General President : On the 11th I wired you—I could get no answer at all—"Please answer me the following question : Did you hold a District meeting of Officials on Monday, May 3rd, when a resolution was put forward, seconded, and carried, that in the absence of any instructions from Head Office our members should strike as from midnight on Monday in accordance with the order

of the General Council? Please furnish me with the name of the mover and seconder of the resolution." Up to this present moment you have never answered that telegram.

Mr. Walsh : That is wrong, I know.

The General President : You have never given me the names of the mover and seconder.

Mr. Walsh : Have I not explained in the telegram?

The General President : You have never given me the names. I asked you there : Please furnish me with the name of the mover and seconder of the resolution.

Mr. Walsh : I could not.

The General President : Up to the present time I have not had that, and that was May 11th. The meeting was held on May 3rd, therefore according to the Rule you contravened that important Rule on a very important subject. That should have been telegraphed to me, and not a letter sent. It was a matter of life and death for this Union and every man concerned, and I was left in ignorance as to whether those statements were true or untrue. Then, not being able to get a satisfactory reply, I had recourse to stronger measures. This is what I wired you on the 11th : " In consequence of your illegal action"—because I had no evidence to satisfy me whether it was true or untrue, and therefore I came to the conclusion that the information I had was true—"in breaking the Rules and Constitution at District meeting on Monday, May 3rd, I regret to say it is my duty as President to suspend you from acting as District Secretary or in any other official capacity forthwith. I hope you will acquiesce in my orders. Otherwise I shall be compelled to apply to the Courts to-day or to-morrow for an injunction to restrain you. This will cost much money and expense, whereas if you quietly obey our instructions such expense can be avoided. You must understand you have not to go near the office or interfere with the business of the Union pending the matter being dealt with by the Executive Council. Wire me that you acquiesce, otherwise I shall be compelled to act." I think before you replied you sent for Rogers to come to South Shields; you sent for the others. I wired that early in the morning because I wanted the injunction out that morning; I delayed all day taking action because I knew if I applied for the injunction it meant for you and the others from £150 to £200 in costs; and I gave you every latitude to answer. Then I had to wire again at 12.40 p.m. on the 11th, again giving you every chance. This is what I said : " You appear to be trying to avoid replying to my important telegram of this morning. I ask you again to telegraph me a full report of the Minutes of the District Meeting Monday, May 3rd. If you fail to do so it will put me to the necessity of moving the High Court at once. This will be a very serious matter, as the expense incurred will be considerable and those who lose will have

to bear the expenses. Make no mistake on that point. I am warning you before it is too late. Rest assured I will act promptly at that."

I am going to submit to the members of this Council, why could I not have a straightforward, honest reply to my telegram when I asked for a copy of the Minutes of the meeting? Remember to whom I am telegraphing—to you, Sir; you, the District Secretary, who, without me having to resort to telegrams, your plain and simple duty was on such an important issue to have sent a reply immediately, either saying it was true or it was untrue. If it was true, a copy of those Minutes ought to have been in my hands on the 11th—or on the 5th or 6th, if you like. But up to May 11th nothing came from you. Therefore I assumed that you were a guilty party, that you were in it as much as the others and you were trying to concoct some answer to what I had said.

Now, I wired you again on the 12th: "Regret your wire arrived too late. I wired and telephoned a number of times yesterday for your answer. Will endeavour in your case to mitigate the costs, which will be very considerable." I had already instructed the lawyers, and then at the last moment I had to see if I could call it off in order to save you any further expense. No thanks to you. I wired you again on the 12th—the Strike had been called off: "In view of the fact the Strike is declared off I have asked Counsel and Solicitors to stay all further proceedings re injunction, but your suspension stands good until I have Executive instructions. I hope you will adhere to my instructions. The damage done is almost irreparable."

Then I wrote you on July 3rd: "I have your letter of the 1st, in which you say that you thought the question of your suspension would have been dealt with by the Finance Committee." Just think of it, Mr. Walsh. You, an old District Secretary, running away with the idea that the Finance Committee could deal with such a great and important constitutional question as that. It is the Executive and not the Finance Committee. The matter was too serious for the Finance Committee to deal with; the Executive Committee, in my opinion, only could deal with it. With reference to the nature of the charges, they are as follows: (1) That you, being a District Secretary and having attended the Executive Committee meetings, were well aware of the fact that a resolution had been passed by that body impressing on everyone that no strike could take place without first taking a ballot vote of the members. There could be no misunderstanding on that point either by you or anyone else. Furthermore, you must have known that in 1912 and 1913, myself, Mr. Cathery, and the Trustees were sued for £15,000. (2) It is reported you convened a meeting of the North-East District Officials on May 4th, and from the material and report to hand it is not clear whether you or Rogers were the Chairman, but it would appear that Rogers was acting for the Communist Party, practically running the meeting. A resolution was submitted calling the men out on strike as from May 4th. Such a resolution should never have been submitted or acted upon. It was stated that you pointed out to the meeting that you had re-

ceived no instructions from Head Office, whereas, as a matter of fact, a circular letter was in the post on Sunday night, May 3rd, to all Branches informing them as to the action which should be taken. Many of the North-East Coast Officials received those circulars on Monday night. You cannot deny that.

Mr. Walsh : Yes, some of them did.

The General Secretary : Because I have letters from them where they say they received them on Monday evening.

Mr. Walsh : I have admitted that in my letter.

The General President : (3) There is also a charge that you did nothing to prevent the calling out of the men, and it was on account of this action I was compelled to act. I wired you to know exactly where you stood, and there was a great delay before I could get a satisfactory answer. I had to threaten you and others with an injunction and warn you of the consequences. This has compelled me to suspend yourself, Mr. Rogers and Mr. Murray. If you have any answer to make I would advise you take each point and draft a reply, copy of which you should let me have before the end of the week. You will get a summons to attend the Executive meeting.

On those facts, say what you like, you have been guilty of gross and wilful neglect of duty; and then you tell me in your letter that Mr. Rogers is "O.K.," that he is a man who is fighting the Communists. In the "Labour Monthly" of June, 1926, this appears: "Another unofficial representative welcomed"—that is, welcomed to the Strike Committee—"was James Rogers, the Regional Organiser of the North-East Coast for the Sailors' and Firemen's Union." I never knew we had appointed any Regional Organiser; I have no idea where they got that title from. "This Union, as well as another, have decided to take a ballot, but those Officials"—mark the words, not Rogers but all the Officials—"in this region and, as we afterwards found out, in almost every other area throughout the country have decided to obey the orders of the Trades Union General Council. In the special circumstances of this Union it was decided to accept Rogers on the Joint Strike Committee." Do you want this Council to understand that you, living there, did not know anything of the activities of Mr. Rogers?

Mr. Walsh : I do. I am not living in Newcastle.

The General President : That you did not know that Mr. Johnson and Mr. Rogers were appointing pickets calling the men out at Newcastle. You are in touch with the Shipping Federation?

Mr. Walsh : Yes.

The General President : You must have known that they were complaining of the conduct of those men. You say you knew nothing about it. If that is true, then, Mr. Walsh, your conduct as District Secretary left much to be desired. I think at such a time



as that the District Secretary should have had his ears and his eyes open and been watching what was going on. Prove my case, say you. I will prove it. Here is a man who was at the meeting, Mr. Doxford. Mr. Doxford warned the meeting of what was going on. Mr. Doxford has told us what did go on. So that so far as evidence and proof is concerned, there is plenty of it. I would like you to explain if you can why there was such unaccountable delay. Six whole days you were making up your mind which policy you would embrace—six whole days. You were a District Secretary, and for that time you did not know what answer to make to the General President. Then you come here as an injured person and you expect that will weigh with us. Gentlemen, I submit—Mr. Walsh, the facts are too much against your statement, far too much. Mr. Doxford, tell us what happened at that meeting.

Mr. Doxford: Somehow or other I do not attend District meetings as a rule, I do not think I have attended one for years; I did not know whether I had any right to be at the meeting, but I rang up Mr. Walsh from the other end of South Shields and I asked if he thought it advisable that I should come along. Mr. Walsh readily said, "Yes." I should get there about between three and half-past three. The meeting had been under way some time, I could not say how long, before I arrived. The discussion went on about whether there should be a strike or not a strike. During the meeting someone—I would not like to say who it was—asked if it was advisable to ring up headquarters and see what the situation was. I do not know whether it was Rogers or Murray, but certainly one of them—and they were taking a fairly active part in the meeting—said, "No, I do not think it is necessary; we will carry on as we are; we have no official information." Mr. Walsh and I both told them that the Executive had passed this resolution; and it was at once said, "We have no official information of that resolution of the Executive, therefore we are going to take no notice of it."

The first resolution, if I am correct—I am going by memory and I am open to correction—was, "That we cease work at twelve o'clock on May 3rd." That was watered down to this—again speaking as far as my memory will carry me—"That we cease work at twelve o'clock to-night, but in the event of official news coming from Headquarters we carry on as heretofore." That practically if there was a strike, immediately the information came the strike was declared off. Mr. Rogers—and there is no denying it—in a fairly loud voice said that he did not care a damn what the rest of the Delegates were going to do, in spite of any resolution—this was before the resolution was carried—he would certainly see that Newcastle came out on strike that night.

That is as far as I can carry the meeting. Of course, there was a discussion all round the show. Mr. Murray, as I understand, was appointed Minute Secretary, and Mr. Murray, I understand, has these Minutes in his possession. Why, I do not know. He was the Secretary of the South Shields Branch, and the meeting appointed him to be the Minuting Secretary, but there was a shorthand writer there, a young man who was taking a note, but in

whose possession they landed I do not know. But I gathered, rightly or wrongly, that Mr. Rogers was running the show. I must say candidly that he interrupted me once when I was speaking. I said to him, "Mr. Chairman." He said, "I am not Chairman." I said, "I beg your pardon; I thought you were." That is the remark I made, and you can take that for what it is worth. I regret very much the position that Mr. Walsh is in. I believe that Mr. Walsh has been a good and faithful servant of this Union. I honestly believe that; and I do not think there is a member here but who regrets the position he finds himself in. I think it was a moment of weakness. I think he was caught in a moment of weakness.

The General President : Is this as far as it affects Mr. Walsh?

Mr. Doxford : That is the position as far as I can put it. Mr. Walsh is open to ask me any questions, and I will answer him as fairly and as squarely as man can.

The General President : When Rogers said he did not care a damn what they did, he was going to pull the men out, did Mr. Walsh enter any protest?

Mr. Doxford : Not in my hearing. I never heard any protest from anyone.

Mr. Walsh : Are you satisfied that I heard that remark?

Mr. Doxford : No, I am not satisfied that you heard it at all.

Mr. Walsh : I did not hear anything of it. One of the charges was that I had not informed the meeting about this Executive resolution.

Mr. Doxford : That is not true, because I know you did. As far as the resolution of the Executive was concerned, you and I did tell the members.

Mr. Walsh : You are a witness for the prosecution, yet you say that is all right.

Mr. Doxford : I am not a witness for anything. Excuse me, I am a witness for neither the one side nor the other. I am here to state things as I heard them.

Mr. Walsh : Mr. Wilson called you to prove the statement.

Mr. Doxford : You could have called me equally well, and I should have given the same statement.

Mr. Walsh : Was Jack Barker taking notes all the time?

Mr. Doxford : Yes, I think so.

Mr. Walsh : Did you see me at any time get a telephone message?

Mr. Doxford : No; the only telephone message was answered by Rogers and it was with his own office in Newcastle.

Mr. Walsh : So that if Mr. Wilson 'phoned me while the meeting was in progress, and Barker took the message and gave it to me, it would have been in your presence?

Mr. Doxford : During my presence—that is, an hour and a half—you never received any communication that I know of.

The General President : Now, Mr. Walsh, you heard what I had to say.

Mr. Walsh : Yes. But I want to say distinctly that you are in error with regard to the telegrams. Your great complaint is that I was so long in answering. No one knows you better than I do; you can make a thing appear black if it is white, and white if it is black; you are much more able than I am at this sort of thing. But if you sent me a telegram asking me if I was calling out the men, I sent you back a telegram saying I was not.

The General President : Will you deal with the first telegram? I will give you the date—May 6th.

Mr. Walsh : Yes. That was not received until May 7th. It was handed in in London at 4.40 p.m., and I did not get it until I got to the office next day. It was not delivered in Shields until about nine o'clock the next morning.

The General President : The telegram will show what time it was delivered.

Mr. Walsh : I have the telegram here.

The General President : What time was it delivered?

Mr. Walsh : It was delivered at 8.36 a.m.

The General President : That was on the 6th.

Mr. Walsh : On the following morning, the 7th.

The General President : What does the telegram say, whether it was the 6th or the 7th?

Mr. Walsh : It says it was despatched from London at 4.40 p.m. on the 6th and was delivered at South Shields at 8.36 a.m. on the 7th. I got it the next morning. It says :

“ It is reported you are advising men on the North-East Coast to strike. Kindly reply by wire as to whether this is true as such is contrary to Executive resolution and Union Constitution.—HAVELOCK WILSON.”

The General President : The next is on the 11th.

Mr. Walsh : The answer to that went immediately :

“ No truth in statement that I am advising men to strike.  
—WALSH.”

That was despatched on the 7th. You say you got no answer.

The General President : No ; I believe such a wire did arrive.

Mr. Walsh : The next was the one you sent on the Saturday. I took it you accepted this all right. I sent you back an answer on the 7th, no truth in the statement, and I took it you accepted that, that I was telling you the truth. Then on the 8th you sent this :

“ Will you empower Finance Committee to pay money ”— that has nothing to do with it. That shows that you accepted the statement of mine as being true. Then on the 11th at 9.58 a.m. you write :

“ Walsh, Coronation Street, South Shields.—Please answer the following question : Did you hold a district meeting of Officials Monday, May 3rd, when a resolution was put forward, seconded and carried that in the absence of any instructions from Head Office our members should strike as from midnight Monday in accordance with the order of the General Council of the T.U.C. Please furnish me with the name of the mover and seconder of the resolution.”

The General President : Did you reply to that?

Mr. Walsh : Yes, at 11.41 it was despatched from South Shields. I verified it at Newcastle and it was despatched from Newcastle at 12.6.

Captain Davis : On the same day?

Mr. Walsh : Yes.

“ I did hold a district meeting of the Officials Monday, May 3rd, when the following resolution was unanimously agreed to (stop). In the opinion of the Officials of the North-East Coast District in case of the absence of instructions from Head Office we should throw in our lot with the other Transport Workers and cease work as from midnight to-night, Monday, in accordance to press reports of the T.U.C. (stop). This resolution was not moved or seconded, but was agreed to and signed by the whole of the seventeen Officials present.”

The General President : Why did not you send a copy of the Minutes of the District meeting?

Mr. Walsh : There were no Minutes. The shorthand writer was there : I took my own clerk up to the meeting so that he would get the salient points.

The General President : Why did not you send me the shorthand writer's notes? Well, we are up to the 11th now.

Mr. Walsh : My dear Wilson : if I were to send you every little trifling thing up to Head Office I should be bothering the life out of you.

The General President : Do you call that a trifling matter?

Mr. Walsh : A District Secretary's duty is to relieve the Head Office as much as possible. That is what I have done.

The General President : Let me clear that point up. I want to know from you, is it your opinion that it was such a trifling matter to have a meeting on May 3rd calling men on strike? You had a shorthand note of the proceedings, and they should have been in the hands of the General President immediately, should they not?

Mr. Walsh : Yes ; but——

The General President : Do you mean to tell me that it was not necessary?

Mr. Walsh : Because they could not carry it out, they could not carry out that resolution ; I pointed out to them that it was out of order.

The General President : We have had evidence to-day that it was carried out.

Mr. Walsh : Where?

The General President : Newcastle.

Mr. Walsh : Where is the evidence?

The General President : We have had it before us to-day, admitted by the two men themselves.

Mr. Walsh : It was not with my knowledge.

The General President : And you a District Secretary.

Mr. Walsh : Hang it all, in a case where you have eight Branches to look after and it is all done in a hurry you cannot be accountable for what every Branch does. I went to Newcastle and saw the men ; there were only two ships, the " Hadrian " and the other one belonging to the Tyne-Tees people, and the mate told me they came out because there was blackleg labour working the cargo ; and the men when in London came to the Head Office, and the Head Office Official told them, and there was a signed statement to that effect——

Mr. Cathery : Might I intervene at this point? Mr. Walsh says the men of the " Hadrian " came to the Head Office and the Head Office Official told them they were justified in leaving their ship because blacklegs were put on board of it. I say it is an

absolute lie. The first thing we knew about the "Hadrian," if I recollect rightly, was a letter we received from (I think it was) the Dockers' Union in which the Dockers' Union sent a man, one of the crew of the "Hadrian," up to this office saying that those men were standing by the ship all the time he was in London, but the company had arranged that the blacklegs that were working at Free Trade Wharf should be kept on the ship, to sleep on the ship, and the Dockers' pickets got hold of the men of the ship and advised them it was against the principles of Trade Unionism for those men to stop at their employment whilst blacklegs were housed on board the "Hadrian." I would have nothing to do with the man. I told him it was his own fault. Eventually they appealed to us again and we did consider the question, and we gave them their train fares down to the north of England. But they got nothing from this Head Office justifying their action if they should come out on strike.

Mr. Walsh: I am not saying the men told the truth. I am telling you what they said to me in Newcastle. A deputation came down from one of the boats, either the "Hadrian" or the other one, and asked me if we were on strike, and I said, "No, and you go back and tell your mates that until a ballot is declared there is no strike." Could it be more specific than that? Then the next day I saw the men at Newcastle and they said they had stopped work because blacklegs were discharging the cargo and putting cargo in. In that circular letter it says if the men do not like to go we cannot force them to go; and if they did not like to work with blacklegs, and they said it was recognised in London, it could not be wrong in South Shields or in Newcastle. That is the only—

The General President: Pardon me a moment. Did you hear of the "Alistruther" and the "Lenfield"? They tried to sign on at Newcastle and I think one of them signed on at South Shields. You as District Secretary ought to have known something about that.

Mr. Walsh: You said just now that the Shipping Federation Officials were put to a lot of inconvenience and trouble, and so on, and surely I should know. Clever as you expect a District Secretary to be, you do not expect him to know by intuition all that is in the minds of the Federation Officials. I get in touch with them as little as I can, unless it is my duty to see them on the Maritime Board or there is trouble with the men. But I do not court their company by a long chalk, and not one of them made any appeal to me; except one, and that was Mr. Gray, and I will tell that incident as it bears out my statement to you in regard to the steps I took to prevent any man coming out on strike. Mr. Gray came up and saw me the day before I was suspended, and he said, "We are having some trouble with the ships." I said, "What is the trouble?" He said, "We cannot get P.C.5." I said, "Why not?" He said, "The Delegate either will not or cannot get P.C.5, will not issue them." I said, "Just you sit here"—it was in my office—and I will soon put that right." I tried to find Murray, and I could not. I could not find the Delegates. Then I came back

and I said to this man, "Never mind, I will get the P.C.5's for you as soon as Murray comes back; he must be round the dam somewhere." He said, "The ship is waiting to sign on." I said, "Go and sign the ship without the P.C.5's." He said, "Will you be responsible for that?" I said, "Yes, do not hang up the ship just for P.C.5, the ship has got to sail." I think that proves that I was not wanting to call the men out; if I had been wanting to call them out I would not have said that.

Now, the telegram that you sent to me was :

"You appear to be trying to avoid replying to my important telegram of this morning. I ask you again to telegraph me a full report of the Minutes of the District meeting Monday, May 3rd. If you fail to do so it will put me to the necessity of moving the High Court at once. This will be a very serious matter, as the expense incurred will be considerable and those who lose will have to bear the expenses. Make no mistake on that point. I am warning you before it is too late. Rest assured I will act prompt at that."

I had replied to your other telegram before that. I replied to this, when you say I have not replied to your telegram of this morning, despatched at 11.41—all these are verified by the Post Office—

"In consequence of your illegal action in breaking rules and constitution at District meeting, Monday, May 3rd, I regret to say it is my duty as President to suspend you from action as Branch Secretary"—not District Secretary—

The General President : That is a clerical error.

Mr. Walsh : Yes.

"or in any other official capacity forthwith. I hope you will acquiesce in my orders, otherwise I shall be compelled to apply to the Courts to-day or to-morrow for an injunction to restrain you. This will cost much money and expense, whereas if you quietly obey my instructions such expense can be avoided. You must understand you have not to go near the office or interfere with the business of the National Union of Seamen pending the matter being dealt with by the Executive Council. Wire me that you acquiesce, otherwise I shall be compelled to act.—HAVELOCK WILSON."

I wired you back,

"Accept your conditions under protest."

There is no dispute about that being answered, because you admit in the next wire you have received an answer to it. I would like to ask you, Sir, because though you are a judge you ought to be an advocate for both sides, have I not carried out your instructions in that telegram?

The General President : To the best of my knowledge and belief you have never been near any Branch of the Union since the time I sent that wire.

Mr. Walsh : That is the whole of the telegrams that I answered. I say again that if you sent a telephone message through it never reached South Shields while that meeting was on ; I got no telephone message from you, and under no consideration if I got a telephone message from you at any time, even now, would I refuse to answer it or be afraid to.

The General President : Will you believe that Mr. Barker, the clerk, would tell a deliberate lie if he says he received a telephone message from me and he wrote it down and handed it to you—would you say that he was telling a deliberate falsehood?

Captain Griffiths : What time was that?

The General President : May 3rd, about five o'clock, I should think. I cannot tell you the time. How long did the meeting last?

Mr. Walsh : About one and a half hours.

The General President : When did it start?

Mr. Walsh : Half-past two.

Mr. Doxford : It was 25 minutes past three when I got there, and it lasted till about five o'clock.

The General President : Barker says he received the message, took it down, and handed it to you in writing.

Mr. Doxford : I think we went home by the half-past five ferry.

Mr. Walsh : No 'phone message came through for me.

Mr. Doxford : Not in my presence, anyway.

The General President : If he handed it to Walsh in writing you would not know.

Mr. Walsh : If Barker wrote that down and handed it up to me he could not have made the statement as to what it was, because I never saw it. Surely you will give me credit for having the courage of my convictions. I am not one to crawl away from a statement. If I have done anything wrong I will admit it willingly. Why should I hide myself because of the fear of the consequences? I would not do it. I honestly say I carried out my duties in that respect in a very difficult position indeed, and carried them out satisfactorily, more satisfactorily than at a great many other places where I have got praise and commendation from the Secretary and General President.



The General President : I want to ask you one important question again : Why was it that I could not have a reply to my wire until there was a meeting with Mr. Rogers, Mr. Murray and yourself at South Shields?

Mr. Walsh : I want to answer you that that is another misunderstanding. There was no meeting of Murray, Rogers and Walsh at South Shields or anywhere else. Mr. Rogers told me that he had received a telegram from you saying that he had gone to South Shields. The telegram read something like this : "I have been 'phoning and wiring you, but I find that you have gone to South Shields to hold a communication with Murray and Walsh. This looks very much like a conspiracy." But I said, "You have not been to South Shields." He said, "No." I said, "How did they get that information?" He said, "Someone in the office answered 'he has gone to South Shields.'" But Rogers at that time on that day, nor the next day, nor the next day, did not go near South Shields; and Murray, Rogers, and I did not meet, the three of us together, at the same time, until days after the three of us had been suspended.

The General President : Then he told a deliberate untruth to-day.

Mr. Walsh : Who, Rogers?

The General President : Yes. Because he has admitted that to-day; and the reason that I knew of it was that I rang up—not being able to get a reply to my wire—the Newcastle Branch; the 'phone was answered by his daughter, and I said, "Where is Mr. Rogers?" and she said, "He has gone to South Shields."

Mr. Walsh : That is right. But he had not.

The General President : It was two or three hours after that when Mr. Rogers replied, not from South Shields but from Newcastle.

Mr. Walsh : That is so.

The General President : It looked as though he had gone down to South Shields to consult with you and then went back to Newcastle and answered my wire so as to give it the appearance that he had not been in touch with you.

Mr. Walsh : I might point this out to you : What is more natural in the event of getting telegrams like that and threatening suspension than that the Branch Secretary should apply to his District Secretary and come up to see him?

The General President : Could he not do that on the 'phone?

Mr. Walsh : Nothing was more natural than that we should have a conference and call them together; but I say it did not happen. And if it did happen I should say, "He did come down,

but there is nothing in it." But he did not come down; and there was no concerted meeting at any time within two or three days after we had all been suspended.

The General President : I have said all I have to say. If any members of the Council would like to ask Mr. Walsh questions, now is your chance.

Mr. Cathery : Mr. Walsh has told us in his statement that at the meeting on May 3rd they took a vote with a round robin. That, I understand, means a ring is drawn and the men sign their names round this ring. Do not you think that in your official position, directly that resolution was passed it was your duty to communicate with this Head Office—the moment it was passed?

Mr. Walsh : No. If I had thought it was my duty to send a resolution, which was not really a resolution but merely the outcome of a conversation which would never be implemented—carried out—if I had to make you believe there was a lot of trouble when there was not; I would not do such a thing.

Mr. Mollan : Was your name amongst the signatories on this paper to this resolution that was passed?

Mr. Walsh : That I could not say. I believe it was. I signed at the bottom as Chairman, but I will not be sure of that. Possibly my name was not on the paper, but it might have been.

Mr. Gunning : Can I ask a question?

The General President : If you do not mind, we should prefer the questions to come from the lay members and not from the Officials—if you do not mind—because it looks to me like some degree of prejudice, and I would much prefer any questions to be put by the lay members and not by Officials.

Mr. Gunning : I was only going to say in fairness to Mr. Walsh that he ought to know it has been admitted that they called out the men of the "Bernicia."

The General President : I have told him that. Now, if any lay members want to ask Mr. Walsh any questions, now is their opportunity.

Mr. Dench : In your defence do you suggest that if these men called out the men of the "Bernicia" they did that without your knowledge or consent?

Mr. Walsh : If they were called out?

Mr. Dench : Yes.

Mr. Walsh : Yes; without my knowledge or consent.

Mr. Ash : I would like it to be understood that two of the deadliest enemies any men could possibly have who hold the views of the Communists are Mr. Walsh and Mr. Rogers.

The General President : Mr. Walsh has never been accused of having anything to do with the Communists.

Mr. Ash : I should like to make this statement : I have been to sea and I came home at the commencement of this, and that is why I have taken an active part—knowing very little about it and not being satisfied.

The General President : Is there any other member who wants to ask any questions? If not, then will you kindly retire for the time being, Mr. Walsh.

*(Mr. Walsh then withdrew.)*

#### EXAMINATION OF MR. MURRAY.

Mr. Murray was then called in.

The General President : Now, Mr. Murray, you are charged with Mr. Walsh, Mr. Rogers and Mr. Johnson with having provoked a strike and having been a party to bringing the men out on strike, and in consequence of that I was compelled to suspend you. You were at the meeting on May 3rd, you remember that?

Mr. Murray : Yes.

The General President : Who was in the Chair?

Mr. Murray : Mr. Walsh.

The General President : Who was the principal man at the meeting in promoting the strike fever?

Mr. Murray : Mr. Rogers.

The General President : Was there any resolution moved and seconded?

Mr. Murray : Yes.

The General President : Who moved it?

Mr. Murray : Well, there were two or three who moved it.

The General President : Have you a copy of the Minutes in your pocket? You may as well produce them now. You have the shorthand notes, they are the property of the Union.

Mr. Murray : I have not the shorthand notes. I sent you along typewritten copies.

The General President : Please hand me the Minutes and I will read them myself.

Mr. Murray : I have sent them along to you.

The General President : Have you got them?

Mr. Murray : I have only a hand-written copy myself.

The General President : Will you read it out? The Minutes are the test, because they will tell us truly what was said.

Mr. Murray : Mr. Walsh has a shorthand note of it.

The General President : Just read out the longhand notes that you have.

Mr. Murray :

" Minutes of District Meeting held at Unity Hall, South Shields, on Monday, May 3rd, 1926, at 2.15 p.m. Present : T. W. Walsh (Chairman), W. Graham, R. Wood, A. S. Armstrong, D. Johnson, F. Bentley, J. Gilroy, R. C. Jackson, G. Gray, J. Murray, McParlan, W. G. Emms, J. Rogers, E. D. Johnson, J. Doxford, E. J. Williams, A. Elsey. Mr. Walsh thanked all Officials and others for all they had done for him in connection with the election of a General Treasurer, and referred to the circular that had been sent to all Branches in connection with the election, in which it stated that the votes of the election were to be counted in the presence of the candidates. He then gave a lengthy account of the E.C. meeting and referred to the incident of ' the name of Havelock Wilson stinking on the N.E.C.,' and the conversation that had taken place at that meeting between Mr. Wilson and himself. (At this juncture Mr. Rogers received a telephone message and informed all present that the Trimmers had been stopped.) Mr. Walsh continued and stated that he had been informed by Mr. Cathery by 'phone that his presence would not be required at the counting of the votes, and he (Mr. Cathery) had received those instructions from Mr. J. H. Wilson. Mr. Walsh had also been informed that the votes would not be counted until Thursday; but upon his arrival at Head Office he found that the count was already proceeding, and Mr. Le Touzel was representing Mr. J. H. Wilson. Mr. Walsh stated that he had signed a document saying that he was satisfied with the way the votes had been counted. Since he had been advised to write with a view of having all the votes scrutinised. Mr. Elsey asked if a question could not be raised as to the numbers of votes cast and the membership of the Organisation, and contended it was not a correct ballot. Mr. Graham pointed out that he had seen envelopes in connection with the election being marked with a red letter T, others two T's, etc., etc. Mr. Walsh informed the meeting that he had mentioned the matter of the markings on the envelopes to Mr. Bellem. Mr. Murray asked why should the envelopes be marked at all. Mr. Emms stated he had seen the papers a week before he knew anything official about them, and one man had asked him where Wilson had got this No. 8 from. The man wrote to Head Office about it, but had received no reply. Mr. Emms also mentioned about

his own paper being marked, and said he strongly disapproved of any ballot papers being marked in any way. Mr. Rogers was of the opinion that all were not satisfied with the ballot. Mr. Walsh stated he was inclined to let the whole thing slip, but informed the meeting that he had been advised to write the E.C. and ask for a scrutiny of the votes. Mr. Elsey asked the Chairman his previous question, and was informed that he did not think a question could be raised on that point. Mr. Elsey mentioned the fact that up till that day he had not received a ballot paper, although his name had been sent to Head Office for one on two occasions. After further discussion the following resolution was agreed to unanimously: 'That the Officials of the North-East Coast District are not satisfied with the late ballot for the General Treasurer, and demand a re-scrutiny of the votes cast—not a re-count.' (Minute Secretary to forward above resolution to Head Office.) Mr. Murray then pointed out the rule re election of General Treasurer and read same. Mr. Doxford stated that he was of the opinion that if Head Office decided that Mr. Walsh should not get in, he certainly would not. Mr. Elsey stated that if the above resolution was sent to Head Office, no harm could be done by same, and stated that if this sort of thing got out amongst the members it would be a very serious matter. Mr. Gilroy: 'It is not the resolution in itself, it's the whole matter that comes of it.' A long discussion then took place re the General Strike, when the following resolution was carried unanimously, the same being signed by all officials present: 'In the opinion of the Officials of the N.E.C. District, in face of the absence of instructions from Head Office, we should throw in our lot with the other Transport Workers, and cease work as from midnight to-night (Monday), in accordance to Press reports of the T.U.C.' Mr. Walsh pointed out that it would be quite out of order for officials to call the men out on strike. After a general discussion the meeting closed at 5.30 p.m."

Mr. Doxford: I take exception to that being a correct record of the meeting or as being anything like a correct record of the meeting.

The General President: You say it is not?

Mr. Doxford: It never mentions me making any statement as to the Executive passing the resolution, and he makes a statement re the resolution of the Secretary. The only comment I made about the election of the Treasurer was this. He mentions Mr. Walsh saying he had signed a declaration accepting the way the votes had been counted. Mr. Walsh accepted the resolution; it was no good rushing your head against a stone wall, and the inference I wanted to convey was that the thing was closed. It is a remarkable thing that this copy does not contain any remarks I made about the Executive meeting. Can you explain how there is that exception? Can you explain the absence of Mr. Rogers' remarks that he did not care a damn for anyone there and he was going to call a strike at twelve o'clock?

Mr. Murray : Yes, I will say that is true.

The General President : Did he say that?

Mr. Murray : Just a moment. I must answer one at a time. You must understand I did not take the shorthand notes. You know who took them.

Mr. Doxford : Yes, Barker.

Mr. Murray : That is only a true copy of the shorthand notes. Mr. Walsh has the shorthand notes himself which I gave him when he asked for them.

The General President : Did you see Barker go out of the room to the telephone when the meeting was on and answer the telephone and then bring a note back of what was said and hand it to Mr. Walsh?

Mr. Murray : No, I do not remember that.

The General President : You did not see that?

Mr. Murray : No. You have to understand, Sir, that my office was upstairs and Mr. Walsh's office was downstairs, and I was not always in communication with them upstairs.

The General President : But this happened while the meeting was on. Now, Mr. Murray, was there a meeting in Shields—you remember me sending a telegram to you in which I demanded an immediate reply; I was a long time in getting it. I will read that out to you and you will check off my copy.

Mr. Murray : I have the telegrams here.

The General President : On May 6th I wired :

“ It is reported you are advising men on the North-East Coast to strike, kindly wire reply.”

You got that?

Mr. Murray : Yes. That was sent on May 6th, handed in in London at 3.36, received at the Post Office, South Shields, at 4.40 p.m. I did not receive that telegram until the next morning.

The General President : Then on May 11th there was a long one. Did you get that?

Mr. Murray : Yes, I got that. I replied to that.

The General President : On May 11th a further one :

“ Did you attend a meeting of the North-East Coast Officials on Monday, May 3rd, when a resolution was put forward, seconded and carried.”

Did you get that?

Mr. Murray : Yes, I got that; and you have got my reply to that, I take it.

The General President : Did you get another one on the 12th?

Mr. Murray : I got two on the 11th.

The General President :

“ In view of the fact the Strike is declared off I have asked Counsel and Solicitors to stay all further proceedings.”

You got that?

Mr. Murray : Yes, I got that.

The General President : Did you get another on the 12th :

“ Regret your wire arrived too late ”?

Mr. Murray : Yes; that was on the 12th. The other I got was on the 11th.

The General President : Did you see Rogers that day?

Mr. Murray : No.

The General President : Was he at South Shields?

Mr. Murray : No, not to my knowledge.

The General President : Is there anything you would like to say in mitigation of what has transpired? You were a Branch Secretary. You know the Rules, do you not?

Mr. Murray : I should do, Sir.

The General President : Do you know that when a District meeting is held a copy of the Minutes should be sent to the Head Office at once?

Mr. Murray : Quite correct.

The General President : Whose duty is it to send them?

Mr. Murray : The District Secretary's.

The General President : Do not you send any?

Mr. Murray : Not for the District meeting, I do not.

The General President : Are you aware that no Minutes were sent up?

Mr. Murray : Yes, I am quite aware of it.

The General President : Can you give us any explanation?

Mr. Murray : The instructions were not to send any up at all. As you know, I was supposed to send them ; it was put upon me as Minute Secretary to send up that very part with regard to the General Strike.

The General President : Who gave you instructions not to send them up?

Mr. Murray : Mr. Walsh.

The General President : So it was deliberately done by Mr. Walsh.

Mr. Murray : By giving me instruction he said, " I think the best thing is not to send them up, Jack "—so I did not send them.

The General President : You have been a good while in the Union, have you not?

Mr. Murray : Yes.

The General President : Do not you think it was very important when a meeting had been called to decide to call men out at midnight, twelve o'clock, and knowing full well the Rules of the Union that there should be no strike without a ballot?

Mr. Murray : That is correct.

The General President : Did not you think it was your duty as a loyal Official of the Union to communicate that fact to me?

Mr. Murray : Yes. Well, of course, we did not see those things at the time. But at the same time I should like to ask why we were not notified of the decision of the Executive Council which was held fourteen days previous to that meeting of ours at South Shields.

The General President : We have had ample evidence to-day that Mr. Walsh did warn the meeting of what the Executive Council had decided. Do you know that?

Mr. Murray : No, I do not know it. This is the first time I have known it outside.

The General President : It has been admitted here and it is in the Minutes.

Mr. Murray : It is not in the Minutes. I asked that question of Mr. Walsh, who was present at the Executive meeting : Surely you have something to tell us about the General Strike business? And Mr. Walsh's reply was that he could not tell us anything.



The General President : Do you remember a circular letter that was despatched from this office on May 2nd, and copies of which were received in South Shields and North Shields on May 3rd, giving full instructions to Officials and members what to do? Do you remember that?

Mr. Murray : No, I cannot say I remember that. What I remember is——

The General President : Now, Murray, do yourself justice.

Mr. Murray : I want to speak the truth.

The General President : Did not you get one?

Mr. Murray : Yes, I got one, and I have it here.

The General President : Why did you not manfully say so?

Mr. Murray : Yes, but I did not get it on May 2nd. It was not posted in London until May 3rd, and I got that on May 5th.

The General President : If you listen to me I will put you right. The circular was drafted on May 2nd, which was a Sunday——

Mr. Murray : May 1st according to this.

The General President : May 2nd. And posted on the Sunday, and some of the North-East Coast Officials received them on the Monday evening after your meeting had closed. Now, you say you got yours on May 4th.

Mr. Murray : On the 5th I got mine. Here is the postmark : "May 3; 12.45 a.m."—I believe it is—(*Document handed to the General President*)—it was supposed to be typed on May 1st.

The General President : On May 3rd it was posted.

Mr. Murray : Yes, midnight on the 3rd.

The General President : And it does not say when it was received?

Mr. Murray : No.

The General President : All the others on the North-East Coast got theirs on May 3rd.

Mr. Murray : I do not know about that.

The General President : But you got one.

Mr. Murray : Yes, after that business was on.

The General President : Will you read it? Tell us what is in that circular.

Mr. Murray :

“The National Sailors’ and Firemen’s Union of Great Britain and Ireland. St. George’s Hall, Westminster Bridge Road, London, S.E.1. May 1st, 1926.”

The General President : It was drafted on May 1st; that was a Saturday night.

Mr. Murray :

“Emergency Circular to Officials. Dear Sir,—I regret to inform you that a very serious crisis has arisen in connection with the Mining Dispute. The General Council of the Trades Union Congress have assumed full control, and all Unions affiliated to the Congress are expected to take action if required to do so by the Council. The probability of such action was discussed at our last Executive Meeting, when it was decided by a unanimous vote that we could not take part in such a dispute or call our members out on strike before first obtaining a ballot vote of our members who are at home. We are compelled to take this vote, otherwise the consequences may be serious, for if we started to pay out strike money without first taking the opinion of the members, any member could apply to the High Court and obtain an injunction to restrain us, and this, of course, would create a very awkward situation; so in order to avoid this, and acting strictly within the Constitution, I am issuing ballot papers forthwith. You will please bring this matter to the notice of all members who may be entitled to vote, and you will at once send up their names to Head Office, when ballot papers will be forwarded to them by return. We must not have any delay or otherwise other Trade Unions may think we are dodging the issue. There is no such intention in our minds, but it is important that we act in a Constitutional manner.—I am, yours faithfully, J. HAVELOCK WILSON, General President.”

The General President : That is clear and definite, is it not?

Mr. Murray : Yes.

The General President : Did you do anything on that?

Mr. Murray : I did before I received definite news on it. On the Tuesday morning I was rung up by the Manager of the Labour Exchange and asked if it was the fact our men were called out on strike, and I told him, “No, not so far as I knew.” He said, had I not seen what was in the Press on the night previous? I said, “Yes.” I also said, “We are having a ballot of our members and it would be foolish to call members out on strike before the ballot was taken.”

The General President : Did Mr. Walsh see that circular?

Mr. Murray : Yes.

Mr. McGhee : The circular he has just read?

The General President : Yes. Mr. Walsh saw that circular?

Mr. Murray : Yes. I pointed it out to him at the time I got it.

The General President : Did he take any action to counteract what had been done on the Monday when you declared for a strike?

Mr. Murray : Not so far as I know.

The General President : You are an Official and in the same office as Mr. Walsh—you knew what happened on the Monday.

Mr. Murray : Yes.

The General President : You got that two days later, according to what you have said. Did you have a talk about it? Did you decide to try and counteract what had been done?

Mr. Murray : In my position there was nothing to counteract. I had not advised anyone to strike or to cease work or anything else.

The General President : You know what the resolution on the Monday was?

Mr. Murray : Yes.

The General President : Did not you think that ought to be counteracted at once?

Mr. Murray : Yes.

The General President : Did you do anything you could?

Mr. Murray : Yes, to do the best I possibly could; but there was nothing to do in South Shields, because there was no one ordered to come out on strike.

The General President : Do you mean to suggest that you could pass that resolution on the Monday and they were pulling men out on strike at Newcastle on the Tuesday—do you mean to suggest that people did not generally get to know about it?

Mr. Murray : They probably knew about it before anyone was pulled out at Newcastle.

The General President : Now, Gentlemen, if you want to ask any questions will you please do so.

Captain Tupper : I do not want to ask any questions, but a statement has been made as to the validity of the ballot in the Minutes because those papers were marked.

The General President : The number of votes of men received, and they want to know who was No. 8. J. Havelock Wilson was No. 8, because he is the oldest member and founder of the Union.

Captain Davis : How many Officials were at the District meeting on that Monday?

Mr. Murray : Sixteen.

Captain Davis : And the whole of them were unanimous in their decision to throw in their lot with the T.U.C.?

Mr. Murray : Yes; each one signed their name to the resolution which Mr. Walsh also holds unless he has handed it over to you.

Mr. Doxford : That resolution is not as it was passed.

Mr. Murray : It is correct in the book, because I wrote it out before the shorthand notes were transcribed.

Mr. Doxford : Will you read it out. I want to clear this up. There was nothing as drastic as this.

The General President : Mr. Murray is not responsible for the shorthand notes or for their transcription.

Mr. Doxford : This is the resolution :

“ In the opinion of the Officials of the N.E.C. District, in face of the absence of instructions from Head Office, we should throw in our lot with the other Transport Workers, and cease work as from midnight.”

That part is correct, but there was also an addition which, as far as my memory goes, was as follows :—

“ But if word comes from Head Office to the effect that the ballot is passed by the Executive, from then the Strike is to be declared off.”

Mr. Murray : That is there.

Mr. Doxford : No, there is nothing in this about it.

Mr. Murray : Just a moment. Probably you read it differently from what I do : “ In the opinion of the Officials of the N.E.C. District, in face of the absence of instructions from Head Office”— it only means if we had any instructions we should act in accordance with them.

Mr. Doxford : I take it if the instructions came on the Tuesday, or Wednesday, or Thursday, or Friday, the Strike is off.

Mr. Murray : So it was, as far as I was concerned.

Mr. Doxford : It is not in the resolution.

Mr. Murray : No; that resolution was passed before we got the communication.

Mr. Doxford : That is all I want to say.

Captain Griffiths : How can they say there was no official information if the report is true that both the Executive members reported exactly what the Executive did?

The General President : Any other member?

Mr. McGhee : Did you have a meeting on the Monday?

Mr. Murray : A District meeting, yes.

Mr. McGhee : Mr. Walsh in the chair?

Mr. Murray : Yes.

Mr. McGhee : The full number of Officials signed their names to the resolution which was read out to them?

Mr. Murray : Yes.

Mr. McGhee : Did not you know, as an Official, that the Executive had already declared there would be no strike until a ballot was taken?

Mr. Murray : No, I did not know it.

Mr. McGhee : Did not Mr. Walsh tell you that?

Mr. Murray : He did not inform us of any such thing. I asked that question.

Mr. McGhee : Did you know Mr. Walsh was at the last Executive meeting?

Mr. Murray : Yes, I knew that. I asked him plainly : If you were at that Executive meeting you have to tell us something about what happened concerning the General Strike. He knew nothing. All he said was, he had his orders to go back to the District, and that is all we got.

Mr. Gunning : They seem to be talking of two Executive meetings. What Mr. Murray seems to imply is the Executive meeting that took place prior to the meeting at Farrington Hall.

The General President : Do not you get a copy of the meetings of the Executive Council?

Mr. Murray : Yes; but I never had a copy of the last one.

The General President : Why not?

Mr. Murray : I do not know.

The General President : The meeting was held on April 22nd. I am not speaking of the last meeting; the last meeting was held on the last day of April and the first day of May. But what about the Minutes of the meeting of April 22nd?

Mr. Murray : That is the one I am talking about; I never had them; honestly, I have never seen any Minutes of that meeting which was held fourteen days prior to May 3rd.

The General President : Did no one have a copy?

Mr. Murray : I never saw one.

A Delegate : They were not sent out.

The General President : Mr. Cathery, were the Minutes of April 22nd sent out?

Mr. Cathery : They were sent out, but it was some time after.

The General President : How long after? Mr. Cathery says they were not sent out before the General Strike occurred, so Mr. Murray would not be aware from the Minutes what happened. But you had Mr. Walsh supposed to be at the office every day; does not he tell you what goes on at the Executive Council?

Mr. McGhee : He was in the chair at the meeting.

The General President : Yes, I know; but Mr. Murray says that he did not hear Mr. Walsh say what had transpired.

Mr. Doxford : But I told them.

The General President : Mr. Doxford says that Mr. Walsh did explain. There is a conflict between them. You cannot tell whether a man hears or not. A man might be deaf. But, anyhow, we have evidence that Walsh did say it, according to Mr. Doxford.

Mr. Doxford : We both told them the resolution the Executive passed on April 22nd. We were the only two people who had the knowledge, and the expression of opinion was that they were not going to take anything verbal, they were going to have it from the Head Office. That is the reason that resolution was passed.

Mr. Martin : Did any of the other Officials attending that meeting on May 3rd have your circular letter?

The General President : Yes. The Monday was May 3rd. I have a letter from Mr. Emms, of Sunderland, who wrote to say he received that circular on his return from the South Shields meeting.

Mr. Martin : That was after the meeting.

The General President : But, of course, that does not fix Mr. Murray. Now, are there any other questions?

Captain Davies : I do not want to cross-examine unduly, but I think I might ask him this : Do you appreciate that having regard to the whole of the circumstances, the policy and the instructions of this Executive Council, in view of the industrial crisis, was a proper one in the interests of the members of this Union?

Mr. Murray : Yes.

The General President : Any other questions? Is there anything more you want to say?

Mr. Murray : No.

The General President : Because if you do you have your opportunity now. By the way, are you receiving any money from the T.U.C.?

Mr. Murray : Not a farthing. I have never applied for any and I do not intend to.

The General President : Thank you.

*(Mr. Murray then withdrew.)*

The General President : Now, Gentlemen, you have heard all the evidence, and it is for you now to decide what is to be done. I am amazed beyond measure that we are paying wages to Officials in this Union year after year, and they do not know their common duties to the Union. To my mind, Gentlemen, it is appalling. And the great surprise to me is after what we have heard that we have got any Union at all. (Hear, hear.)

A Delegate : That is true.

The General President : It is not in consequence of the help that I have had from such men. Here is Mr. Walsh, the District Secretary, not a youth by any means; he calls a meeting on May 3rd; he is as well-informed as any man in this crowd as to the position; he agrees with the policy; he never enters a word of protest. A meeting is called; it was his duty to enforce the orders of the Executive Council. (Hear, hear.) It was no one else's duty. And if he could not enforce the orders of the Executive at the meeting, his common duty was to retire and say, "You are out of order; I will not permit this; I vacate the chair, and I declare this meeting at an end." (Hear, hear.) That is what he ought to have done.

But what explanation have we had about the Minutes? Is Mr. Walsh going to tell me that he did not know it was his duty to send those important Minutes here at once? If it is true, then he is not fit to be a District Secretary, or anything else. What is his excuse? He did not want to worry me. I am getting letters of protest from the Shipowners threatening to sever their connection with our Organisation through not carrying out our contracts; worried to death over it on a bed of sickness; and I am trying to get information from men whose duty it was to

give it to me, and they did not do it. I say that is a bad, deplorable state of affairs; and it will take a lot, in my opinion, to justify such conduct. In those circumstances, as a warning to all District Secretaries, as a warning to all Branch Officials, as a warning to all Delegates, we have got to deal severely with a case of that kind. I am a fairly good-natured man—I hope so; at least, I have tried to be as good-natured as I can. But when it comes to the wrecking of the Union, then I burn with indignation and become sternly formidable and unmerciful. Because I know what it means. To destroy this Union means putting hundreds and thousands of men back to slavery; and any man who is guilty of that, in my opinion, is a traitor to our cause; and if it was my own brother I would just dispose of him as readily as I would dispose of anyone else. Those are my sentiments.

I think we have had the clearest evidence possible that Mr. Walsh is not fit to be a District Secretary. He has betrayed his trust. I do not want to be hard on Mr. Walsh; he is an old man; he is getting on in years; and I personally would like to show him every consideration. I think the merits of his case would be, in his position, to dismiss him from office and refer the matter to the Finance Committee as to whether any allowance should be made to him. As I have said, he is an old man. How he stands financially I do not know. Perhaps he is like all of us—not got much in reserve, if we have got anything at all. Therefore, taking into consideration those facts, I am inclined to be merciful in the direction of seeing that he does not suffer unduly. But I am certainly of the opinion that he is not fit to hold office. He would have been retiring this year in any event, if the resolution is passed at the Annual Meeting that Officials must retire at a certain age. I am prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt. There is one thing I will say for him. You have heard it, and it is that since the date of his suspension he has had the good sound common sense to leave things alone. I commend that to you, because it is so different from the others. The others have continued their misconduct right up to the present moment. Mr. Walsh loyally obeyed my telegram. Mr. Murray has done the same. (Hear, hear.)

Now with regard to Murray. My feeling against him was much the same as against Mr. Walsh and the others, but I am informed by those who have been over the district that he was more a victim of circumstances than anything else. I have heard that from men on whom I can rely—Mr. Tarbitten for one, who has been on the North-East Coast and who has made diligent inquiries, and he reports to me that in his opinion Mr. Murray was not so much to blame, although he was open to censure. Captain Davis has also been over the district, and he reports to me much in the same strain. Now, I rely on those reports because I know they come from two men who are not prejudiced either the one way or the other. Under those circumstances I would recommend leniency in the case of Mr. Murray. He has now been three months without wages; he is a man with a very large family—I believe he has ten children—and bearing that in mind, and not wanting to do an injustice, we might be considerate. He, like Walsh, from the time of his suspension has done



nothing; he has kept quiet. That is so different from the cases of Mr. Rogers and Mr. Johnson; they have been active persuading the men not to pay, doing all they could to interrupt meetings, calling meetings without any authority and then inviting our Officials there. The meetings are packed. There are interruptions at every turn. I say men who are guilty of that do not get much mercy from me. But I say in the cases of Walsh and Murray there is that to be said in their favour that they did not do that. Now, Gentlemen, it is for you to decide. What are your wishes?

Captain Davis: I have listened with great interest to you, Mr. President, and I quite agree with all you have said. Now, there is one thing I would like to ask you and the Executive to consider. Mr. Walsh has committed the crime of getting old, and I would respectfully submit to the Executive Council and to yourself that it would be an act of grace if we asked Mr. Walsh to tender his resignation and also submit his case to the Finance Committee. The very fact of his tendering his resignation would certainly help him socially, and in many other ways which I would be happy to subscribe to. (Hear, hear.) I submit that. Mind, of course, it is for you to decide; but I want you to bear that in mind during your deliberations as something perhaps that may not have occurred to you.

The General President: I would like to point out to you, Captain Davis, that I have suspended Mr. Walsh. That means his wages are stopped from the date of his suspension, provided it is approved by this Executive Council. If we ask Mr. Walsh to resign that is tantamount to saying that he has never been suspended, and therefore he is entitled to all his wages from the time I suspended him up to date. Furthermore, it is a reflection on myself; because if you say that he shall hand in his resignation, then that is against my judgment in suspending him.

Captain Davis: No. I would like to say that according to the evidence, which has been so overwhelming, that Mr. Walsh signed that document and threw in his lot with the T.U.C., it requires no words of mine or anyone else's to speak of that sort of conduct; but I do submit that if some way can be found of doing what I suggested it might be done. I hope that the Executive will endorse your action in this matter. After having endorsed it, perhaps we could arrive at a decision on the lines I have suggested.

The General President: I think we might meet it in this way. Perhaps some of you will correct me if I am wrong. First, I suggest a resolution endorsing my action as being justifiable and correct; and then, before you proceed to pass any sentence, say, "We call upon him to hand in his resignation on the understanding that his case will be referred to the Finance Committee for consideration."

Mr. McGhee: What age is he?

Mr. Doxford : Sixty-five.

The General President : Mr. Cathery tells me 60. I have known Tommy Walsh for 35 years, and he was an older man than I was when I was 35. I am 68 now, so I imagine he is still an older man than I am. However, the birth certificate could be got.

Mr. Doxford : You gave us the impression that there was a conspiracy amongst the three Officials concerned regarding these telegrams—the delay in answering them. What makes you think that?

The General President : The only thing I can say in reply to that is, you remember there was a great Strike on; you remember that the telegraph operators were working under very high pressure, and it is quite possible the delay in replying was largely due to the fact that the telegrams were not delivered for some hours after they were sent. That is quite possible, and I think it is reasonable to assume that is so.

Mr. T. Jones : I beg to move a resolution approving of the action of the General President in suspending Mr. Walsh under the circumstances.

Mr. Street : I will second the resolution.

The General President : Is there any amendment? If not, then I will put the resolution.

On a show of hands there voted :

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	35
Against	...	...	...	...	0

The General President : Then that resolution is carried unanimously.

Mr. Allen : I will move that the further consideration of Mr. Walsh's case be referred to the Finance Committee for them to deal with.

Mr. Ley formally seconded.

The General President : Will you also add the words : "And that sympathetic treatment be given to him in view of his long service and his age." (Agreed.) Is there any amendment? Then I will put the resolution with those words added.

On a show of hands there voted :

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	35
Against	...	...	...	...	0

The General President : Then that resolution is unanimously carried. Now we come to Murray.

Mr. McGhee : How long has he been in the service of the Union?

The General President : About 15 or 16 years.

Mr. Damm : Since 1911.

Mr. McGhee : Has he been a Secretary since that time?

The General President : Yes, nearly all the time.

Mr. Tarbitten : May I refer to one good feature with regard to Mr. Murray? When I went to the North-East Coast I found that Rogers had been receiving his wages for three weeks although suspended. Murray's wages were sent to his house, but Murray returned those wages to the Branch as a suspended Official. In the case of Rogers he accepted his wages. Therefore, I do hope that this Council will give every sympathy to Murray and go as far even as to reinstate him, from a Secretary to a Delegate. Do not forget that he has got ten children, and the man has suffered agony, so I appeal for him. (Hear, hear.)

The General President : What is the best for us to do in our endeavour to deal out justice with mercy?

Captain Tupper : Cannot we leave it to you?

The General President : No, certainly not. The first thing you would know was that Murray was one of my sycophants; and I think I have dealt out as many blows to Murray as anyone else in the Union when it was necessary. I will not have that said.

A Delegate : I would propose that Mr. Murray be reinstated in the circumstances.

The General President : I recommend that we pay him half wages from the time of his suspension and we give him a job in the Union. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Ley : But do not forget at the same time to give him one of your dressings down.

The General President : A vote of censure. What is your feeling on that?

Mr. Ash : My feeling is this. As I said before, when Murray was shoved up against it, very nearly to losing his job some years ago owing to things that happened, you want a very strong man on the dam at Shields. There is no one who knows anything about South Shields and Murray's position but will say he has filled the position of a strong man there. We shall want a strong man there in the future, perhaps more than we did in the past, and I hope you will give Murray a chance to carry on his job in Shields.

The General President : No; Murray will not go back to South Shields any more.

Mr. Ash : I am glad you will give him a chance to hold a position in the Union.

Mr. Doxford : I am glad you are treating Murray leniently, although I am giving evidence against him. But when he came into the room he seemed to have aged years in the last few weeks. He has had as big a fright as it is possible to give a man, and the Executive will be doing an act of kindness, which I do not think he will forget, in keeping him in the Union in some position. I endorse that proposed action.

The General President : I want you to understand that on no consideration would I have recommended such mercy if he had been guilty of what some of the others had been guilty of, and that is, pursuing their conduct to the end. (Hear, hear.) No mercy for them from me; they have to go through it, every one of them. The only man I will forgive is the one who says, "I am wrong; I throw myself on your mercy"; then I will, but not otherwise. That is my feeling. Then I take it that the recommendation is that we reinstate him in some other port, that we allow him half wages from the time of his suspension up to date, and that we censure him for his conduct. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Lang : I beg to move that.

Mr. Street formally seconded.

The General President : Is there any amendment? Then I will put that to the meeting.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For	...	...	...	...	...	...	35
Against	...	...	...	...	...	...	0

The General President : That resolution is carried unanimously.

#### CASE OF MR. PEARCE.

The General President : Where is Pearce? (*Mr. Pearce stood up.*) I did not know you were here or I would have had you out long ago.

Mr. Pearce : I was summoned here.

The General President : You are one of the offenders.

Mr. Pearce : That is right.

The General President : My attention ought to have been called to your presence, but I will say nothing now.

(*Mr. Walsh was again called in.*)

The General President : Now, Mr. Walsh, the Council has considered your case fully, and they have come to the conclusion to dismiss you from your position of District Secretary, but a further consideration of your case will take place by the Finance Committee to see what we can do in some other way. That is the decision in your case.

Mr. Walsh : When is that to date from—now?

The General President : From the time you were suspended. That is the decision of the Executive Council, and if you will take the advice of a friend you will say no more about it at the present moment.

Mr. Walsh : It is to go before the Finance Committee?

The General President : Yes.

Mr. Walsh : All right.

*(Mr. Walsh then withdrew.)*

*(Mr. Murray called in.)*

The General President : Mr. Murray, the Council is of the opinion that you are deserving of a very heavy vote of censure because you have not done your duty to the Union in the manner you should have done; but they have reasons to think that your offence was committed in ignorance. Furthermore, what has weighed with them very considerably is this, that since you were suspended you have caused no annoyance to the Union and you have carried out your instructions. The Council has decided that you will be censured; we will pay half your wages from the time of your suspension up to date; and I am to reinstate you as an Official at some other port. That is their decision.

Mr. Murray : Thank you, Mr. President, and Gentlemen all.

*(Mr. Murray then withdrew.)*

*(Mr. Rogers and Mr. Johnson were again called in.)*

The General President : Mr. Rogers, the Council has considered your case very fully, fairly and impartially, and they have come to the conclusion that you are to be expelled from the Union, and to have no further dealings with you in any shape or form. That is their decision. In your case, Mr. Johnson, they consider that your conduct was outrageous, but you are a seaman and they do not want to do you any injury in any shape or form. You are dismissed from office, but you are not suspended as a member—that is to say, you can go on as a member, but you can no longer hold office. That is their decision.

*(Mr. Rogers and Mr. Johnson then withdrew.)*

## CASE OF MR. PEARCE.

The General President : Now, Mr. Pearce, you ought to have been a culprit here, but you have been present and have behaved very decently. You, being a member of this Executive Council, went down to Tower Hill, and in combination with a number of Officials and members declared a strike. There could be no excuse for you doing that, because you were a member of the Executive which declared there would be no strike without a ballot. You became very active at Tower Hill on May 3rd; you constituted yourself Chairman of the Strike Committee; you issued passes and orders as the Chairman of the Strike Committee; you went to work with the others and pulled men out of ships, depriving men of their employment; and you must see now, if you did not see it before, that it was a crime, and a very serious crime; because scores of those poor men have been pulled out, strangers in the Port of London, and they had to get home the best way they could. Many of them had to sacrifice their stores. I would like you, if you would, to explain how and in what circumstances you were guilty of these offences.

Mr. Pearce : On this Strike business I was not anywhere near Tower Hill when the damage started and all ships were called out. I went round my own wharf to have a drink where we always go on strikes, and I was informed Mr. Reed wanted me. When I got there, there were Strike notices up in the window, and they asked me to take the Chair of a Strike Committee. I was not in favour of it at all. I had been in the Trade Union movement not long enough to know what it meant. I was pushed into the thing. As for sending orders, I did not go near a ship or send an order. There were people there writing, I have been informed since.

The General President : Please be frank and truthful. Do not hide anything. Throw yourself on the mercy of the Council.

Mr. Pearce : I do absolutely.

The General President : What you did was in ignorance of Trade Union principles and rules, was it?

Mr. Pearce : I do not say in ignorance.

The General President : I have copies if you want me to produce them—and I do not want to do it if I can help it—of cards signed by you as Chairman of the Strike Committee.

Mr. Pearce : Cards signed by me?

The General President : Yes, by you. It is your name, anyhow.

Mr. Pearce : It is not my signature; anyhow.

The General President : It looks very much like it; I have compared it with your own signature.

Mr. Pearce : There were cards written when I got over there, and given out,

Mr. Catherly : And there was a notice in the window signed by yourself,

Mr. Pearce : No, it was just a printed notice.

The General President : Your name was there.

Mr. Pearce : There was one taken down signed by George Reed and then they bunked mine up. I was at dinner at that time; I used to go home to dinner for about three hours.

The General President : You have not been much at Union meetings?

Mr. Pearce : No.

The General President : And you have not been much at Executive Council meetings.

Mr. Pearce : This is my third.

The General President : Therefore I can quite believe you did not know much about the job altogether.

Mr. Pearce : No.

The General President : I can believe that you went up there and everyone was excited and going to turn the world upside down, and you thought you might just as well have a hand in the job.

Mr. Pearce : No, I did not think so at all. They pulled me into it.

The General President : We are all old sailors, firemen and stewards here and old hands. You will do better if you say, "I was a stupid man to take part in anything of the kind."

Mr. Pearce : I knew that on the first day.

The General President : You plead guilty to the charges.

Mr. Pearce : I absolutely plead guilty.

The General President : And do you say, "Gentlemen, I throw myself on your mercy" ?

Mr. Pearce : Brother colleagues, I throw myself on your mercy, when you see how I was pulled into it; but as regards taking any action, it was only a rough-and-tumble; what I did was to keep the crowd from walking into the office at Wells Street, and the office was kept in order. But as for going near a ship, I never went near one.

The General President : Under those circumstances I recommend that the Council warn you that any more foolish conduct

like that will not be tolerated; but we will forgive you and let you carry on. That is what I advise.

Mr. Doxford : I will move that.

Mr. Lang formally seconded.

The General President : And that he be allowed to continue in his office as an Executive member. Have I your undertaking, Mr. Pearce, that your conduct in the future will be good?

Mr. Pearce : I will see to that myself. No more of this. But you have to consider I was working there for four days giving pints of beer away; I was on the stones; in fact, I was called up with the rest.

The General President : In the case of Mr. Pearce, as I have said, he has learned just what Trade Unionism really is, and his conduct is going to be satisfactory in the future. Under those circumstances we will not penalise him for mistakes which he regrets he committed. It has been moved that we say : All right, but do not commit such errors again. Those in favour signify in the usual manner.

Agreed.

#### MR. OSMER EXAMINED.

*(Mr. Osmer called in.)*

The General President : You are charged, Mr. Osmer, with conduct detrimental to this Union. You have given a lot of trouble at one time and another, and have written a number of foolish and abusive letters to myself and others. But the worst offence that you have committed in my opinion was endeavouring to form a rival Union last year in Cardiff. You started a rival Union and you ran it for about six weeks, which was the length of your span on earth as a new Union man, and you made a great fiasco of it. But during the time you were giving out the usual filthy abuse, saying that everyone connected with the National Union was a crook and a thief, and I was the biggest thief of the lot. You wrote a letter to the Marine Workers' Union advising that Mr. Shinwell should be sent down to Cardiff as there was a splendid opportunity of putting the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union out of existence. Do you remember that letter?

Mr. Osmer : I refuse to answer any of that until you have finished; then I have your own statement here which is, as I said in my letter to you, all Greek. This that you are raising at the present time has all been dealt with and finished with according to your own letters to me, which I apologised for, and the apology was accepted over twelve months ago.

The General President : It is not twelve months ago since it happened. Do you deny that you sent such a letter to Mr. Cotter?



Mr. Osmer : I deny nothing.

The General President : Then you admit it?

Mr. Osmer : Yes.

The General President : You admit you sent a letter to Mr. Cotter?

Mr. Osmer : Yes.

The General President : Do you admit that you invited Shinwell to go down there and help to form this Union to put us out of business?

Mr. Osmer : I do.

The General President : Then I charge you with acting detrimental to the interests of this Union. You have been a very troublesome man, and I am going to ask this Council to suspend you from taking any part in the business of the Union for a definite period.

Mr. Osmer : I have to read a reply and to read your own letters, and here are your own words. I want to remind you of the penalising that you did to me in reference to sending out throughout the Bristol Channel—unfortunately I did not get hold of it soon enough to make use of it—to every Branch that I was to be stopped at all costs from signing on any ship. You are quite well aware of that, I suppose.

The General President : I am not.

Mr. Osmer : But during the time I eventually got a ship and that was about May 5th. My daughter went down to pay my contributions, which she has done for years, but the contributions were refused. When she got home she sat down and wrote a letter to you in reference to the matter and this, Sir, is your reply :

“ Dear Madam,—I have your letter of the 7th inst. with regard to your father’s contributions. I have informed Mr. Jackson and others that if you tender these contributions they should be accepted.”

Now you are speaking about expulsion and all that appertains to it after the whole matter has been settled up, after receiving my apology and your letter in reply to it is here. Here is an answer again from Mr. Jackson, the Secretary, and this is his reply :

“ I have to-day received instructions from our President to accept contributions on your account.”

This was to my daughter on May 13th. That is a few of them. Now your next. This was on May 4th :

“ Mr. Osmer.—Dear Sir,—I am pleased to note in your letter you express regret for your past conduct. There was

certainly no justification for what you did. The best thing you can do it is to get a ship and to get off to sea. I will inform Mr. Tearle that you have expressed your regret and no impediment shall be put in the way of your obtaining employment."

This was on May 4th, 1925; there have been six Executive meetings since that date, therefore whatever I may have to say to you in connection with my conduct I do not suppose for a single moment that you have got the letter, or any other communication from me, on any action that ever I may have taken that I have not been justified and had some just cause for doing so.

The General President : Go on. Is that all you have to say?

Mr. Osmer : No, not by a long, long chalk. Therefore, the whole of the matter in reference to the present letters summoning me to attend this meeting is quite contrary to every Trade Union movement, to every straight or right-thinking man or any truthful man. Inasmuch as you had accepted the apology for what I am charged here with to-day over twelve months ago—to be frank, twelve months on May 4th last. Now you also say in your letter here you make some wilful charges in connection with the unofficial strike of last year. I may say here and now I had no part, I took no part in it, and I had nothing at all to do with the unofficial strike, either by meetings or otherwise. And any communications which I may have forwarded to you, or even what I may have had to say to a District Secretary or otherwise, I claim the right as a member of any Trade Union organisation, if an Official denies me the rights and privileges according to the rules, to deal with that matter in the best way that I may think possible. This is another of your letters which, of course, you knew at the same time you had written; you knew very well that I had done the very thing that these letters state, namely, that I made a request to the District Secretary, Mr. Tearle, for a meeting on May 11th and 12th. I suppose this may have something to do with it. That had been done and 30 or 40 members wanted that meeting. What it was for I do not suppose it would enlighten the members here if I told them; but it had nothing to do with the unofficial strike; it was not during the unofficial strike or anything appertaining to it. But I am going to go a little further, and I am going to say here and now that the whole of the rights and privileges that a seaman has had in connection with this Organisation were wiped off the map and out of existence by Officials of the Organisation at the last Annual Meeting, without a single Branch meeting being held for a member to have a voice in the matter at all. That is all I have to say at present.

The General President : You will not get another opportunity, so you had better make your full statement now.

Mr. Osmer : Whatever the decision is I am entirely in your hands until you have finished.

The General President : Now, Mr. Osmer, I have been wondering really whether you are in a right state of mind. You have

been a pest and a nuisance to this Union for the last two or three years. The reason why you have been a pest and a nuisance is due to the fact that you got drunk and lost your appointment as an Official, and you have come to the conclusion that by self-assertion, or any other means, you are going to be reinstated in an appointment. You never made a bigger mistake in your life. There are no appointments for men of your class. Quite recently you have been abusing all the Officials. You have been subjecting me to abuse also, which, however, is a matter of indifference to me, as I feel you are too puny for me to bother about. You are a perfect pest and a nuisance; you are not a legitimate seaman. You are a tout for a bookmaker; you are running about getting bets off sailors and firemen. If that allegation is true, you have no right to attend an Annual Meeting of our gathering, under any circumstances. You are a man of no substance, and your past conduct right up to date has been unsatisfactory and demoralising. I have told you what the charges are, and by the proofs received I think they are well-founded. We, therefore, do not want you in the Union. You are not fit to be a Union man. I am going to ask this Executive to expel you from the Union as a person who is not fit to be a member; and you can, unfortunately, go and do your worst as you did last year in misleading men, taking money by false pretences.

Mr. Osmer: I will make you withdraw that.

The General President: Taking money from men believing you were running a Union; it was only a bogus concern, and you never accounted for the money you got.

Mr. Osmer: That is a lie.

The General President: Have you ever published a balance-sheet? I am going to ask this Council to dismiss you as an undesirable person from this Union. That is all, you can retire now.

*(Mr. Osmer then withdrew.)*

The General President: That is Mr. Osmer, who is pestering my life out week after week, month after month, for an appointment, and all his opposition is to try and force the pace. I want to let everyone know I am the wrong man in the world to be forced. With kindness and persuasion I will go a long way; but do not try any force, or force will be met by force every time. The record of that man is a bad one. He is a tout for a bookmaker, and I was disgusted and surprised to find that he was allowed to have a walk-over in Cardiff. It would be disgusting and obnoxious to me to sit in the same room as that man, and I ask you under such circumstances to expel him.

Captain Davis: I think it only right, as a member of the Finance Committee, that I should tell the Executive Council something in connection with this. When Mr. Osmer came before the Finance Committee on a charge of attending a meeting at New-

port—that charge was levelled by the Secretary, Mr. Jackson, that this man had come to a District Meeting and made himself most objectionable, he struck a blow at the lustre of the Union generally, and the Branch in particular; and when I tell you here to-day that when Mr. Osmer came up I did not know then the strange mentality of this man; but I really believe, having had some long-continued acquaintance with him, that he ought to be relegated where he can do no harm to himself or anyone else. Seeing that he had been an Official I said to him, “I see, Mr. Osmer, you are coming to the Finance Committee?” He said, “Yes.” I said, “You know, to go to a meeting at Newport hopelessly intoxicated, where members are congregated together, and to lower and take away a certain amount of caste from this Union, is a crime, it is something which cannot easily be overlooked; but I do believe that if you go before Mr. Wilson and the Finance Committee”—because there is one thing I failed in, perhaps, I think it was sentiment—I said, “If you go in there and say to Mr. Wilson that you are sorry and you make an apology it will be perhaps all right.” But then I saw the strange mentality of the man. I could see there was something wrong with him. His demeanour was strange. Until the present juncture really I have taken him as a farce of a broad character, but there is nothing more impossible in my mind than that this Union should be represented by a man of that type. We have a clear duty not only to ourselves, but to the men we have the honour to represent; and I submit, having done so much with Mr. Osmer and promising to lend him my support in getting him reinstated, I must say the mentality of the man was such that one could not court his company any longer. Since then he stands here to-day as a man who has taken up an attitude diametrically opposed to this Union, and I respectfully submit to the Executive that he is not a fit man to represent the men of the sea, having regard to the whole of the circumstances.

Mr. Tearle: I think there has been a misunderstanding about Mr. Osmer having a walk-over in Cardiff. There were four nominations: Carter, Tincum, Roche, and Osmer. Carter and Tincum have gone to sea, therefore it fell upon Roche and Osmer to attend the Annual Meeting for Cardiff. A few weeks ago one of the members of the Cardiff Branch protested against Osmer being allowed to attend the meeting. I said I had nothing at all to do with Osmer being nominated, nor did I have anything to do with that. Being nominated with Roche, if they were elected they would have to attend; that went without saying.

Another thing about Mr. Osmer. After coming back from the North-East Coast I was met with a sheet of paper with about 12 names on it. It was handed to me by one of the Officials in the Cardiff Branch; about half of the names only were in financial benefit, so I put it in my pocket and said nothing more about it. The next day I was in conversation with the Master of a ship in my office when Osmer came in; I bounced him out again; then he bounced in again, and again he went out. Several people were waiting to come in. Then Osmer again came in; he said, “Mr. Tearle, I want a meeting.” I said, “What do you want a meeting for?”

He said, "A lot of men want a meeting." I said, "Is there anything I can do to help you?" He said, "No, we are going to have a meeting." I said, "You will have no meeting; you cannot come and demand a meeting like that; out you go, I have something else to do." So I put him out again, and he never returned. He stayed out that time. But I understand he has been going about causing a lot of trouble. Further, it has been said about him that he is taking bets. I do not think he is a fit and proper person to represent the seamen in the Cardiff Branch. He is an undesirable man from the standpoint of representing men, and I do not think he is "5½d. to the 1s." That is how I look at him. I have not treated him seriously; and I think the Executive Council would be wise in their judgment if they show definitely that Osmer is not only an unfit and improper person to represent the Cardiff members at this Executive Council, but is a most undesirable member and should not be a member of our Union at all. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Jones : What Mr. Tearle has said is true. The talk of the seamen of Cardiff is that they did not wish a man of Osmer's character to represent them at the Annual General Meeting.

The General President : Then is it expulsion or suspension?

Several Members : Expulsion.

Mr. Allen : I move that Mr. Osmer be expelled from the Union.

Mr. Peter Lang : I will second that.

The General President : You have heard the resolution. Does anyone want to speak upon it? Is there any amendment? Then, those in favour of expelling Mr. Osmer from the Union will hold up their hands.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution for expulsion	...	...	33
Against	...	...	0

The General President : The resolution is unanimously carried. There is one thing I observe, and that is, that it is a bad thing to be charitable. Now, that fellow was suspended and he appealed to me that we were depriving him of his living, and I advised that we let him get off to sea. He went down to pay contributions and they would not take them, but I wrote a letter advising that his contributions might be accepted and let him carry on; then because I did that he comes up to convict me out of my own mouth because I had been charitable. Please tell Mr. Osmer that we will send our decision in writing.

#### CASE OF MR. ROCHE.

*(Mr. Roche was then called in.)*

The General President : I understand you have been elected a Delegate for the Annual Meeting?

Mr. Roche : Yes.

The General President : It is rumoured that you have been acting detrimental to the interests of the Union; that you have been saying things which you have no right to say. Have you anything to say about that?

Mr. Roche : There have been times when I have said some things which perhaps I might have said in the heat of the moment, or something like that, of you.

The General President : All I have got to say is, do not do it again.

Mr. Roche : I am sorry, Sir.

The General President : Last year, when the strike was on, I am told you went down to Bristol and you gave our fellows a hand.

Mr. Roche : Yes.

The General President : I think that stands to your credit, and all I would say to you is : Be careful of your talk in the future.

Mr. Roche : I will do that.

The General President : That is all I have to say to you.

*(Mr. Roche then withdrew.)*

Mr. Gunning : I conveyed your message to Mr. Osmer and he says he will demand an appeal to the Annual Meeting.

The General President : That terminates our business to-day. We will now adjourn until eleven o'clock to-morrow morning.

*(The meeting was then adjourned until the next day, Tuesday, July 20th, at eleven o'clock.)*

# Executive Council Meeting.

## SECOND DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

TUESDAY, JULY 20TH, 1926.

CASE OF MR. CHARLES McVEY.

*(Mr. Charles McVey was called in.)*

The General President: I may tell you I am taking Mr. McVey's case first, and he is accompanied by a friend. You will notice the Rule on that matter. Whether that friend means a member of the Union or not, I am not quite certain. However, I am going to raise no point on it. The friend who accompanies Mr. McVey is Mr. Findlay, a member of the T.U.C. You will understand that Mr. Findlay will take no part in the business; he is here only as a listener. Now, Mr. McVey, as a preliminary proceeding, I would like to ask you on what grounds you appeal? Is it that the Rules have not been construed properly? That is the first point.

Mr. McVey: No, not on those grounds.

The General President: Second, is it on account of any excess of duty on my part?

Mr. McVey: No.

The General President: Then you will understand, Gentlemen, that Mr. McVey does not appeal on the question of the Rules, nor does he appeal on the ground of any excess of duty on my part. That is to say, I have not strained the Rules?

Mr. McVey: No.

The General President: Now we know. Will you just keep that point in mind. Now, the charges that I am going to make against Mr. McVey are serious. I am charging him with a wilful and deliberate breach of the Rules, and I will go further than that, with conspiracy on his part to cause other Officials to break the Rules. That is a very serious charge. Furthermore, I charge Mr. McVey with neglecting his duty as a District Secretary, not only in this present instance, but going back for a period of more than six years. I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to be charitable and kind to Mr. McVey to an excess. I have been very dissatisfied with his work, and at times I could not quite tell where he was working, whether he was working for us or whether he was working for someone else. Then at other times I felt somewhat sorry for thinking that, and I have come to the conclusion at times that he was doing his best and that it was the material he was working with that made it difficult for him to do his duty. I have said that to him on many occasions. But

I regret to say now that I have come to one conclusion, and that is, that Mr. McVey has not played a straight part as far as the Union and myself are concerned. I am very sorry to have to say that of a brother Official. But the evidence is so strong in support of that that it necessitates me to tell the truth and the whole truth. I could have done this long ago; but I thought, "Am I sure of my ground? Am I convinced I am right?" And when I have thought there was any shadow of doubt as to what was in my mind I have hesitated to take action.

Now, the charge principally that we have got to deal with this morning is that Mr. McVey has broken every Rule in the book. In connection with the General Strike, Mr. McVey knew our policy; it was laid down calmly and deliberately from nearly the early part of last year—never mind this year. You will remember in May of last year there was a great agitation about helping the miners. Conferences were held on the "down tools" policy. We took no part in those Conferences because, as honest men, we knew if we attended those Conferences and led the miners to believe that we would adopt a "down tools" policy we would be guilty of allowing them to think we would support their views. We refused to attend these Conferences because every one of us, including Mr. McVey, knew perfectly well what our Constitution was; that is, we could not adopt or take part in a "down tools" policy before first taking a ballot of the members of the Union. That was the position last year. That was exactly the same position as this year. We have said, if we are going into a strike we have got to take a ballot. I say that Mr. McVey knew that. Mr. McVey never, to my knowledge, dissented from that policy, neither by word nor anything else. He subscribed fully to it. Now, there can be no excuse for Mr. McVey to say he was misled and that he did not understand the real position. We had a Conference on April 22nd, and there again at the Executive meeting it was affirmed what our policy should be. Then came the Trades Union Conference. I am not sure whether Mr. McVey attended that or not.

Mr. McVey: No.

The General President: No, Mr. McVey did not attend. However, there were other Delegates attending; and our instructions from the Executive Council on April 22nd were that we should depute one of our number to hand in a statement as to our attitude. On the last day in April and on May 1st the Conference met. I drafted a statement to be handed in, and I was advised by one of my colleagues that that statement should not be handed in until the other Delegates had expressed their opinions. Well, I was not quite sure whether that was right or whether it was wrong; I was not very well at the time and probably I was not thinking at my very best; and I said, "Well, as long as it is handed in before the meeting finishes, all right." That statement was handed in; it was read by Mr. Citrine; it was handled by Mr. Thomas, and Mr. Thomas read it four or five times. You were there and you know that perfectly well.



Mr. Gunning : It was handed in at the beginning of the meeting, I may say.

The General President : Yes, it was handed in at the beginning of the meeting; it was read by several members on the platform, including Mr. Thomas, so that our position was well and clearly defined. Now, at five o'clock at night I received four of our men who were down there, and they told me a General Strike had been proclaimed. I knew what my duty was then. My duty was immediately to issue a Circular to the Branches explaining the position, and to proceed to take a ballot. You, Mr. Findlay, will appreciate this. I obtained that news at five o'clock in the evening. That was on May 1st. At half-past six I had my Circular drafted, but unfortunately I could not get it sent out because all the typists and everyone had gone; I had no one to cut the stencils, but I did the best thing, and that was to send out messengers to get some of the typists in on the Sunday morning so that the Circular would be sent out on Sunday. That was done.

Then the next question was the ballot paper. I drafted that. I tried to get on the telephone to printers. Everyone was gone. On the Sunday morning at six o'clock I had two men out in the East End of London searching for a printer who would do the work, because I knew that some of the printers down there worked on a Sunday. We got one at about 8.30, and by ten or eleven o'clock the copy was set up, approved of, and they commenced to print the ballot papers. It was only a one-man show; the printer could only print about one copy at a time, so you can imagine his progress was not very fast. But, however, by that evening I had four or five thousand ballot papers under way. I secured a staff wherever I could get in touch with any of our people, and I brought them in, and I think on the Sunday night we had in the post the Circular and, perhaps, more than 2,000 ballot papers. I want you to appreciate, Mr. Findlay, as from the Trades Union Congress, that there was no delay on our part; not a moment's delay. Now, those were sent out; and day after day, as they were printed, they were sent out to the number of 16,000 to addresses of men who were at home and able to vote. Now, on the Monday morning I rang up Liverpool to ask Mr. McVey—and I want to tell Mr. McVey now I was a bit shaky in my confidence of him and I wanted to know just where he was standing—I rang up at about ten o'clock and I got a shock. Mr. McVey and Mr. Parkin had gone to the Council of Action.

Mr. McVey : That was the Tuesday morning.

The General President : Mr. McVey says that was on the Tuesday morning. Well, it might have been; but I am inclined to think it was Monday. But it is a small point.

Mr. McVey : Yes.

The General President : I thought that was a very strange place for Mr. McVey to be, seeing that we were not in a position

to proclaim to the world that we were taking part in this Strike. I consider it was presumption on the part of any Official of our Union to go to Councils of Action or anywhere else. Their business was to wait to see what the ballot was like. Then I discovered there was a revolt going on in more than one place. I found on the Monday morning the Secretary of the Tower Hill Branch had formed a Strike Committee and was proceeding to call the members of the Union out, without any authority. I heard rumours much about the same from the North-East Coast of England. I could not act on rumours. When you are going to deal with a matter like that, it is incumbent upon one to obtain something substantial. But I want to call Mr. McVey's attention to a very important fact. I say it was a conspiracy on his part to involve the Union in the Strike. On May 3rd, which was a Monday, I find Mr. McVey telephoning to the Albert Dock, London.

Mr. McVey : On Monday?

The General President : Yes. Here it is.

Mr. McVey : No, not on my oath.

The General President : Someone in your office.

Mr. McVey : Not Mr. McVey.

The General President : Yes, I said you. Who has any right to indulge in telephone trunk calls?

Mr. McVey : Not me.

The General President : Without your permission.

Mr. McVey : If they have done it they have done it without my knowledge.

The General President : Then I say you ought to know what is going on in your office. If anything goes on in this office I hold myself responsible. Then I find on May 5th you are in communication with James Sexton, either you or someone else in your office. I cannot imagine that Mr. White was in touch with Jimmy Sexton at Huyton—we know where Huyton is; that is where Sexton lives.

Mr. McVey : I never spoke to Mr. Sexton on the telephone.

The General President : Then who has been using a 3s. call?

Mr. McVey : I never spoke to Sexton in my life on the telephone, let alone on May 5th.

The General President : I am going to know before we finish this job who did. I want to know that. A 3s. call. The ordinary call there is 1s.; so whoever had a conversation must have had a

somewhat lengthy one. On May 6th, Newcastle-on-Tyne, a 6s. call; then another 6s. call—12s. on one day was spent on trunk calls between Newcastle and Liverpool. We are entitled to an explanation. Who was it? Just at a time when there was an endeavour being made to pull people out—a concerted action. I want to know who was the gentleman. Was it you or was it someone else? Are the telephones in our office to be used in such a way that any Bill, Tom, Dick or Harry can go to use them? If that is the position, then it is a very badly-governed Union; that is what I have to say on that. Then on the same day there was a telephone message to Belfast, 3s. 5d. On May 7th another telephone message to Newcastle, 4s. 8d. Do you say, Mr. McVey, that you did not talk to Newcastle?

Mr. McVey: I did not say I did not talk to Newcastle. Newcastle rang me up in my absence and asked, could I ring them up. I did not offer.

The General President: That will not fit this case.

Mr. McVey: You will find they rang me up when I was out and they left a message to ring them up.

The General President: This was Bank; and we had it from Mr. Rogers yesterday that you did discuss with him the Strike situation and the policy.

Mr. McVey: About the 6th he left a message for me to ring up, in my absence. I rang him up, and he explained to me the position on the North-East Coast.

The General President: You discussed the Strike situation?

Mr. McVey: Yes; after he had rung me up and left a message to ring him up.

The General President: Then on the 8th a telephone communication to the Albert Dock, London, 9s.

Mr. McVey: Yes.

The General President: You did that?

Mr. McVey: Yes, I admit that.

The General President: A 9s. call. What was that on?

Mr. McVey: On receipt of a telegram from Mr. Bond to ring him up.

The General President: On the 9th, the next day, another 9s. on telephone calls.

Mr. McVey: Where was that to?

The General President : Albert Dock. Then on the 10th, Albert Dock again, 4s. 6d. On the 10th, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 6s. On the 11th, two calls to Huyton where James Sexton lives.

Mr. McVey : They are not mine.

The General President : Is not the telephone exchange in your room?

Mr. McVey : There are three telephones.

The General President : But the telephone exchange is in your room.

Mr. McVey : That does not follow. They can be put through downstairs and we would not know anything about it. They could ring up from downstairs without me knowing anything about it.

The General President : If that is how the business of the Central Office is conducted, and has been conducted, it is not very creditable to you, Mr. McVey. Now, as a result of this plot—and I am going to call it a plot—I was compelled to take drastic action; and Mr. Findlay, your friend, will admit this : A man who is at the head of a Union has a very serious responsibility placed upon him to be compelled to suspend one official, much less suspending a whole crowd.

Mr. Findlay : I agree.

The General President : Therefore I was faced with that responsibility. But I did not hesitate to do it. Why? I knew it meant the life or death of this Union; if we came out on strike the whole of our contracts would be broken; the Union would be involved in enormous expense; and, in a word, the sailors would have to go back at £3 a month less wages; and who could have stopped it, who could have helped it? Would it be the Miners? Would it be the Transport Workers? No one could have come to our rescue. £3 off our wages; all contracts finished; Maritime Board destroyed; and if that had happened, Mr. McVey, you would not be coming here this morning seeking mercy, there would have been nothing to come to; it would have been the cleanest wipe-out of any Trade Union in the whole of the country. The Railwaymen have been badly hit, the Dockers have been badly hit, but they have a chance of recovery. But what are we to do with men who are scattered in all parts of the world, who may not for the next twelve months know the ins and outs of this job? All they would get to know would be that the great Seamen's Union was wiped out, was a thing of the past; and I say "God help any man who went out to try and revive it." My experience is that he never would do it. Well, you, Mr. McVey, are one of the leaders in this—and it was bad; it was rotten. At that time I was lying between life and death. You must have known how ill I was.

Mr. McVey : Yes, you told me.

The General President : But you could have had it from those who saw with their own eyes the state that I was in. Yet you, a responsible Officer of this Union, instead of taking that into consideration and saying " I am going to stand by my Chief, anyhow ; he is not fit to fight for himself, I will fight for him," that was your duty—you did not try to do it, but just the opposite. If it was a question of shuffling me off the coil, you went the best way in the world to do it. Well, I had to injunct you at enormous expense and an enormous amount of pain and trouble. I did injunct you. The Courts found you guilty of committing a breach of the law. One wise thing you did, and that was, you did not contest the injunction ; because if you had it would have cost you many hundreds of pounds ; and whoever advised you to throw up the sponge at the last moment you can compliment that lawyer from me and say that he was a wise man ; he gave you the best advice that any man could give another in the circumstances.

Well, having done all that, I should have thought that a little common sense would have overtaken you ; that you would have begun to think : Where am I ? Where am I going ? What am I doing ? You did not display that quality at all. You seemed to think you had done right. Then you appealed to the T.U.C.—the T.U.C. !—to back you up in your wrongdoing. I am sitting here in the presence of a member of the T.U.C., and I am going to ask this pertinent question of the T.U.C. : What do we subscribe the money for : is it to breed disunity, is it to help rebellious Officials who break Rules and Executive orders ? If that is the main function of the T.U.C., the sooner the T.U.C. is wiped off the face of the map the better it will be for Trade Unionism. (Hear, hear.) I say that, Mr. Findlay, as one who served twenty years on the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, elected year after year by the largest majority of, perhaps, any man ; and I was myself Chairman one year. Now the Trade Union movement has degenerated to such an extent that unofficial strikes can take place ; we can appeal to the T.U.C. to repudiate such unofficial strikes, and they do nothing. They refused to send a telegram to Australia repudiating it. Now, in this case Mr. McVey is getting the help of the T.U.C. For what ? Does Mr. McVey suppose for one moment that I care a jot for the T.U.C. ? Let the T.U.C. come and interfere in our domestic affairs, and by my faith, I will tell the T.U.C. where they are in error ! Make no mistake about that. I respect the T.U.C. ; I hope to do so ; but when they commit such unpardonable blunders as that, I want to know where we are, what we are paying our money for. It was bad for Mr. McVey to go there. What he ought to have done was to have come to me. Perhaps you might have felt a little ashamed of yourself, but there is no harm in being ashamed of having committed an error. None at all. And do you think, McVey, if you came to me I would have treated you brutally ?

Mr. McVey : I do not think you would have seen me.

The General President : Why not?

Mr. McVey : That is how I felt.

The General President : Is there any Official in this Union who is afraid to come and see me? I am sure I am not so fearsome as all that, Mac. Everyone who is in trouble comes to see me. (Hear, hear.) I do not turn them down brutally. And if you had come to me and said, honest and straightforward, "Mr. Wilson, I feel I have made a mistake, what is the best policy for me to pursue?" I would have told you : "Throw yourself on the mercy of the Executive Council." That is what I would have told you. "Be honest and candid and say, 'I made a mistake, Gentlemen; it is for you to decide it.'" But instead of that you go to work and you pursue a line of policy in opposition to this Union in the most aggravating form. The Trades Council of Liverpool unfortunately have got the best offices in our building at the lowest rent, and you and your colleagues have been going there every day holding meetings. What do you think my feeling is? What do you think the feeling of the Officials of this Union is, when we know that you and those who acted with you, in the manner you did, are actually coming to our premises and sitting there for hours discussing your plans as to what you are going to do? Well, I maintain that is aggravating the offence to a degree. If you had been wise men you would have gone to some other building and kept away from our premises. You did not do that. Some of those who have been associated with you—I cannot charge it against you the same as those men out there—have been calling the Officials I sent there, scabs and blacklegs. For what? Because they were good Union men and, at my call for volunteers to step into the breach, they had courage enough to do it. (Hear, hear.) Then they have to be called scabs! Special insults were hurled at Mr. Jones. I say that is aggravating the offence in a manner that is most scandalous. Now, when it comes to the question of appealing here—I believe there are 28 men in Liverpool affected by this—

Mr. McVey : Twenty-two.

The General President : There is nothing in our Rules to say that those appealing against my decision shall have their expenses paid here. I submit, Mr. Findlay, it is ridiculous to suppose it is so—if I am right—to pay the expenses of men to come up here. It is a waste of money. If they come and they prove that I am wrong, then the Union would indemnify those men for every day they had been off, and all their expenses of coming here and their expenses of going back. But to bring up 21 men for the same offence, and to ask, as you have done, McVey, that we would pay the expenses of those 21 men to come up to London—now, Mr. Findlay, I will tell you what we did do. There are three sections—deck, engine-room, and catering; we offered to pay the expenses of two men from each department; six men in all. No; they ignored that, and they have all come here. I will give them credit if they get any money out of me. I will watch they do

not. There are Trustees and myself and Mr. Cathery, we will stand four-square, we Executive Officers, and not a single penny will go out unless it is through a Court of Law. If a Court of Law says we are wrong, we will pay it; but, by heavens, we will not pay otherwise; not even if you pass a resolution, because you can only pass resolutions in accordance with your Constitution and your Rules. If you go outside of them, then we as Executive Officers, are entitled to say, "All right, we will not do it; you can discharge us, you can do as you like, but that is the position."

Now, Mr. McVey, I have many other things that I might say, but I will spare you that if I can. You have not been a success as a District Secretary; you have never been a success; when I take into consideration that for six whole years a number of insulting scabs have been allowed to defame my name and the name of the Union on the flags at Liverpool, and neither you nor those associated with you have had the courage to counteract their shameful, lying statements. For six years, since 1920 up till now, and it is only within the last month that I was able to get a body of men together with something like courage to go down and face them on the flags, with the result that they melted like snow on the hedges—(hear, hear)—you do not know, Mr. Findlay, the leading man in this job, this gang of scabs, the Communists, the Minority men, a puny man called Morgan. That is the microbe who has been able to drive all our late Officials into obscurity. And heaven knows, Sir, I have done my best to put them on their feet. At the end of last October and at the beginning of November the position in Liverpool was rotten—wiped out—and McVey can tell you, ill as I was and sick as I was, I went down to Liverpool and, inside of two weeks, I pulled the whole district together and put them on their feet; they were able to take money, and they were able to go in and out of their office, which they were afraid to do before. A sick cripple did that. And what am I to think of healthy men with all their faculties drawing wages out of this Organisation and allowing a state of affairs like that to prevail? So you will see my indignation. There is some justification for it; much justification for it. For that reason I am glad you are here this morning. I could have said, "No," in a way, but I am emphatically glad I did not; because you are a member of the T.U.C. and I am talking to the T.U.C. now. I want them to know what I have said, so they will get lifted to their right altitude and they will know where they are and where they stand. Not only are they paying the ex-Officials in Liverpool £2 a week unconstitutionally—where is the justification for this £2 a week?—I understand Mr. McVey is getting £4 a week. Is that so?

Mr. McVey: No, it is not so.

The General President: You say it is £2 a week. The rumour is that it is £4.

Mr. McVey: It is not true.

The General President : We had two Delegates in here yesterday, as I call them—ex-Delegates—who drew their wages all the time of the General Strike, and then they found the men up against them and they resigned; they walked up to the T.U.C. and they are getting their £2 a week. What for? Are they victims of Havelock Wilson's oppression? They resigned; they gave up their jobs; yet the T.U.C. has got that much money to spare that they are paying them £2 a week; inviting everyone to come who has a grudge against Havelock Wilson. I do not know who is responsible on the T.U.C., Mr. Findlay, but you can tell them from me I could give them regiments of men of that kind and will not sweat if they pay them £2 a week either. Now, Mr. McVey, that is what you have got to face, and if you can explain it away or seek for a mitigation it is your business to do it. Now is your opportunity. That is all I have to say at the moment.

Mr. McVey : Mr. Chairman and Delegates, the statement that I want to make to the Executive Council I propose to read. The Circular issued in the first instance by the Mersey District Committee is as follows :—

“ The Executive Council of the National Union of Seamen, in accordance with the Rules of the Union, have decided to take a ballot vote of its members immediately with regard to their action in a General Strike. This step must be taken before any strike pay can be paid out to its members. The Mersey District Officials, however, feel it is their duty, in order to give all assistance to the Trades Union Congress decision, that all work, including the work of sea transport, shall stop, therefore appeal for support in this direction. Recognising that this decision by the District Committee will not entitle members to any strike pay until a ballot vote has been taken, and that decision must be in favour of supporting the strike, otherwise no strike pay shall be paid. Your local Officials feel that this movement should be supported, and desire to assist in bringing the dispute to a successful and speedy conclusion even without strike pay, as we are of opinion it will be to the very best advantage of the Seamen's movement. All members should report to their Branch at once in order to vote on this important question.”

That was the Circular issued by the District Committee on Tuesday morning, May 4th, and signed by every Official in the District, excluding Manchester. As a result of that we are here to-day making an appeal for reinstatement to our positions in the Union; and our reply to the charges made against us is as follows : We admit having disregarded the E.C. instructions and breaking the Constitution and Rules of the Union in advising seamen to support the appeal of the Trades Union Congress, as we are affiliated to Congress and their appeal called for all sea transport to stop. We felt that there was an obligation on our part to assist. What was our position locally? On May 3rd we were confronted on all sides with questions as to whether men should



sign articles or not. In this matter we were definite and advised men to continue at work, although in some instances we were told that we would be scabbing. On Monday evening a definite request was sent to me asking what our members were going to do—by the Council of Action, that was. I replied, a ballot was on, but this did not satisfy them, and I called a District meeting for Tuesday morning at nine o'clock. I was requested to give a definite reply by ten o'clock, and I was told that if we did not support them they would take the job in hand themselves. The position on Tuesday was more serious, as all men had stopped work on the ships, including dockers, shore-gangmen and all men preparing the ships for sea. Our men who were working by their vessels were demanding a reply from us, pointing out they were being told to do the work of men who had been called out by the other Unions. It is necessary to point out here that all the big firms in Liverpool have their own shore gangs, and when these men stopped, including tugboatmen, our men were called upon to do their work. This placed us in the position of not only deciding whether we would take part in the strike but whether we would deliberately tell our men to take over the work of the men who were out on strike from other Unions. In one special instance the cooks were told to go and prepare food on the s.s. "Runic" for blacklegs which were brought in. A number of men belonging to the Transport Workers' Union were called out, and we were requested by the Cunard Company to supply men in their places. In other words, we were to be an organisation to be used to assist in breaking down the Strike. Our position was, we must either be Trade Unionists or definitely assist in defeating the objects of all other workers who were called out, whether Rules provided for it or not. Several Unions were in the same position as ourselves with regard to a ballot vote. There were instances of Government-sealed agreements being broken. Now with regard to the ballot vote. The only point there, and I do not want to stress it, is that we understood the vote would be taken by the Branches and concluded in four days; but I shall not argue about that; we broke the Rules and I have to admit we broke the rules.

In my letter dated May 4th, which I may read, I said:

"Following your telegram forwarded to-day, I am enclosing copy of decision arrived at unanimously and signed by every Official in the Mersey District who was present at the meeting. I am sure we were confronted with the greatest possible difficulties that one could imagine in view of the General Council's recommendation that all sea transport should stop; we were confronted with men absolutely refusing to sign articles on Monday, which was definitely against our advice. We were confronted with requisitions from Transport Unions with regard to men working by their vessels. The Shipowners were wanting definite information from us with regard to the position. Men who usually cash advance notes were refusing to advance money; and in the case of the 'Piacco' it was with the greatest difficulty that

this ship was got out on the Monday, and the offices have been stormed since Monday demanding to know what we were going to do with regard to the matter; and although in every instance it was conveyed to them that a ballot vote was necessary, this was received most unsatisfactorily. I am convinced we have taken up the only attitude that was possible under the circumstances, and after consultation with every Official in the District, in their opinion it was the only possible course to take. A definite statement was made by representatives of the Transport and General Workers' Union at the Strike Committee meeting held on Monday night, that if we did not call our members out they would see that they came out. I am sure you will realise from these points how we were placed; and when all these questions were discussed by the Officials at a meeting convened at nine o'clock this morning, there was not one dissentient voice against adopting this policy, which was the only thing to do under such exceptional circumstances. We have now pointed out to the men that this action was being taken on the distinct understanding that no strike pay can be paid unless the members voted in favour of the General Strike. I do hope you will see how we were placed . . . by Police arrangements."

We also informed the Shipowners of our position, so it cannot be said we were doing things underhanded in that direction. We were advised by the General President to tell the men, if they do not want to sign on, all right; but do not tell them not to sign. Now, our position was different, as members were called upon to do the work of men who were called out, and the Shipowners were calling upon us to supply ratings, and men who had signed articles were being requested to join their ships earlier than the appointed time so as to prepare the vessel for sea, which, in our opinion, was deliberate blacklegging those men who had left.

We also have signed statements from three members of the Executive Council who say definitely there was no other course open to us. Those statements are signed by Orr, Ledson, and Galvin, three men who attended the last meeting. We do not complain of being suspended; we think it was the only course that could be adopted at the time; but we do consider the length of time which we have had to wait for trial has not been justified and has been rather hard upon us. Nor do we think the suspension should have carried with it complete loss of wages altogether. However, we have been off now about ten weeks, and but for the T.U.C. helping us financially by a payment of £2 a week we would have had to face a serious situation. We claim that, although we admit having broken the Constitution, we have not done things so bad as others who are not now in the employ of the Union; and we feel our position, and our long period of suspension has been sufficient punishment for any wrong that may have been committed. Certainly no other course was open to us at the time when such a vital Trade Union principle was involved,

where we were faced with telling men to blackleg their fellow workers in a time such as that; and we still feel that had the whole position been looked over at the time and we had been reinstated in our positions we would have had more power with the members in the future than we have had during the last few years. We have done things in the past against our own feelings for the benefit of the Union, and I personally want to say, if I am to be allowed, that I have been challenged on many occasions, when on April 1st, 1923, I came to the assistance of the General President and did all I could to save the Union at that time. I was doing what I considered at that time to be the honest thing. I have done what I consider on this occasion was the honest thing; and at least we have saved our homes and families from being subjected to serious condemnation of our actions, because if we had taken any other course some of us as public men would have had to face the most awful abuse in the future. We do not forget the past six years, when we have been subjected at street corners and at our homes to the most vile and wicked abuse for acting in support of the Executive Council.

In conclusion, there was no other course open to us except to run away and not face the men with the full position, which in our opinion would have been cowardly. We still feel that if this case had been overlooked it would have been better for us. We prevented a serious conflict with other Unions, and we advised our men not to blackleg their fellow workers. If this Executive Council think we are not fit to hold our previous positions, then I would like them to consider one or two matters which are of vital importance to those who will ultimately, if your decision is against us, be thrown out of work. The first one is: Shall any of us be entitled to any expenses if we wait over to appeal to the Annual General Meeting? Second, are we entitled to any wages since suspension? Third, are we entitled to one month's notice, or are we entitled to any notice at all? Fourth, are we entitled to our superannuation money and the guarantee money of those who do not pay superannuation? Also, are we to be forced to pay the costs of the action with regard to the injunction?

The General President: That is, in my opinion, the reply of a weak man. The other men—I am not going to fix so much responsibility on them—I mean the ordinary Delegates; but Mr. McVey has displayed this morning just what I have come to the conclusion he is—one of the weakest men that ever I have met in the Trade Union movement in that time. It has made me ashamed to listen to him. Now, let us come back to see where we are. What was the advice Mr. McVey got? On May 4th—you know Orr, you are pretty good friends?

Mr. McVey: Yes.

The General President: And he has shown you the Circulars he has had from Head Office relating to these matters?

Mr. McVey: Yes.

The General President: You have seen them?

Mr. McVey: Yes.

The General President: Listen to this—

Mr. McVey: I do not think Mr. Orr has shown me this Circular.

The General President: Mr Orr, have you ever shown Mr. McVey the circular relating to this?

Mr. Orr: It is very curious, he has sent a man called—I forget his name; he is an old-timer with the Union—I went up and saw Frank Riley and I finished up at Islington, that finished my work because I had no concern with it otherwise in any way.

The General President: Listen to this; this is dated May 4th, and it is headed "Strike Crisis." It says:

"If there was ever a time in the history of the Union when Officials should keep calm, quiet, with clear heads, the moment is NOW."

That is plain enough, is it not?

"I have always impressed on officials and members that our Constitution provides that before we can enter into a strike a ballot vote must be taken. We cannot under any circumstances delegate to anyone the authority to call our men out on strike without the consent of the men themselves."

(Hear, hear.) That is true; you cannot dispute that.

Mr. McVey: We said that in our Circular.

The General President: The Circular goes on to say:

"At the present moment some men say we ought to declare an official strike. Let me point out to those who hold this view that if we declare a strike we shall order large numbers of men to cease work. At the end of the week they would expect strike money and they would have to be told there was none forthcoming, as a ballot had not taken place in accordance with the Constitution. The Finance Committee are fully determined that they will not sign any cheque for strike purposes unless the Constitution is observed."

Now mark these words:

"This does not mean that the men are compelled to go to work if they do not want to."

What clearer advice could you have than that? It is not your business to order men to go scabbing, as you say in your statement; what you ought to do is to tell the men the truth, enlighten

the men; say, "There is our Constitution, So-and-So, if you do not want to go to sea, do not go." You are not declaring a strike in saying that; you are telling them the truth.

Then the Circular goes on :

"If a man does not want to ship he can simply say, 'I am not signing on,' and can then proceed to record his vote by ballot."

Mark you this :

"If no official strike is declared men will be paid lock-out pay instead of strike pay, therefore the only difference is, by declaring an unconstitutional strike, official, men have to have strike money refused them."

As the Constitution says :

"The advice to be tendered to all men is, 'If you do not want to sign, don't; but if you want to sign, carry on with your business, and then at the end of the week you will be paid strike or lock-out money. If no official strike is declared you will stand to draw the dole, but if it is declared officially you will not be entitled to the dole.'"

Is not that true?

Mr. McVey : Yes.

The General President : What brain was there required in a job like that? You tell the men, "Well, I cannot compel you to strike if you do not want to, but if you do strike, your dole goes and your lock-out money goes." Then later the Circular says :

"Immediately on receipt of this letter I want every official to take the names and correct addresses of all members who are in benefit, and are prevented from getting employment in consequence of the strike, and to send those names with addresses to Head Office as quickly as possible so that we may know by Friday our liabilities in the way of lock-out pay."

That is a generous offer. In doing that we were straining the Rules, because really there is no Rule that allows us to do that; but the Rule does say we can help members in distress, and that is what we were trying to do; preparing for it.

Then the Circular continues :

"By declaring a strike we are endangering the Maritime Board and its agreements. If we go about this business in a constitutional manner, take a vote and the vote declares in favour of a strike, then the Maritime Board will in no way be upset. We are entitled to strike when we like so long as it is done in a constitutional manner, and neither the Shipowners nor anyone else can object. I beg each and every one to pay special attention to this letter and carry it out to the letter of the law."

Mr. McGhee : What is the date of that?

The General President : May 4th.

Mr. McVey : I had it on the 9th.

The General President : Then, Mr. McVey comes and says he was beset with difficulties; the position was terrible, and he did not know what to do.

Mr. McVey : That would not arrive until the 9th.

The General President : It was posted on the 4th—why?

Mr. McVey : Four days always in the post during the Strike.

The General President : There is the telephone.

Mr. McVey : Yes.

The General President : You can pay 9s. a time to communicate with a lot of microbes; 9s. spent in talking to the General President would have been more profitable from your point of view.

Mr. McVey : There may be something in that.

The General President : There is a great deal in that. I was the man to be spending 9s. on, not a man of the calibre of Rogers—a microbe that does not possess brains. Such as he can be consulted. I am the General President of the Union, and you do not consult me, the man who can give you advice. I have had 50 years of it; yet you consult others. I consider, Mr. McVey, your plea is not a sound one, from every point of view. Have you anything more to say?

Mr. McVey : No.

The General President : Well, there is the case, Gentlemen. Now, Mr. Findlay, I am very pleased to see you here, and if you can afford the time I would like you to see this job right through. I will tell you why. I want you to go to the T.U.C. and say you have been here and you have seen every one of those men get proper and fair treatment, and if you can afford the time I would beg of you to see the whole thing through. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Findlay : Would it be possible for me to have a word with you?

The General President : Yes; but one moment; you have heard Mr. Findlay's request, Gentlemen, that he should say a word. Constitutionally and legally there is nothing against it if you so decide.

Captain Griffiths : I move that Mr. Findlay be heard.

This was agreed to.

Mr. Findlay : Mr. President and Gentlemen, I thank you for giving me a word. I felt when Mr. Wilson was speaking that it would be only fair, and I felt you would be only too pleased to

hear what I have to say. After all, I am not concerned with what Mr. Wilson has called the T.U.C. I think he is entitled to have his opinion about the T.U.C. I also think that you gentlemen are entitled to have your opinion about the T.U.C. But I would submit with all due deference that the position of the T.U.C. throughout this Strike has not yet been made publicly; and while I know exactly where we stand, I think even Mr. Wilson will agree that the T.U.C. as a body did not act until they got the power from the various Unions which attended at the Memorial Hall, Farringdon Street, on the Friday and Saturday. He was very careful to make it plain that the position of your Union was made plain at the Memorial Hall. I think the T.U.C. were not in doubt as to your position as a society. I do not think there can be any complaint about that. (Hear, hear.) I think there is also no need for complaint as to the action taken by the T.U.C. on behalf of Mr. McVey and those other members. I say that in all confidence because, as one of the T.U.C., as one of the Committee that decided on the action that was taken, we took it with the full knowledge of what we as a T.U.C. had asked the members of the various Trade Unions to do during that Strike.

Now, Mr. Wilson has read out in his own Circular, I think, a complete (shall I say?) justification of the action taken by the T.U.C. In effect he says, "The Constitution of our Society prevents me, the Chief Official, from ordering our men officially on the street." No member of the T.U.C. would take exception to that, or could take exception to that Circular, Sir. I submit with all due deference that that Circular is an ideal Circular from the point of view of the Chief Official of any Society. I say that as being responsible for having issued a Circular myself; and, in effect, my Circular is of a similar nature to Mr. Wilson's. Why? Because my Union was not one of the Unions to be ordered out on the street at the first time of asking, and I was inundated with communications from my members who wanted to be on the street. I said: "You are not entitled to be on the streets; you are not asked to be on the streets." "But how can we work," they say, "when other members out of the same shop are on the streets?" My reply was, "You can work quite well; you can simply say the T.U.C. has not yet asked you to go on the streets." Further than that, I said that by remaining at work—they said, "We shall not be kept at work, we shall be automatically locked out"—I said, "That is part of the T.U.C. plan; if you are locked out you will be entitled to have Unemployment benefit; that plus our Unemployment benefit, will be much more money in your pocket than it will be if we draw you out and pay you strike benefit."

The General President: That was in my mind all the time.

Mr. Findlay: That was the exact position of my members; and that is why so many of my members stayed in employment while others were on the street because of the great Strike that had been called. So I can fully understand and endorse, so far as that statement is concerned, exactly the position that obtained.

As I have said, I am not concerned about placing the T.U.C. position before you so far as this meeting is concerned; I think, Mr. Wilson, you will agree it is not my place to justify that. But I think you will agree that so far as Mr. McVey and those men have acted there was, I believe, a genuine attempt to carry out the instructions—that may be not of your particular Union or in compliance with your Constitution, but to carry out what they believed was an attempt on the part of the T.U.C. to get justice for the miners; and that they believed they were actually taking the course that was going to bring that about. I do not think I would be doing them a service if I were to attempt to justify their action as opposed to the Constitution of your Society. As a General Secretary I could not condone the action of any official or member of my Union that was contrary to the Constitution of the Union; at the same time, I can find extenuating circumstances where a body such as the T.U.C., granted the power which they were granted at the Memorial Hall and the object for which that power was granted—I can find extenuating circumstances if some members at that time were apt to lose their heads. That, Gentlemen, is about all I would like to say. To err is human. Mercy is a divine quality, and we, on behalf of the T.U.C., ask you people here, we ask Mr. Wilson particularly, not because we were interfering with your domestic arrangements or with your Constitution in any shape or form—the T.U.C. would be the last body to do that, and I think I have seen a good deal of it in the last four years; I do not profess to have had the same knowledge of the movement or of the Parliamentary Committee that Mr. Wilson has had—but I can speak for the gentlemen now associated with me on that Committee—Mr. Cotter was a member of it at one time, and I think Mr. Cotter, with that knowledge, will agree that that body has been and always will be jealous of the rights of individual Societies—never on any occasion have they attempted to interfere, to my knowledge, domestically with any Society; not even at this time did they expect or dream about interfering as between your General President and yourselves—we should expect, as Mr. Wilson said, to be told where we got off. Anyone who knows Mr. Wilson must admire the courage and devotion to duty that he has displayed at all times, and more especially since he has suffered so severely through his infirmity. I think it reflects all the more credit. No one can listen to what Mr. Wilson has said, as I have done on two occasions now, without realising the triumph of spirit and of mind over purely physical matters. (Hear, hear.) One cannot speak without feeling when we see an exception of that kind. There is no question about it, to my mind, at least. It is true that Mr. Wilson—and I think you have referred to it yourself, Sir—by his uncompromising attitude at times has more than once drawn upon himself animadversion; but nevertheless, those who may most differ from him cannot but admire the spirit he has displayed under those circumstances, not least myself.

Well, now, I am not here to try and justify what these men have done. I do not think that is my place. What I am here



for is to point out to you that the T.U.C. has had the money given to them for the express purpose of trying to mitigate the hardships that have arisen through this great Strike. It is from that fund that these men have been paid; because we felt that however much you might feel it as a constitutional body inside your Union, we believe it is for you to deal with this question—we are not attempting to deal with it, but we are attempting to try and mitigate the hardships that have arisen, not only in the Seamen's and Firemen's Union, but in nearly every other Union where hardship has undoubtedly arisen.

Mr. Wilson referred to the Transport Workers and also to the Railway Workers; he pointed out the damage that would have been done to his Union. Well, damage has been done to the Railway Union and to the Transport Workers, which damage it will take some time to repair. Conditions of employment, contracts were broken under similar circumstances to what Mr. Wilson said, probably with not as great consequences; but at least the consequences have been overcome since the Strike was settled, to a certain extent, but there are still on that fund many men who are suffering. If it would be possible for you gentlemen here I would request and beg, on behalf of the T.U.C., that that suffering which will be caused to these men, if you can see your way at all that it should be taken off the shoulders of the Council to that extent, and at least the Council would have it—and I shall have to report—the Council would at least feel that they have done their duty, so far as they have been able to do it, by making this appeal to you, and also by mitigating, under the circumstances, the lot of these men who felt themselves possibly obliged to do what they have done. I thank you very much.

The General President: Mr. Findlay, I hope you noticed very carefully that I made no comment on the policy of the T.U.C. None whatever.

Mr. Findlay: I agree.

The General President: As to whether their policy was a right one or a wrong one I made no comment whatever.

Mr. Findlay: That is right.

The General President: That is a matter to be discussed at another place and at another time.

Mr. Findlay: I agree.

The General President: The point I did comment upon was that the T.U.C. had acted in what I consider an unconstitutional manner in providing funds for men who have been rebellious against the Constitution of this Union. Your appeal on their behalf, because they may be married men and are suffering, is very good up to a point. But I may tell you that there are hundreds of our ordinary members—not officials, but ordinary

members—who in consequence of the action of these men are suffering also. (Hear, hear.) Do not forget that.

A Delegate : Thousands, not hundreds.

The General President : And I will never be a party to making a special privilege class of Trade Union Officials. I never have been and I never will be. (Hear, hear.) If the ordinary member has got to suffer, the Trade Union Official has got to suffer in equal proportion. (Hear, hear.) Yesterday we had a poor, unfortunate man in here who had been twenty years in the same employment; he was ordered out by the Newcastle Officials, and that man to-day is on the rocks, starving, for all I know; no chance of getting back to his employment, none whatever. What is going to become of cases of that sort? That is one I mention out of hundreds. Is the T.U.C. going to provide them with money?

Mr. Findlay : If you send them over, the cases will be considered.

The General President : Then I am afraid, Mr. Findlay, you are in for a lot of customers.

Mr. Findlay : There are a lot.

The General President : Of course there are a lot not worth much consideration. A man like the decent fellow we saw here yesterday, a respectable man in every way, is one; but there are some in Liverpool, and on the Tyne, and in London, where they were all drawn out in this unconstitutional manner, and they have had to suffer and are suffering to-day. I do hope the T.U.C. will not make a special privileged class of Trade Union Officials. More than that, if a Trade Union Official is only a month or two in our service I could forgive him; because, perhaps, he has not had time to master the Rules and the Constitution; but when he is a man who has been a number of years an Official, and ought to know better, the responsibility is his if he does not give the right advice to the people. Now, is there anyone who would like to ask Mr. McVey any questions?

Mr. Martin : I should like to ask if during the conference of District Officials, whereby they arrived at a certain decision, they were aware of the statement made by Mr. Pugh at the Memorial Hall, that the Executives would be left to their own discretion even though a General Strike would be called on Monday night?

The General President : Mr. McVey was not at that conference.

Mr. Martin : No; but did he know that?

Mr. McVey : No.

The General President : Are there any other questions? Mr. Findlay says that what was decided upon was that each Executive would be responsible for calling out its own members.

A Delegate : That is correct.

Another Delegate : Exactly.

Mr. Jones : Did Mr. McVey use his influence with the suspended Officials in Liverpool, when they were holding meetings, to get them to keep away from those meeting-places and not cause a disturbance?

Mr. McVey : Yes, I did. I never went near one myself:

The General President : Does any other member wish to ask any questions? Very well, then I will ask Mr. McVey to retire. I think our best course is to hear all the cases and then decide each case on its merits; because they are all interwoven, the one with the other, and I think we will adopt that course.

This course was agreed to.

*(Mr. McVey then withdrew.)*

#### EXAMINATION OF MR. WHITE AND MR. PARKIN.

*(Mr. White and Mr. Parkin were then called in.)*

The General President : Now, Mr. White and Mr. Parkin, the charge against you is that you, in combination with Mr. McVey and others, deliberately broke the Constitution of this Union and deliberately ignored the instructions of the Executive Council. I do not know whether you want me to relate all the circumstances or not. I can do it if you want it. But, in a word, I will put it to you in this way: You know that a resolution was carried at the Executive meeting on April 23rd, that no strike should take place without a ballot.

Mr. Parkin : Yes.

The General President : You know that on May 1st a General Strike was declared by the Parliamentary Committee.

Mr. Parkin : Yes.

The General President : Were you there at the Memorial Hall?

Mr. Parkin : No.

The General President : Anyhow, it is said, and I suppose it appeared in the paper, that the Executive Council of each Union would be responsible for calling out its members—the Executive Council, not Branch Secretaries, not Delegates, nor District

Secretaries, but the Executive Council. Now, you, Mr. White and Mr. Parkin, with Mr. McVey and others, met on May 3rd or 4th—I think it was the 3rd—a meeting of District Officials was convened, and thereupon you decided on a certain course that was contrary to the Constitution of the Union. In Mr. White's case I am going to say about him that his conduct has been exceedingly bad. He has neglected his duty. He allowed a young man to rob this Union and never reported it to me; I had to find that out for myself; and when Mr. White discovered that he was suspended he drew out of the bank £82. I have never got to know yet what that £82 was for. Mr. White was the Secretary of the Branch, and it was his business to see that the accounts were correct. As a matter of fact, he signed every one of those accounts coming to this office, and they were not correct. That had been going on for some time. I am saying that Mr. White has broken the Constitution, has kept on in a position of defiance. I consider that his conduct is reprehensible to a very serious degree.

As far as you are concerned, Mr. Parkin, I want to say this: I have made careful inquiries, and your honesty is questioned by no one. The testimony I have had in regard to you is that you are an honest man. As far as work is concerned, I know of no complaints about you doing your work; so that what you have to answer for this morning is your unconstitutional action. But in Mr. White's case he has to answer for more than that. Now, that is all I am going to say at the moment. If you have any defence to put in, Mr. Parkin, do so.

Mr. Parkin: Mr. Chairman and fellow members, I admit that we broke the Constitution as far as the Union is concerned with regard to what we did in view of the decision of the Trades Union Council. We had to choose between the T.U.C. and the Union, and we had at the same time to take into consideration the position in Liverpool as far as the members were concerned. I am going to say here candidly that what we did we did honestly, and we did it, in my opinion, in the interests and for the welfare of the Union. Now Liverpool has been the cockpit ever since I have been interested in this Union, as far as strife is concerned; and I can safely say that as far as I and my co-Officials are concerned, we have done our utmost to heal any difficulties and bring the men along to our ideals as far as joining up with the Organisation was concerned. Now, the position of late since the end of 1925 has, perhaps, been more difficult through the difficulty that arose with the Transport Workers' Union. You know, Mr. Chairman, that there were certain encroachments made after the ballot by the £1 reduction—encroachments made by the Transport Workers' Union. The men were going up in large numbers to the National Transport Workers' offices with the object of joining the Union, and in the case of hundreds of men they joined up. It was only by the action of the Disputes Committee in connection with the T.U.C. that that difficulty was avoided. No further encroachments were to be made as far as our members were concerned. The result, in my opinion, of any action that

we may have taken derogatory, as far as the Trades Union Council was concerned, over the call to transport, would have meant this Union falling out with the T.U.C., giving the Committee an opportunity, as far as the Transport Workers were concerned, of further encroachments without the assistance of the T.U.C. to stop it. We had all that in view; and I might as well say I made that expression at a meeting that was called on the morning after the Strike was declared. One of the principal objects I advocated was that we should make a call upon our members to act in accordance with the T.U.C. As far as the ships were concerned that had signed on, we did our best to facilitate matters there. We decided to ask the local Committee to sanction that all ships that had signed on by the Monday that the Strike was declared, should sail. It so happened that way. There was no great amount of difficulty, in my opinion, that did occur, but what difficulties did arise arose through the urgency of the men themselves. I know of one instance where the men of the "Cedric" were called upon to cook for what were called voluntary workers—scabs—and they decided as a body to chuck up their job and they left their ship.

Then there was the catering of the "Newfoundland," where they refused to sign. There were several other cases where action had been taken by the men themselves, who in many cases were not members; and for us as Trade Unionists, in my opinion, to take up any action derogatory would have created difficulties as far as the Trade Union world in general was concerned. I will say candidly we did it honestly, and I am going to appeal, as far as I am concerned and my co-Officials are concerned, that we have a right to reconsideration as far as reinstatement is concerned.

The General President: You have been more than a day connected with Trade Unionism, have you not?

Mr. Parkin: Yes, I have been 32 years.

The General President: And a member of the Engineers' Union?

Mr. Parkin: That is right.

The General President: You know all about Constitution and Rules?

Mr. Parkin: That is right. It is not the first time the Constitution and Rules have been broken, in the A.E.U. and other Unions as well.

The General President: They did not let you down lightly, did they? You know how strict they are. Now, do you remember a Circular that was sent out on May 4th, telling you what to do if men came and worried you as to what they were to do? The Circular advises you to tell the men to please themselves; if they want to sign on they can do so, and if they do not want to sign on, to please themselves. Do you remember that?

Mr. Parkin : Yes, I remember the Circular.

The General President : Do you remember it said that if no Strike was declared they would be entitled to the dole?

Mr. Parkin : Yes.

The General President : And in addition to that, the Finance Committee was prepared to consider making them a lock-out grant in consequence of loss of employment?

Mr. Parkin : Yes.

The General President : Why could not you have advised the men according to that Circular?

Mr. Parkin : I said we had to take into consideration, so far as Liverpool was concerned, the attitude of the men. That Circular would not, in my opinion, appeal to them, when we knew at the same time the call that was made as far as transport was concerned was almost 100 per cent. outside of our Organisation.

The General President : What men do you refer to?

Mr. Parkin : I am referring to Dockers, for one section.

The General President : I am not dealing with Dockers but with seafaring men.

Mr. Parkin : I say as far as transport was concerned, outside of the Seamen's Union there was almost 100 per cent. came out at the call of the T.U.C.

The General President : You know the result of the ballot, do not you?

Mr. Parkin : Yes. But, Mr. Chairman, the difficulty was this : the ballot was taken during the Strike.

The General President : I know it was; but the reason I put that to you was this : You say the men were worrying you wanting to know what they were to do. That was your point.

Mr. Parkin : Yes, that is right.

The General President : And as a justification for what you did. Now, you know the result of the ballot; it showed there was two to one against coming out on strike. They could not be worrying you much.

Mr. Parkin : As I said, the ballot was taken during the Strike. It was started at the beginning of the Strike and the result was declared about the last day of the Strike. As far as any lead by the men was concerned through the ballot, it served no useful

purpose. We had to act, in my opinion, as Officials, and as thorough-going Trade Unionists, taking up the interests, as far as the opinion of the men was concerned, in the circumstances.

The General President: But the opinion of the men was against it.

Mr. Parkin: It was declared so afterwards according to the ballot.

The General President: The men would not change their minds. And are you aware that at the Trades Union Conference here it was decided that the calling out of the men should be left to the Executive Council of each Union?

Mr. Parkin: The position as far as I know it is that the Executives of the various Unions were called together to meet the T.U.C. and respond to whatever attitude the Union was prepared to take up as far as this Strike was concerned.

The General President: But is it not the fact that the Conference decided that the calling out of the men should be left to each Executive Council? Is not that true?

Mr. Parkin: That is so.

The General President: When did you become the Executive Committee down in Liverpool?

Mr. Parkin: I have admitted the fact that we acted unconstitutionally as far as the Union is concerned.

The General President: Very well; I need not press that any further. Just before you finish: Did you have any telephone talks with the Albert Dock, London, on May 3rd?

Mr. Parkin: No.

The General President: Did you have any telephone talks with the Albert Dock, London, on May 6th?

Mr. Parkin: I have never had any telephone talks with the Albert Docks at all.

The General President: Did you have any telephone talks on May 7th with Newcastle?

Mr. Parkin: No.

The General President: And on May 8th with the Albert Docks, and on May 9th?

Mr. Parkin: No.

The General President: Did you have any talks on May 10th?

Mr. Parkin: No.

The General President : That is the Albert Dock again. Did you have any talks on May 10th with Newcastle?

Mr. Parkin : No.

The General President : Do you know Huyton, a place called Huyton? Do you know who lives there?

Mr. Parkin : No, I do not.

The General President : Do not you know Jimmy Sexton lives there?

Mr. Parkin : He lives at Huyton.

The General President : Did you have any talks on the 'phone with Jimmy Sexton?

Mr. Parkin : No.

The General President : Now, Mr. White.

Mr. White : In reply to the first charge I can only reiterate briefly what Mr. Parkin said. If we have broken the Constitution, and we now admit that we have, we did it conscientiously, honestly believing that we were right in our actions. Events proved that we were wrong; but there were circumstances over which we had no control in Liverpool, which demanded that in certain instances our men were being called upon to do the work of transport men. My idea, and particularly as one desirous of guarding your own members' interests, is that at no time would you allow it to be levelled at them, the charge of blacklegging upon their fellow workers. I do not think I need deal with it at any length. Mr. Parkin has gone over the ground for that case.

But with regard to the other case mentioned by the President, that has been the subject of five charges in the Police-court. The result of the first was a dismissal by the Stipendiary; the result of the second was that the President's counsel thought fit to withdraw the charge; the result of the third was also a dismissal by the Stipendiary; counsel thought fit to withdraw the fourth; and the Stipendiary, in the fifth case, stopped the case as wasting the time of the Court, as far as I was concerned. I do not think it fair if this Council is to decide whether my actions were honest, to attack my integrity in the face of those facts; I do not think it would be right.

The General President : Is that all you have to say?

Mr. White : Yes.

The General President : Well, Mr. White, there was no such thing as a dismissal in the first case. The first case ended in £129 being paid over to the Union. You know that?

Mr. White : Yes; with which I had no connection.



The General President : I will show you what your connection was. You complained in the Court that it was a wrong act for me to take you there ; at least, you did not, but your counsel did—that it was wrong for me to protect the funds of the Union.

Mr. White : Not on those grounds.

The General President : But as a result I got £129, so the action was not dismissed, and you got out of it by the clerk shouldering the responsibility—that he alone was responsible ; a very good story for the Court, but not good enough for me.

Mr. White : It was perfectly true.

The General President : And not good enough for this Council, either.

Mr. White : I hope it is.

The General President : We will see as we go along. Now, you were the Secretary of the Branch.

Mr. White : Yes.

The General President : You knew that your duties were to see that the accounts were properly kept.

Mr. White : Yes.

The General President : You had to send a weekly return to this Head Office, and you had to sign it as being correct. Is that right?

Mr. White : Yes. On a point of explanation—

The General President : You can explain if you make a point of it. But that is your duty?

Mr. White : Yes.

The General President : Now, here is a young man in this office, a clerk—not a cashier ; I do not know where they got the word “ cashier ” from, in a Branch taking £70 or £80 or £90 a week ; there is no such thing in the Rules that I know of—he was a clerk, and your duty was to look after that clerk. Your duty was to see what was being done with the money ; and here is—as far as I can find out ; I have not gone right through it yet, but do not suppose I am finished ; that is only a start—but I did discover there was £129 sent down from this office that was never accounted for. That is only a kick-off ; probably I shall find a good deal more before I am finished, because the accounts have to be gone into. We may find something further. That is one charge. The next charge was a claim for £41 ; instead of the man being paid out in full he got £19 odd and an I.O.U. for £19 ; and when we started proceedings someone secured the man

and got him to say, right or wrong, that he had had all his money. We subpoenaed that man to attend the Court. Unfortunately the solicitors made a mistake; they thought the one subpoena would have been sufficient, whereas they ought to have given him a fresh subpoena to be there to give evidence; and through not getting the second subpoena he did not turn up. But I am told the case was not dismissed, it was withdrawn. Then the third case against you personally was to give an account of the £82. That was not dismissed, it was withdrawn; because I am told the Magistrate said you ought to have been summoned for fraud and not for withholding.

Mr. White: No, Mr. Chairman; the Magistrate's statement to your counsel was: "Do you allege fraud?" and counsel said, "I am afraid I cannot." Then he said, "You have no leg to put your case on." Am I right, Mr. Gunning?

The General President: I want to see whether the shorthand notes of the trial have been sent. Then we will find out exactly what the Magistrate did say. But I am told by those who were present that the charge was not dismissed, it was withdrawn because I, in my mercy, as usual, did not want to send you to gaol; I wanted the money; and I advised the solicitors to go for you for withholding the money and not fraudulently misappropriating it; and as they went for withholding and not for fraud, on that the charge was withdrawn.

Mr. Gunning: That is true.

The General President: But do not go away with the idea that it cannot be revived. If you want a charge for fraud you can be accommodated on that point. You can tell us now, if you will, what became of that £82.

Mr. White: I do not know, unless it was what was returned to you. It was not returned to you by me.

The General President: You drew that money out after you knew I had an injunction against you.

Mr. White: It is unfair to say that. It is untrue.

The General President: What was the date when you drew that cheque?

Mr. White: I could not tell you at the moment.

Mr. Gunning: It was May 4th.

Mr. White: And my suspension is May 4th—

The General President: You knew I had applied for an injunction?

Mr. White: Yes, you had done days before that.

The General President : Then why did you draw out that £82?

Mr. White : I suppose it was necessary to book up the returns. On a point of explanation, I would like to get this clear—

The General President : I want it to be clear.

Mr. White : Certain sums of money, as the President has said, in cheque form were sent to the Central Branch for entering for contributions. Great stress was laid in Court upon the fact that I had signed those returns as being correct when in fact they were wrong. But the money had come from Head Office with the men's names to be inserted on the return sheets. Surely if those returns were made on Saturday, by the following Tuesday Head Office should have known. The return sheets when they were put in in the Court were already audited by Head Office. Those must have been done on Tuesday; and if Head Office had in actual fact accepted them as being correct, how could you blame me for also making the same mistake as the Auditing Department in Head Office? There are two ways of putting things which put a different complexion on it.

Mr. Cathery : But the Auditing Department only deals with the finances as recorded by the payments that have been collected by the Branch.

The General President : Do not be switched off in that way about the Auditing Department. I have a much simpler way of getting at it than that. Let us stick to the point. You got a cheque down for £72 in the month of April, did not you?

Mr. White : £72 15s.

The General President : What did you do with it?

Mr. White : It was laid in the safe until the first of those men who were in the batch concerned with that £72 15s. called.

The General President : You kept it in the safe?

Mr. White : Yes.

The General President : Then on May 4th you paid it into the bank, did not you?

Mr. White : Yes, because I had to complete the returns.

The General President : Just answer my question. Is that true? You got that cheque in April and you banked it on May 4th.

Mr. White : The whole position had to be cleared up.

The General President : Never mind. I am only asking a question, and you can say whether it is true or untrue. You got that cheque in April and you did not bank it until May 4th?

Mr. White : Yes, that is correct.

The General President : At the same time you paid that cheque in for £72, which was from Head Office—it was not your money, it was from Head Office—you immediately drew out a cheque for £82. Is that true?

Mr. White : That is true, yes; of which all should have been booked up on the returns on the last week.

The General President : All the returns were made up on the Saturday, and there is no mention on those returns, about that £72, on the Saturday's returns. No mention of it. Now, I want you to explain here not with regard to the £72, because you paid that into the bank, but what was the £82 drawn out for? That is what I want to know. If I had been in the Court last week, that is what I would have instructed our lawyer to ask. What was this £82 for—drawn out in a hurry?

Mr. White : It was not drawn out in a hurry. All the wages of practically the District were paid out by Mr. Louis Nicholas from that money.

The General President : No, excuse me; the wages of the District for that week were paid by Mr. Louis Nicholas by a cheque from here to himself, not out of the £82.

Mr. White : He took the money from the Central, and other Delegates can bear it out that they had to wait until four o'clock to be paid at the North Office at Birkenhead.

The General President : I just passed it a few days ago to pay Louis Nicholas what he paid out in paying your wages for that week. Therefore that £82 did not go to pay the wages. What did you do with it? Why did you draw it out?

Mr. White : I can give you no further explanation.

The General President : That will do me, then. You can give no further explanation. Now, with regard to the other charge. It was not against you, it was against Mr. Cosgrove; but you say that was dismissed.

Mr. White : I did not mention that; I meant the £19 case which was stopped.

The General President : That was stopped because the man who ought to have been there to give evidence—

Mr. Gunning : It was withdrawn, not dismissed. There was only one dismissed, and that was the case of White on the first charge; it was dismissed with remarks by the Stipendiary as to the actions of Mr. White.

The General President : That was the case withdrawn because Mr. Adams took it upon himself, by a letter to you, to say that he was the guilty person, and the case was dismissed against you on that account, with some very excellent remarks from the Stipendiary Magistrate on yourself.

Mr. McGhee : I think it ought to be clearly stated what the remarks were. I was in the Court and I heard them. It is only fair to say that the Magistrate held Mr. White responsible for grave negligence; but at the same time he completely exonerated him from any dishonesty in connection with the charges. I was in the Court and took particular notice of what he said.

The General President : I was not there; but I have the shorthand notes of what the Magistrate said, and it was a very strong censure of Mr. White.

Mr. McGhee : That is right. For his neglect, not dishonesty.

The General President : Now, Mr. White, do you remember 1921?

Mr. White : What particular incident in 1921?

The General President : You came up to the Annual Meeting with a number of others to reform me.

Mr. White : That is news to me.

The General President : You never heard of it?

Mr. White : I do not know of any resolutions that I sponsored there; in fact, I do not know any I was associated with, just at the moment.

The General President : Do you remember there was an inquiry into the funds of the Liverpool Central Office?

Mr. White : No, I do not.

The General President : You do not remember?

Mr. White : No, I do not. I knew nothing at all about them.

The General President : You never heard of the young fellow Adams being up at this office to give an account of the Navy League funds and the Unemployed funds?

Mr. White : I knew nothing at all about it, and if I had I would not have had him working with me if he had been accused of thieving.

The General President : You were an Official of the Union.

Mr. White : Yes.

The General President : How many times a month does the Liverpool Trades Council meet? How often every month do they meet?

Mr. White : Three times; and the Birkenhead Trades Council meet every fortnight.

The General President : Because I see in your returns you charge every week, " 3s., Trades Council."

Mr. White : I was Secretary for a long while and I was attending two Trades Councils.

The General President : Two?

Mr. White : Yes.

The General President : I was not aware of that. Only I cannot understand it. Which Trades Council were you at—was it the Liverpool one or the Birkenhead one?

Mr. White : The Birkenhead one from Mr. Cheminant's time. The delegation had never been rescinded, and I had been a Delegate with him. And when I was in Garston I used to attend the Birkenhead Trades Council.

The General President : Would it not be useful for a man making up the accounts to put in, " Liverpool Trades Council, so-and-so; Birkenhead Trades Council, so-and-so "?

Mr. White : I followed the previous Secretary.

The General President : Then if he has gone to the devil you are going with him? To follow your own sense would be more profitable. Now, does anyone want to ask any questions?

Mr. Jarman : There is one question which appeals to me; that is, whether Mr. White was aware that they deliberately broke the T.U.C.'s instructions in addition to breaking the Constitution of this Union when they called our members out on strike in Liverpool?

Mr. White : Yes. But at the moment I was under the impression that the T.U.C. General Council had plenary powers given to them from the Executives.

Mr. Jarman : The instructions given by the T.U.C., as far as I am aware, were that the Executives of the Union alone had the power to order their members out. I ask you whether you knew that.

Mr. Gunning : On a point of explanation. With regard to those charges I would like to say this, that on our barrister withdrawing the charges the barrister for Mr. White immediately got up and asked for costs in this case; the Magistrate, in giving his decision, said he could not grant costs as he thought there was every justification for the prosecution and bringing the charges forward.

Mr. White : That was in Cosgrove's case.

Mr. Gunning : It was in all the cases, as each case came on, because it was questioned whether we should have an adjournment or otherwise, and I decided that we should withdraw, and it was on that they asked for costs.

Mr. White : No; as a correction, it was in Cosgrove's case that counsel asked for costs; but in the case prior to that my counsel asked that the case be not withdrawn and be registered as dismissed entirely, and the reply from the Magistrate was, "Do not look a gift horse in the mouth."

The General President : He was giving you very wise advice—exceedingly wise; that old Stipendiary was saving you. My counsel said, "Withdraw it," and your counsel wanted to go on; but the Magistrate knew what was the best thing for you to do. Now, are there any other questions? Then, will you retire.

*(Mr. Parkin and Mr. White then withdrew.)*

#### CASES OF MR. DONNELLY AND MR. ALLEN.

*(Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Allen were then called in.)*

The General President : Now, Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Allen, I am charging you with breaking the Rules of the Union and acting unconstitutionally, defying the Executive Council and acting in concert with Mr. McVey. You know all about it.

Mr. Donnelly : All I can say is that I quite realise I have broken the Constitution from the Union point of view, but this is the first opportunity we have been able to have to explain the position. I am going to say right away that the first telegram I admit that I had did not affect it, because of the blacklegs going on board the boats. When I received your telegram it asked for a reply by twelve noon; I did not get it until five at night; we were having a meeting of the District Officials in Liverpool. I could not reply if you had asked me to reply by four o'clock; I could not reply until twenty past five. I went home and found my name was being broadcasted as one against whom an injunction had been granted; at nine o'clock at night I heard that. I admit I broke the Constitution the first day because I saw the blacklegs going on-board the Dublin boats, and our men were asking what they were to do. I never went near a ship after that because, as a matter of fact, the whole of the docks was closed to all Delegates. The only satisfaction I got out of

the whole business is that no ships' men lost their job through me.

The General President : How long have you been connected with Trade Unionism?

Mr. Donnelly : Ever since the old Cooks' and Stewards' Union started in 1910.

The General President : And you have been more or less connected with the Cooks' and Stewards' Union and our Union right up to date?

Mr. Donnelly : Yes.

The General President : Did you ever read the Rules?

Mr. Donnelly : Yes.

The General President : Have you ever read the Rules of this Union?

Mr. Donnelly : Yes.

The General President : Did you find anything there to justify your conduct?

Mr. Donnelly : No, I realise that. But there were exceptional circumstances. I do not know what Mr. McVey has said, but I do say that the exceptional statements in Liverpool by the Communists' International Party, the A.M.W., Federated Cooks and Stewards, had a big bearing, because Frank Williams's Union had ordered our men out of the ships. As a matter of fact, before we received your telegram Mr. Parkin and I went round the coast boats and told the men they were to stand pat until they got orders from our Union as to what their action was to be. Of course, by night the position had changed. There was a crowd in Canning Place; the Transport Workers had pulled their men out and had threatened us; they said our men had to come out, so there was nothing else to do. I know I made a mistake, but under similar circumstances I do not see I could do anything else but what we did. Everyone sympathised with the Miners; they still do; and the circumstances, in my opinion, were too great for us in Liverpool, and while I plead guilty, if I had the chance again I do not see that I could act any different from what I did do.

The General President : Mr. Donnelly, who gave you a job in this Union?

Mr. Donnelly : You gave it to me.

The General President : I am a pretty old hand, am I not? I have been more than a day in the Trade Union movement, have I not?

Mr. Donnelly : Yes.



The General President : Why did you decide to accept Mr. McVey's advice? He may be described as a fledgling compared with myself. Why did you accept his advice instead of mine?

Mr. Donnelly : I cannot say that I did accept his advice; because everyone—admittedly Mr. McVey was in the Chair, but I do not see that Mr. McVey—

The General President : Did you not send a telegram to me, " I am standing by McVey " ?

Mr. Donnelly : No.

The General President : Did you send a telegram, " I am standing by the T.U.C. " ?

Mr. Donnelly : There were so many, I am not sure. I think there was a round robin.

The General President : I said a telegram.

Mr. Donnelly : There was a Circular signed.

The General President : There was a telegram.

Mr. Donnelly : I did not get your telegram until twenty-past five at night.

The General President : I am not talking about that. You did get a telegram from me?

Mr. Donnelly : Yes, two or three, I think.

The General President : Asking you whether you intended to stand by the Rules and Constitution of this Union?

Mr. Donnelly : That is the one I am referring to. I did not get it until half-past five :—

" In consequence of unconstitutional action on the part of Charles McVey, White and George Parkin, have been compelled to suspend them from transacting any further business on behalf of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union. McVey says in his letter to me that Officials signed resolution ordering men on strike before ballot completed. Please send me a telegram at once that you intend to stand by Executive resolution re balloting members prior to taking part in Strike. Unless I receive telegram by twelve o'clock to-day you stand by Executive instructions I shall be compelled to include your name in injunction being applied for in the High Court of Justice."

The General President : Did you send a reply to that?

Mr. Donnelly : I cannot say. But I have an idea at the back of my mind that resolution was again affirmed that night. That is what I am saying, when I got this telegram, I believe I am right in saying that. I do not think I sent a telegram.

The General President : You all did.

Mr. Donnelly : I do not think I did.

The General President : Every one of you.

Mr. Donnelly : I do not remember. I will not say I did not, but I do not remember it.

The General President : Every one sent a telegram that you were going to stand by Mr. McVey or the Trades Union Council.

Mr. Donnelly : I believe I signed a paper to that effect; but I do not think we sent a telegram. And then we took no further part on receipt of this; as a matter of fact, we were not allowed in the docks.

The General President : But I did warn you.

Mr. Donnelly : I had no chance to be heard before this. I only got the Writ the night before the action took place—that I could have come up because there were no trains; but I got a bill of costs against me in good time.

Mr. Allen : I do not think that the Liverpool Delegates could have acted in any other way than what they did. It amounts to this, that the men in Liverpool were clamouring for a strike, and I consider the action we took in Liverpool saved Liverpool as far as this Union is concerned; because undoubtedly if we had not taken that action the men would have gone to the Transport Workers. Besides that, we had to bear in mind this fact, that many of the men were in the Transport Workers already in the Cunard boats and some in the coast lines, and the fact was that when the men walked out of their jobs we were asked to put men in their places, and we did not feel it was a Trade Union act to do that. That is my answer.

The General President : Are there any questions anyone wants to ask?

Mr. Ley : Did not you think at the time that in the face of this it was your bounden duty to obey the orders of this Executive Council, in the face of everything?

Mr. Allen : In the face of everything? After all, two heads are better than one; when you get all the Officials in Liverpool getting together and they think the action they took was in the best interests of the Union, I thought so, too.

Mr. Ley : You thought so, but did not act on it.

Mr. Allen : I thought the action we took was the right action for the benefit of the Union. Perhaps all the Delegates here have heard the manifesto we signed.

Mr. Ley : Yes.

Captain Tupper : You acted contrary to the instructions of the Executive Council, but still drew your wages from the Union.

Mr. Allen : Yes. But, after all, if some of you had been in Liverpool I think you would have altered your tone.

Captain Tupper : You think so, as against the Executive?

Mr. Allen : When you come to consider local questions. We thought we were acting in the best interests of the Union. I think that had an Executive Official been there something different might have happened.

Captain Tupper : You had an Executive Official there—McVey. He is an Executive Officer.

Mr. Allen : Yes. And surely Mr. McVey is a man of good standing, is he not? When he could see the position there he would realise it.

Captain Tupper : This is a national Union, not a local Union.

Mr. Allen : What would have been the effect on a national Union if one big port had broken away?

Captain Tupper : That does not answer the question about disobeying the orders of the Executive.

The General President : What do you mean by, "if one big port had broken away"?

Mr. Allen : Liverpool is a big port, and I really think there was a danger of that.

The General President : Did they break away?

Mr. Allen : You must admit that a considerable number of men in Liverpool have broken away and joined the Transport Workers.

The General President : When?

Mr. Allen : In the Cunard and the sea-goers.

The General President : In this Strike?

Mr. Allen : No; they were not allowed to.

Mr. Martin : Had any of the Officials received your Circular in reference to this Strike, Sir? Did you receive, Mr. Allen, a circular letter from the Executive Council sent out by the President?

Mr. Allen : No, I do not think so, not until after the action had been taken. I think there was a Circular sent round later.

Mr. Connolly : Are any members of the crews of the Belfast Shipping Company members of the National Union of Seamen?

Mr. Allen : I shall have to leave that to the man who is dealing with those ships.

Mr. Connolly : Why did you order those men to come out on strike after they were told not to come out on strike and had full instructions from the Belfast Secretary?

Mr. Donnelly : The Belfast men were all our members; they were all solid in the Catering Section even before P.C.5. We did not interfere with the firemen and sailors; they pay in Belfast. As a matter of fact, I asked Parkin to come down with me, and we did not get any chance of telling them to come out on strike on the Belfast boats. We told them there would be Officials down from the other Unions attempting to get them out, and we told them to carry on until we received orders from our Office. But I have to admit that with regard to the Dublin and Cork boats I went on board the ships and read out that resolution and pointed out that if they did come out they would get no strike pay until the ballot was taken, and then only if the ballot was in favour of a strike.

Mr. Allen : Might I add a little to that with regard to the Belfast Steamship Company?

The General President : Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Allen, this revolt took place on May 3rd, did not it?

Mr. Allen : Yes, on the Monday.

The General President : That is the first meeting you had?

Mr. Allen : Yes, in the morning.

The General President : What did you think was the position in the other ports—London, Newcastle, and one or two other places? What did you think they were going to do?

Mr. Donnelly : In answer to that, we had had a brief report from two members who had been on our Executive, and it was pointed out that the Trades Union Congress had said that all transportation by sea was to stop.

The General President : Did Mr. McVey tell you, or Mr. White tell you, or anyone else tell you, they had been talking to the other ports as to the situation?

Mr. Donnelly : No, I never heard a word about that. We did not know what the position was in any port.

The General President : I am not speaking of one.

Mr. Donnelly : I want to correct myself. As soon as our injunction was served we saw it in the paper that Reed, of Tower Hill Branch, had been affected. That is the first we heard about it.

The General President : Did you know that on May 3rd Liverpool was communicating with the Albert Dock on the telephone?

Mr. Donnelly : No, not with any other port.

The General President : Did you hear anything about the attitude of Mr. Clouston?

Mr. Donnelly : No, I never heard his name mentioned.

The General President : Do you know that on May 6th there were two telephone communications to Newcastle-on-Tyne?

Mr. Donnelly : No. I knew nothing about it. This is the first I have heard of it now.

The General President : On May 6th?

Mr. Donnelly : No, I never heard a word about it. I knew nothing outside Liverpool, not even London.

The General President : On May 7th did you hear anything?

Mr. Donnelly : No.

The General President : On May 8th did you hear of any talk of London?

Mr. Donnelly : No. We did hear a bit later while the Strike had been on more than half-way to say that the North-East Coast was affected.

The General President : I am speaking of May 8th.

Mr. Donnelly : What day was that? Half-way through the Strike we did hear there was some trouble on the North-East Coast.

The General President : On May 10th did you hear anything of London?

Mr. Donnelly : No, we knew nothing at all about London.

The General President : So Mr. McVey and the others did not let you know what was going on?

Mr. Donnelly : They could not have done. If that happened, I do not remember them saying anything. I think I attended every meeting; we had a meeting three or four times a week.

The General President : You had one on the 10th.

Mr. Donnelly : I think we had one practically every day.

The General President : Did you have any trunk messages?

Mr. Donnelly: None whatever, anywhere.

The General President: That is all I have to ask you.

Mr. Donnelly: On the Saturday there was a meeting of the whole of the Trade Unions in Liverpool at the Stadium; I attended the afternoon one, and there was one in the evening also.

The General President: I am talking about meetings held amongst yourselves.

Mr. Donnelly: No, I knew nothing about any port outside Liverpool.

The General President: You formed yourselves into a Committee, did not you?

Mr. Donnelly: We were all together; all the Officials.

The General President: You formed yourselves into a Committee?

Mr. Donnelly: We all met; all the Officials.

The General President: You are a Committee now, are not you?

Mr. Donnelly: We have been meeting practically every morning since. We are all suspended Officials.

The General President: You are all acting one in conjunction with the other?

Captain Davis: Do you remember, Mr. Donnelly, the men going down to the South Branch to Mr. Deckers, bewildered, asking for money—lock-out or strike pay—because they were ignorant of the position? Do you remember that?

Mr. Donnelly: No, I never went to the South Branch.

Captain Davis: Have you any evidence of it?

Mr. Donnelly: None whatever in any shape or form.

Captain Davis: Do you remember the case being circulated, Allen?

Mr. Allen: No, not at all.

Captain Davis: That the men were looking for some, and there was no money for them; they were bewildered?

Mr. Allen: No, I know nothing about it.

Mr. Jones: Can they give us any idea about following round the Officials, going to Liverpool and holding a meeting?

Mr. Donnelly: Tell me one place I ever followed them round.

Mr. Jones: The Officials.

Mr. Donnelly : No Officials. Tell me any man I ever followed.

Mr. Jones : I am asking the question of either of you.

Mr. Allen : I did not ; certainly not.

Mr. Donnelly : In answer to Brother Jones, I do not know that I ever followed anyone round. As a matter of fact, I knew there were meetings—because cards were sent out—at South End and North End, and, I think, Picton Hall. I was not there at the start. Brother Jones and I had a few heated words after the meeting was over. I met Brothers Jones and Jarman, and I spoke my mind to Jones that very night. But I never followed anyone round.

The General President : No ; but some of you were outside of the places where the meetings were held.

Mr. Donnelly : I was at two meetings.

The General President (*to Mr. Allen*) : Were you at any?

Mr. Allen : I was at the Picton Hall one.

The General President : What was your idea in going there?

Mr. Allen : There had been a rumpus at one—I had not been to that one—so I went to the other to see what was going to happen.

The General President : You were there outside, were not you?

Mr. Allen : No. That took place at the South Branch.

The General President : You were outside the Picton Hall?

Mr. Allen : Yes ; but I was not too close to Picton Hall ; I was in the gardens, as a matter of fact.

The General President : Tell the Committee this. You knew very well you would not be admitted?

Mr. Allen : Yes.

The General President : What was your idea in going there with a number of others?

Mr. Allen : I do not know that I was with a number of others. I went there to see what was going to happen.

The General President : What did you expect would happen?

Mr. Allen : I did not know.

The General President : Did you not expect something?

Mr. Allen : I wondered what sort of a meeting it was going to be.

The General President : Did you go there to help the Union men to get in?

Mr. Allen : I said this much, that it was in the interests of everyone who had a Union book to go inside and take an interest in the Union.

The General President : You only went there as a spectator to see what was going to happen?

Mr. Donnelly : With regard to the Picton Hall meeting. When I arrived on the scene there were about 30 trying to get past the gate. I went there with no one. It was not a pre-arranged thing we should go to the meeting. I went up there about eight or half-past eight, and the crowd were outside, and O'Connor was advising the men they were to show their books to go into the meeting. O'Connor said, " If we have any meeting you show your books." Some of them showed their books, and others, in the National Minority Movement, marched away up and down.

The General President : Would it not have been better to stop away under the circumstances?

Mr. Donnelly : There was no harm done. It might have been better, but we were doing nothing; we were not on pay.

Mr. Jarman : Did not you say you were coming across very likely after the meeting?

Mr. Donnelly : Yes.

Mr. Jarman : Will you say you were there from eight o'clock?

Mr. Donnelly : You were having a meeting at Picton Hall, and I was in Lime Street and coming back when you and Jones were coming up the street. As a matter of fact, walking past the Empire was Mr. Grainger, of New York—

Mr. Jarman : Do you think it would be helpful to this Union that some of the Officials there in a bunch should have used strong language towards Mr. Jones?

Mr. Donnelly : I certainly used strong language to Jones, and I also heard language used by another to Mr. Jones.

The General President : Did you hear things said about the President—about a twisted body, and twitting him because he was a cripple?

Mr. Donnelly : I did hear that used, but I did not use it.

The General President : I think we have served all useful purposes with regard to you. Will you please retire?

*(Mr. Donnelly and Mr. Allen then withdrew.)*

*(Adjourned for a short time.)*



CASES OF MESSRS. BECKETT, COSGROVE, JENKINS,  
WARBURTON, S. LLOYD, AND JOWETT.

*(Mr. Beckett, Mr. Cosgrove, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Sam Lloyd, and Mr. Jowett were then called in.)*

The General President: I want to tell you, gentlemen, that you are charged with violating the Constitution and Rules of the Union and defying the Executive Council. I do not think we need go over all the ground that we have already traversed. It is generally admitted that you acted contrary to the Rules. Now is your opportunity to explain why you did so, one at a time.

Mr. Cosgrove: The conditions in Liverpool prevailing at that time at the commencement of the Strike, the members on the ships considered by not coming out they were endangering their lives by the mass pickets. I want to say the men on the ships were demanding ballot papers which, through the lack of postal facilities, I believe were delayed. But this did not satisfy them. Also, ships inward bound during the first week of the Strike resented Captains approaching them on the secret ballot. I cannot say any further than with the conditions prevailing it was impossible to do otherwise than what we did; that is, all transport being stopped, and the men not having a lead from us.

Mr. Jowett: I am going to appeal to this Executive, and also to the President, to look upon the exceptional circumstances with which we were faced. First, we had the Transport Workers, and it was practically an ultimatum to all our people to say upon which side they were going to throw their weight. On the other hand, we had all the men stopping us and coming to the office, and, I might say, even going so far as going to our houses, and asking us which side we were going to take with regard to this Strike. The circumstances were laid before practically every man. It was not what you might say a hurry-up movement; every man knew, and every man had to weigh up the circumstances which were enforced upon him; and we weighed them up very carefully. The Transport Workers' people demanded from us by a given time what action we were going to take. That was only one. We had also the Minority Movement, headed by a band of men who had caused a great deal of trouble to this Union, and they were fairly well backed up at this particular juncture. On the other hand, we had the newly formed Association of Seagoing Cooks and Butchers and Bakers, and they were in a position to call out the men, and they called out the men, and the men responded to them. On the other hand, we had the newly formed Association of Stewards and Pantrymen, organised by our friend Dodd, whose sole object is the handing over of those men to the Transport Workers—and they were responding. Further to that, we had men from ships approaching the Transport Workers' people, cooks and stewards outside those two organisations, and demanding from them what action they should take. They said to those men, "If you are men at all, and if you believe in the Trade Union

movement, then you should know what action you should take. This is not a strike of our people, this is a strike of the Miners." All those circumstances weighed up—mind you, weighed up very carefully—I had to consider; I weighed them up, and I signed a paper, and I am not ashamed of my action, because I am a Trade Unionist, and have been for many years, and I hope to be a Trade Unionist all the rest of my life—I never want any man, woman, or child even, now or in the future, to point at me the finger of scorn and say, "In that particular Strike in 1926 you were one of those who told the men to blackleg on the rest of the Trade Unionists of this country." Such a position I could not face. And I am going to throw myself right on to you people. You are the Executive Council. I admit I broke the Constitution of the Union; but I admit this fact, that I broke it under exceptional circumstances; and I never want to see for the rest of my life another case of the same kind. That is my case, Mr. President and Gentlemen. I just put it right before you in as few plain words as I possibly can. I want you to weigh up your judgment the same way as we had to weigh up ours. Give us your best judgment and the benefit of the doubt.

The General President: Who gave you a job in this Union?

Mr. Jowett: Yourself, Sir.

The General President: So you are under a certain amount of obligation to me, are you not?

Mr. Jowett: Yes, in many ways.

The General President: Could you rely on my judgment?

Mr. Jowett: Yes, I could.

The General President: You admit I have had a few years' experience in the Trade Union movement?

Mr. Jowett: Yes.

The General President: And ought to know a little bit?

Mr. Jowett: Yes.

The General President: Do you not think it would have been better if you had relied on my judgment?

Mr. Jowett: Well, Sir, if I might point out this to you. I know the exceptional circumstances in which you are placed: you have to rely upon other information outside of your own, and I feel sure that if you could get right to the men themselves, right amongst the men, you would find a far different feeling, and you yourself would have a different feeling altogether from that which you now possess.

The General President: That is to say, then, that I do not know what is going on? That is what that means. I can tell

you this, Mr. Jowett, when you are as cognisant of affairs as I am, not in one place but in every place, you will be considered wise man. Now, you said you were a Trade Unionist?

Mr. Jowett: Yes.

The General President: Is not the first obligation of a Trade Unionist to respect the Constitution of his Union?

Mr. Jowett: Yes.

The General President: If you have no Constitution you have no Union. Do you know that there are 700 Old Age Pensioners drawing 5s. a week from this Union?

Mr. Jowett: Yes.

The General President: Now, supposing that everyone had followed your example, and the example of the others, and this Union had gone down—as it might well have gone down—did you ever think what was going to become of those 700 poor old chaps? Would you like to face them and tell them, “We are very sorry, but we have blown away all our money on this Strike; there is no Old Age Pension for you”? Would you like to do that?

Mr. Jowett: If I may answer that question, I would say this, that even had we gone down I would have been prepared to face those 700 Old Age Pensioners; because I feel assured of this, that both the Cooks and Stewards and the Firemen and Sailors of this country, had they known the position with regard to the Old Age Pensioners, they would never have let them down for their 5s. a week.

The General President: All I can say is that you are talking foolish. I have before my mind the Derbyshire Miners' Union, one of the best Unions of this country that was; they are paying their men 10s. a week, but, in consequence of strikes, the Old Age Pensioners in that Union have been put on the scrap-heap some five years or more, and they remain there yet; no one is willing or ready to help them. That would have been the end of the Old Age Pensioners of the sea. And you think that the Sailors and Firemen and the Cooks and Stewards would help them out? If you think that, you are very simple.

Mr. Jowett: I am only going by the past experiences we have had with our old Benevolent Fund. I never recollect any particular case ever coming before the Cooks' and Stewards' Branch of the old Cooks' and Stewards' Union that was ever turned down.

The General President: You had a very small sum. You will remember that 700 Old Age Pensioners at 5s. a week each is a considerable sum of money. When it comes to dealing with

£10 or £15 a week it is a small matter; but when you get to 700 it is a big thing. And you will bear in mind your Constitution provides that; men join for that; and it is a sacred duty on you, and every other man in the Union, to see that whatever happens you will never deprive those men of what they are entitled to receive under your Constitution. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Council, there was a manifesto drawn up, and we have drawn up a line of defence—Mr. McVey drew it up. I heard it read, and I think that without elaboration of any kind that covers the whole of all that I could say. I admit that we did get mixed up with the Strike in Liverpool, under extraordinary circumstances. The circumstances, I suppose, have been pounded and compounded this morning several times. I do not want to go into that. But I am prepared at this moment to say that under the same circumstances—I would go so far as to say I do not think there is a man in the room who would have done anything different from what we did at the time under those circumstances: Our action in your opinion may appear unjustifiable. Locally we thought different, and honestly I may say we had those thoughts. I, myself, under the same conditions would do the same thing again to-morrow if I were placed in the same position and place. I do not think I shall say much more on that; because, as a matter of fact, I do not think I could. You have heard Mr. McVey's defence. I stand by that. He has called our attention to it. I do not want you to ask me whether Mr. McVey led me into this. He did not. I heard the whole thing along with those of us who were out at the time at Liverpool. We were asked our opinion of it individually; we were asked, did we agree with it, and we said "Yes, we did." We gave that answer in all good conscience, and I am prepared to stand by it now.

The General President: Have you ever had any reason to complain of my conduct to you?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Never in my life.

The General President: I never treated you unfairly?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: No.

The General President: Nor uncivilly?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: No.

The General President: You have known me a long time?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Quite a number of years, Sir.

The General President: And you would not take me to be a fool?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: I never did that in my life.

The General President: Do not you think, seeing that I was President of the Union, my advice would have been more advantageous to you than anyone else's?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Under the circumstances, Mr. President, I say no, most emphatically no, with all due respect to your knowledge of the Trade Union movement. Under the circumstances locally, I say that. I appeal to the Executive when I say it was practically impossible, as a leader of men in Liverpool, at the moment to turn round and supply "scabs" to a company that never asked us for their assistance the whole of the time I have been a Delegate in the port—and that is a considerable number of years, as you know. I would not supply them with blacklegs at the time they asked me, and that is the only hand, I think, that the majority of us took in the Strike.

The General President: Do you know this Circular, which was issued on May 4th, giving advice what to do?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: From whom was that?

The General President: A Circular issued by me on May 4th, telling you if the men asked questions, what they were to do.

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes.

The General President: You know it?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes.

The General President: I advised you to tell the men if they did not want to sign on you could not compel them.

Mr. Sam Lloyd: That is right.

The General President: You remember that?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes.

The General President: Do you remember I pointed out how the men's dole might be saved?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes.

The General President: And how they might get lock-out pay from us?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes.

The General President: Do you think you were wise to advise the men on another course?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: I venture to say that the majority of us did not advise anyone to strike. I will go so far as to say now that there are men working in the Organisation who did more than any of us who are out to-day in the way of calling men out on strike. I will say that one man, or two men, did more than the whole 22 of us did; and he did that in one hour; and we were out for the full period—he did more damage than we did

in the whole period—and I am not squealing when I say that; I am only trying to convince you we took the right line.

The General President: It was one of your colleagues?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes; and he is here, as a matter of fact. I also had instructions from Mr. McVey to get out and put the position plainly and bluntly in front of them, which we did do in Liverpool.

The General President: You know the result of the ballot?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes.

The General President: Two to one.

Mr. Sam Lloyd: And I know when we got it.

The General President: Two to one against any strikes.

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes; but I know when we got the result of the ballot.

The General President: Never mind when you got the result of the ballot; the fact was that the ballot revealed the fact there were two to one of the men against any strike. Do you know that?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes.

The General President: So that they could not have been very enthusiastic for any strikes. Did you ever go out and have any meetings advising the men what to do—public meetings?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: No, not at the time of the strike, I did not. I did not think it advisable.

The General President: Have you had any meetings during the last six years?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes. I have had them in Bootle, and got the Minutes myself.

The General President: I cannot contradict you.

Mr. Sam Lloyd: I would not say I had if I had not. I have got them; and I believe if you look on the wall—they are hanging on the wall at Liverpool—you will find the Minutes of the meetings.

The General President: How long is it since you had a meeting?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: It was a considerable time ago, not as regular as we ought to have had them, admitted.

The General President: How long is it since you had a Branch meeting, not a public meeting, in Bootle?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Me, personally?

The General President: Yes.

Mr. Sam Lloyd: The last meeting of any sort held in Bootle was for the election of the ordinary members to the last Annual General Meeting.

The General President: Twelve months ago?

Mr. Sam Lloyd: Yes.

Mr. Beckett: I will put the position before you as it stood in Liverpool. It was very hard. Our Dock gates were shut. And also on the Monday, bear in mind, before the Strike came, with regard to a ship called the "Megantic," when I went down to sign that ship on I was stopped at the bottom of the stairs. I asked what for. They said, "A strike." I said, "No strike is on yet, you must sign on the ship." They said, "We are not going to sign." I said, "You must sign." Those men did not want to sign in that ship; in fact, they came up and asked for permits on the Saturday morning because they did not want to go in the ship. The position in Liverpool was that strong that we could do nothing else. In fact, we could not go near the men. In fact, the "Cedric" was full of nothing else but transport workers, bar detectives, and if I am not mistaken, she is yet. That was the position in Liverpool, and we could not do anything else. Even with regard to the "Megantic," on the Monday they wanted to come down and hold the ship up.

The General President: How many Union men were there on the "Cedric"?

Mr. Beckett: There were no more than twelve on the deck.

The General President: How many crew did she carry?

Mr. Beckett: Close on 40—36 to 40. I am speaking for the deck only.

The General President: About 300 men altogether?

Mr. Beckett: Yes.

The General President: And there were twelve men in the firehold, members?

Mr. Beckett: No, not the firehold at all. I said the deck department, not the engine department.

The General President: Were they wanting to come out on strike?

Mr. Beckett: The deck department?

The General President: Yes.

Mr. Beckett: No. They refused to sign. Some men signed and some did not.

The General President: Who wanted to come out on strike?

Mr. Beckett: I told you—the "Megantic" on the Monday.

The General President: They were non-Unionists?

Mr. Beckett: Yes.

The General President: Why did not you let them come out? Is it your place as a Union Official to stop non-Union men coming out on strike if they want to?

Mr. Beckett: Certainly not.

Mr. Jenkins: I have no excuse to offer in regard to the General Strike. From the General President's point of view I have done wrong, and I have to admit it; but if I was in the same position again, I have to state I would take the same action again. On the Monday prior to the Strike, when the "Montreal" signed, the men in the catering department came and asked me as one man whether they should sign or not. I said, "Yes, to-day you must sign; but probably to-morrow you will not have the opportunity of signing." As far as my defence is concerned, it is in what Mr. McVey read out this morning, and I stand by what he read out and put before you to-day.

Mr. Warburton: I was in the position on Monday morning when the "Oriana" signed that the men did not want to sign. I impressed on the men to sign as there was no strike on, with the result that all hands signed. On the Tuesday morning we were faced with this proposition in Liverpool—and you have heard it from the lot of us—when we went down to the Dock we were refused admittance; the Dock gates were all shut; we were told to keep away and not interfere with the men. We told the men the position, and all the rest of it. The men who had signed on came to us and asked what they were to do; we told them to join the ships. As a matter of fact, we gave them permits; we went down to the Dock at midnight on the Wednesday and got the men through the pickets, with the result that the ship went away. I am making no apologies for what I did during the Strike; I would do the same thing to-morrow under the circumstances; we could not do anything else.

The General President: You men are not doing justice to yourselves, the way you are putting it. You admit you have done a wrong?

Mr. Warburton: Yes.



The General President : Breaking the Constitution of the Union ; and you say you would do the same thing to-morrow.

Mr. Warburton : Under the circumstances I could not do anything else.

The General President : I say that is not a wise thing for you to say.

Mr. Warburton : If you were faced with the position as we were—our homes and everything else were threatened—we were distinctly told we were given an hour to consider what we would do.

The General President : But, Mr. Warburton, who were the men that were threatening you?

Mr. Warburton : The men round the Docks, our own men, a lot of them were.

The General President : Who were not members of the Union. What did they want?

Mr. Warburton : They wanted us to advise the men to go on strike.

The General President : What for?

Mr. Warburton : It was a General Strike.

The General President : Could not they go and do that themselves?

Mr. Warburton : They wanted us to do it, or get us into trouble with the men.

The General President : Why did you do it?

Mr. Warburton : Because we could not do anything else under the circumstances. We never went down and called the men out.

The General President : All right. Now, does anyone want to ask any questions of these gentlemen?

Mr. Jarman : You say in the "Megantic" and the "Cedric" they were all full of Transport Workers. Did the Transport Workers' Union do anything to pull or force those men out? Because I remember clearly in New York that all those men who signed in the ship were Transport Workers.

Mr. Beckett : Yes.

Mr. Jarman : And if the Transport Workers were threatening bodily harm to you, why did not you point out that their members were sailing in the "Megantic" and the "Cedric" and the "Mount Royal" and every other ship?

Mr. Beckett: The Transport Workers' pickets stopped them going through the gate.

Mr. Jarman: They were serving on the ships.

Mr. Beckett: No.

Mr. Sam Lloyd: In reply to Mr. Jarman. With regard to the "Megantic," I might say that the Transport Workers off the "Megantic" took it upon themselves at that time to become pickets, and they picketed the White Star gate and their men, the Transport Workers of the "Megantic," for the whole of the Strike. More than that, a C.P.R. boat, whose name I forget—you remember, Mr. Garland—yes, it was the "Royal Mount"—we had a member of the Transport Workers who, with his colleagues of the Transport Workers, did exactly the same thing; they waited until night time and walked up to the men bringing everyone with them, and a Delegate of the Sailors' and Firemen's Union did not have a chance. That is in reply to Mr. Jarman.

The General President: All the questions that are necessary have been asked, and we do not want to prolong this thing for ever, because we have gone into it very thoroughly to-day, and Mr. McVey has made a statement which has been signed by the whole of you.

Mr. Warburton: That is right.

The General President: Therefore, to prolong the matter on the question is wasting time.

*(Mr. Beckett, Mr. Cosgrove, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Sam Lloyd, and Mr. Jowett then withdrew.)*

CASES OF MESSRS. P. O'CONNOR, M. MURPHY, J. BASSON, W. J. GREEN, E. GALVIN, AND R. MURRAY.

*(Mr. P. O'Connor, Mr. M. Murphy, Mr. J. Basson, Mr W. J. Green, Mr. E. Galvin, and Mr. R. Murray were then called in.)*

The General President: Now, you gentlemen know why you have come here. Mr. McVey put in a statement this morning which I understand has been signed by the whole of you. ("Yes.") Do you stand by that statement? ("Yes.") Do any of you want to say anything in your defence? It is a very serious charge to break the Rules and Constitution of a Union and to call unfortunate men out on strike and cause them to lose their employment. Some of them will never get back again. It was done in a most unconstitutional manner. You can explain or give any good reasons, and now is your opportunity.

Mr. Basson: I went down to the "Scythia." I said to the men, "I request you not to sign on to-day pending the result of the ballot." In that particular ship there were 14 men in the

Transport Workers in the engine department. Mr. Brooks, the Shipmaster, said, "Is that Mr. Wilson's orders?" I said, "No; but this is Tuesday, and the ship is not going away until Saturday, and the ballot will be through by Thursday."

The General President : Then you did advise them not to sign?

Mr. Basson : Yes, pending the result of the ballot.

Mr. Galvin : As far as I was concerned, after I left the Executive Council—the first and only time I have been to an Executive Council—I went back and took over the inside work of the Catering Section in order to allow a man to go on his holidays—Egan. During that time, of course, I took my orders from Mr. McVey, the District Secretary, and carried on as I thought wise, and using what discretion I had. In my particular case I went ahead with my work as far as taking contributions was concerned, and also issued a large number of N.M.B. cards. I was told I was prevented from doing so. As far as any wrongdoing is concerned, if I have done wrong I have to abide by that; but unfortunately the circumstances were such in Liverpool that I could see there was no other alternative, and, of course, I had to stand by my colleagues. That is all I have to say.

Mr. Green : It is a most unfortunate thing to have to come forward here before the Executive in a matter such as this; but our position in Liverpool was an unfortunate position also. I consider that the peculiar position we were placed in—we were asked by certain people, and the certain people were our own members, what we were going to do; how we were going to act. We were asked by other people what we were going to do, and how we were going to act; and we considered that it was best for the support of our Union and for the support of our own members to take what was a wrong action according to the Executive's judgment. For that I humbly apologise, for the simple reason that I say at this juncture it was wrong. The men themselves asked us, "Are you asking us to go and blackleg with people who are not working at the ship?" and we were asked to send men down to certain ships to work. The result was that we did not see our way clear to say to those men that we could ask them to go and do that work. I think honestly we might have done wrong, but in the peculiar position we were placed in we thought we were doing the right thing for the Organisation. We were threatened on all sides as regards the office and the men that were going down to those respective ships; and we thought we were doing the right thing. I leave it to the Executive to judge whether it was right or wrong. I have admitted that in my opinion we did wrong by not abiding by the Executive's ruling; and if such a thing occurred gain, needless to say, I think we would ask the Executive previous to taking the particular action we did take then.

Mr. O'Connor : So far as I am concerned, in this particular case I am in a very unfortunate position with regard to the

Branch I am concerned with. I am not the only Official connected with the Branch; there is a Secretary and the District Secretary; you all know, the majority of you, I am one of those chaps who are to be found at every moment. On this particular occasion I made no effort towards saying or doing anything in the matter, but two or three men came across and asked me what was I intending to do with regard to the Shire boats that were signing on. I said, "I am not in a position to tell you what to do just at the moment; I am awaiting instructions." With that they went out and told the men, who came into the office and said if I did not do anything towards asking the men to come out of the Shipping Office they were the men who should go into the ship; that if I did not come out and support them and ask the other men to come out, I should have to put up with the consequences. I thought it was the only opportunity I had to defend myself, and the Union, and I turned round and went to the Shipping Office and appealed to the men to come out to save any trouble that was likely to take place. That is all I have to say. I am quite prepared to stand by Mr. McVey in any statement he has made.

Mr. R. Murray: I can only substantiate the words of Mr. Basson here. I was down at the "Baltic City," which was supposed to sign articles on the Monday. The General Strike was declared at twelve o'clock the night before. I was on board the ship with Mr. Basson, and when the members of the catering department asked me what was the word, I told them that up to now the word was for them to sign on. The trouble arose about Wednesday. The members of the catering department were told they must work twelve hours a day, that was from eight in the morning to eight at night; and the work they were put to do then was looking after the men who were living aboard the ship. Quite a number of those men said they did not like the idea of it, and they looked to me to advise them. They thought as I should say that they should stay away from the ship. I told the majority of the men on the Wednesday that they could please themselves. There was a matter of about six men left the ship; the remainder of them worked the twelve hours a day and went back into the ship. After that I took very little interest in the majority of the men, because I could not get near the Docks. I never went near the Docks. With regard to Mr. McVey's statement, the position in Liverpool at that time was critical, and I think for anyone to advise who had the mind to look after these men living on board the ships, and feeding aboard the ships, and everything else, it might have proved pretty awkward to him. That is all I have to say.

Mr. M. Murphy: About a week previous to the Strike I was transferred from Liverpool North to Birkenhead, and the question of advising men was taken out of our hands by the Company's representatives, who told the men there would be no further signing on until after the trouble was over. So far as the action we adopted is concerned, I think it was the only

possible one that could be adopted in the circumstances; and I think that anyone who was on the spot would absolutely realise it was the only possible thing that could be done. It was done in the interests of the Union, and not in the interests of the Officials. That is all I have to say.

The General President: I want to ask you a few questions, Mr. Murphy. You are not a sailor or a firemen or a steward, are you. As a matter of fact, you are a clerk?

Mr. M. Murphy: Yes.

The General President: You were a long time in the Liverpool Central Office, were not you?

Mr. M. Murphy: For a number of years.

The General President: Were you in Court a week last Thursday?

Mr. M. Murphy: I was not.

The General President: Did you read anything about the case?

Mr. M. Murphy: I read the whole case.

The General President: Did you read the evidence of a young fellow called Adams?

Mr. M. Murphy: I did.

The General President: Was what he said true?

Mr. M. Murphy: In what direction?

The General President: That he had never been up to London to have the accounts investigated?

Mr. M. Murphy: I did not read that in the paper.

The General President: Well, I will put it to you in another way. Did you come to London with Adams and Collins to have the accounts investigated?

Mr. M. Murphy: No; I am afraid you are wrong.

The General President: Were you not with them?

Mr. M. Murphy: No, I was not.

The General President: Never?

Mr. M. Murphy: Never with them. I worked in the same building.

The General President: Were you ever up in London to give an explanation of the Liverpool accounts?

Mr. M. Murphy: Never in my life.

The General President: No question about the Unemployed pay, was there?

Mr. M. Murphy: There was.

The General President: What was it?

Mr. M. Murphy: It was something that transpired before I took over.

The General President: What was the question of the Unemployed accounts?

Mr. M. Murphy: There were a lot of questions, as far as I remember.

The General President: Is it true that £5,000 could not be accounted for?

Mr. M. Murphy: I believe it was. But I was not aware of it.

The General President: What had you to do with the Unemployed account?

Mr. M. Murphy: I simply took it over after the illness of the late Johnny Kelly.

The General President: And you did pay out Unemployed money?

Mr. M. Murphy: Yes.

The General President: And there was £5,000 which could not be accounted for?

Mr. M. Murphy: I do not know the exact figure, but I know we recovered a lot by going to Kew.

The General President: It was a large sum of money?

Mr. M. Murphy: It was approximately £5,000, if I remember rightly.

The General President: Did you pay any money out in your own time?

Mr. M. Murphy: Yes.

The General President: Did you get proper receipts for it?

Mr. M. Murphy: Yes, I did.

The General President: How is it that £5,000 could not be accounted for?

Mr. M. Murphy : Because, unfortunately, in my opinion there were a lot of things happening before I was advised to take over, after the illness of Johnny Kelly.

The General President : Why were you suspended from the Central Office by Mr. McVey?

Mr. M. Murphy : I simply acted on instructions.

The General President : Let us have the truth. You were the chief clerk there?

Mr. M. Murphy : Only for the Health Insurance.

The General President : But you have just told us you paid out the Unemployment money?

Mr. M. Murphy : During the illness of the late John Kelly.

The General President : And you did pay it out?

Mr. M. Murphy : Yes.

The General President : And Mr. McVey shifted you?

Mr. M. Murphy : There was no shifting necessary, in my opinion, because it was only a matter of going over the road from the Central Branch to the Board of Trade buildings, which were loaned to us.

The General President : Do not fence. You were put from being a clerk to being a collector on the Dock. Is that true or untrue?

Mr. M. Murphy : No. Of course, that was for your benefit.

The General President : In what way?

Mr. M. Murphy : For recognition as an Official of the Organisation.

The General President : That is to say, you could do better outside than you could managing the books where there was £5,000 not accounted for?

Mr. M. Murphy : I was not consulted on that.

The General President : Is that what you mean?

Mr. M. Murphy : No, I do not reply that, and I hope the Committee will not take it that way, because that is a slight; and I do not think it is fair to me after 18 years' work in the Organisation where I have not been definitely reprov'd for misconduct, only insinuations which have never been proved—and I do not think it is fair.

The General President : You do know there was over £5,000, of which you had part handling—I will put it in that way—that could not be accounted for? There were no receipts to show who had the money?

Mr. M. Murphy : I said at the time that I would be responsible from the date I took over, which was only fair to me; because before I took over I did not know what happened, and four or five people dabbled with that money before I took over.

The General President : Now, you know Adams?

Mr. M. Murphy : Yes.

The General President : Did he come to London?

Mr. M. Murphy : He did.

The General President : What was the object of his coming with Collins?

Mr. M. Murphy : That I do not know; because I was in an entirely different department in the building.

The General President : You knew nothing about it?

Mr. M. Murphy : I knew there were defalcations, but I did not know to what extent.

The General President : And you were shifted out of that Central Office by Mr. McVey?

Mr. M. Murphy : As the District Secretary, yes.

The General President : And you went as a collector on the Docks?

Mr. M. Murphy : I went where I was told to go.

The General President : Have you ever been able to collect enough to pay your wages during the time you have been on the job?

Mr. M. Murphy : Yes.

The General President : Have you seen your account as made up where it shows your average was not more than £3 10s. a week?

Mr. M. Murphy : No. That was only one particular week.

The General President : You have never had any complaints from me, have you?

Mr. M. Murphy : Only on one occasion.



The General President : Did not Mr. McVey complain that I was telling him that you were not worth your money?

Mr. M. Murphy : Only on one occasion.

The General President : All right. And you are quite satisfied that Adams did come to this office with Collins to explain the matter?

Mr. M. Murphy : Adams and Collins came, but I had nothing at all to do with that.

The General President : If Adams swore in the box in the presence of Mr. McVey that he had never come here to have his accounts investigated, he told a deliberate lie?

Mr. M. Murphy : I should say so, yes.

The General President : Then I will ask you no more. Does any other member want to ask any questions?

Mr. Basson : During the unofficial strike I was assaulted and had eleven teeth knocked out. I was personally complimented by the Superintendent of the Clan Company and by the C.P.R. Company and the members of the Maritime Board. But on this occasion I could not see my way to go near his men, as I said before. There were 14 men who had been in the Transport Workers and had already got their orders, standing there waiting to see what I would say.

The General President : Yet you signed the famous manifesto to stand by McVey?

Mr. Basson : I could not do anything else.

The General President : Any more questions?

Mr. O'Connor : With regard to the unofficial strike, I would like to have a word on it.

The General President : It is outside the question ; but you can have a word.

Mr. O'Connor : I would like to let the Executive Council know with regard to the unofficial strike, the people who took all the credit for that were not here, they were ten or twelve miles from the port, but they got all the honours. A band collected outside my house and was there for hours. I am the man who broke the whole lot up, and not like the Rileys, who stand by Wilson, " the poor old cripple," but who cannot stand by themselves.

The General President : Are you the man who said that if you had the crippled old bastard in Liverpool you would break him up?

Mr. O'Connor: My dear Sir, such a word never left my mouth. I am not in the habit of hitting cripples or anyone—I only hit those who come to hit me. A man who says that and will come to me face to face, I will go through it with him.

The General President: You did not say it?

Mr. O'Connor: No, I did not. All I did say was this. I said, "As far as Havelock Wilson is concerned, I say the man is in a very unfortunate position. If the man was capable of getting about and seeing his own business done instead of depending on parasites that are coming along job-seeking and telling tales and never tell a word of truth, the job would not be in the position it is to-day." I maintain that.

The General President: Do you know that the income of the Liverpool District has gone up considerably since you left?

Mr. O'Connor: I do not believe it.

(Mr. P. O'Connor, Mr. M. Murphy, Mr. J. Basson, Mr. W. J. Green, Mr. E. Galvin and Mr. R. Murray then withdrew.)

#### CASES OF MESSRS. MURPHY, ALDRIDGE, CANDLISH AND KENNY.

(Mr. Peter Murphy, Mr. Aldridge, Mr. Candlish and Mr. Kenny were then called in.)

The General President: You have seen Mr. McVey's statement, have you not?

Mr. Kenny: Read it right through.

The General President: And you have signed it?

Mr. Kenny: Yes.

The General President: And you all agree with what he said? ("Yes.") You know that you have broken the Rules and Constitution of the Union?

Mr. Kenny: Yes, that is admitted.

The General President: And you are liable to be not only deprived of your jobs but to be expelled from the Union, because it is a very serious matter when you break the Rules and Constitution and defy the Executive Council. That is what you did. Have you anything to say in the way of an excuse for having done that?

Mr. Kenny: In the first place, on the Monday morning when we all signed the document with Mr. McVey we only got an

hour's notice given to us by the Council of Action. They told us exactly that if we did not give them an answer within an hour that they would take action themselves. Consequently we all signed that document after perusing it very carefully. There was no man coerced or intimidated, and every one of the Officials at that meeting signed that document. When we came out Mr. Decker authorised Aldridge and I to take the men out of the "Adreola"; we did so. Then we went to the "Fulmer" and the other Cork boat, and we told the engine-room and deck department. They said, "Does it matter, because we have had notice ourselves, as this ship is in the Federation, and we are finished to-night?"

On the following morning Mr. Decker was in the office, and Mr. Aldridge and myself went in. He said, "Peter, get down to the Docks and tell these men they are on articles and it does not affect them." We went down. All the Docks were locked; the pickets of the Dock Labourers were there. They menaced me, and I said, "Look here, it is no pigeon of mine; I have been here twelve years; I am going to address the men and tell them the position." The men said, "Look here, Peter, we will pull your house to pieces if you come down with a declaration like that." The Superintendent said to me, "Kenny, what is your opinion?" I said, "It is very precarious." He said, "What attitude are you going to adopt?" I said, "I have 17 nephews and they are all going to sea. I had better go up to Mr. Decker." I went back again and told Mr. Decker. I said, "Harry, the position is rotten." "Oh," he said, "I cannot see it; will not the men take your opinion?" I said, "No, they want you down." The three of us went down immediately. We attempted to go inside the Dock gates, and the policeman stopped us. The policeman said, "Where are you going?" Decker said, "I am the Secretary of the Union." The policeman said, "Never mind, you stop where you are." They had to let a motor-car out, and Superintendent Jackson, the Superintendent of the firm, was approached by Decker. They allowed him to go to the ship-repairing works, then he got on to Captain Walsh, and Captain Walsh told him to meet the Second Mate, who was paying the ship. We sent in, and the gates were opened for the crowd to come out. On the Wednesday morning Decker spoke to the crowd, the deck, the engine-room and the stewards, and he put it to them they were on articles, and, even so, there was a ballot on. Immediately it was put to the vote the ship said, "Harry, go back on the 'phone and get us paid off; we have our homes to protect as well as you."

Mr. Aldridge: I substantiate Mr. Kenny's statement with regard to that. I was with him.

Mr. Peter Murphy: I was only about six days in Liverpool when this trouble arose, and I, for one, was confronted with the trouble the night before the Strike was called. I had to get one ship away, I think it was the "Metagama." We had a meeting in the afternoon to get the men to sign. I was told

off by Mr. Riley to see the ship out. I did that, and had a muster; I think we found there were eight men short, six Firemen and two Trimmers. In the meantime Mr. Riley came aboard and asked me how I was getting on. I said, "Eight men short." Mr. Wilson, of the C.P., was present at the time. Mr. Riley said to Mr. Wilson, "You take eight men." Mr. Wilson said, "No; the gangway is just up and there are possibilities of the men coming aboard." I said, "That is right." Mr. Riley said, "If you do not take those eight men I will take the men ashore." Mr. Riley was drunk, I tell you honestly, and Mr. Wilson, of the Canadian Pacific, will testify my statements. I had to get him to sit down and make a second muster. I went round myself and had a second muster, and found there were only five short, and Mr. Riley completed that ship. That is the only job I had any difficulties with. The next ship was the "Andalia," but I did not do that, because Mr. Basson took the men out. Those are the only two ships I had to deal with during my experience in Liverpool.

The General President: Did you receive a telegram from me, Mr. Murphy?

Mr. Peter Murphy: Yes, I received your telegram and answered it.

The General President: When you got that telegram was there a meeting going on somewhere close by?

Mr. Peter Murphy: I never attended any meetings of any description in Liverpool. I did not interest myself in it.

The General President: No open-air meetings?

Mr. Peter Murphy: One meeting I was at on the Square just as you come out of the Central Office.

The General President: Did you hand my telegram up for the Chairman to read?

Mr. Peter Murphy: Mr. Riley handed my telegram up and also his own letter.

The General President: Were there any comments passed when that telegram was read?

Mr. Peter Murphy: I could not say.

The General President: You were there?

Mr. Peter Murphy: I was, but I could not say.

The General President: It was a Union telegram to a Union Official. What right had you, or under what justification, did you hand that telegram up to be read out at that meeting?

Mr. Peter Murphy: I did not hand it up. Mr. Riley was with me at the time, and he handed up the telegram.

The General President: You must have given Mr. Riley the telegram.

Mr. Peter Murphy: I do not think, to be frank with you, that I did. I do not think it was mine. I might be mistaken, but I do not think it was my telegram, honestly I do not.

The General President: You will not swear it was not yours?

Mr. Peter Murphy: No, I will not swear it was, or it was not.

The General President: Did you make a threat that you were going to show Havelock Wilson up?

Mr. Peter Murphy: I could not make the threat because I could not show you up.

The General President: I am very pleased to hear that. Then I am all right?

Mr. Peter Murphy: You are all right with me.

Mr. Candlish: With regard to the position on the Merseyside on Tuesday morning, there was nothing else for anyone to do but to sign that manifesto in the interests of this Organisation. There were people wanting to go and join other Unions, and we put them down, and a Trade Unionist could not have done anything but sign that manifesto—no one in a position on the Merseyside. That is all I have to say.

The General President: You are expecting when you come here to get some wages, are you not? That is the object of your visit here, is it not?

Mr. Candlish: Yes.

The General President: Supposing everyone throughout the country had done what you had done, do you think there would have been any money to come for to-day?

Mr. Candlish: Supposing everyone had done what I did—what do you mean?

The General President: Supposing all the other Officials, who had equally as much trouble as you, had thrown the lot in and declared a strike unconstitutionally. You know what the result would have been, do you not?

Mr. Candlish: I claim that the other Officials who were in the same boat with me, as you term it, did it the same as I did—every one of them.

The General President: You are speaking of Liverpool?

Mr. Candlish: Yes.

The General President: I am speaking of the whole of the country. Supposing they had all done what you and others did. Do you think there would have been any money here to-day?

Mr. Candlish: I do not know.

The General President: Where would you have got your wages from?

Mr. Candlish: I have never got my wages unless I have worked for them, and I consider I have done a fair day's labour for the wages I have received in this Organisation.

The General President: Is not that the position of every man who is an Official?

Mr. Candlish: I hope so.

The General President: Including myself?

Mr. Candlish: I hope so. I have done it since I have been on the job.

The General President: Supposing they had been as silly as you, and had done what you did, and the Union had gone under, where would you have got any money from?

Mr. Candlish: I should not have got it; I would not have expected it.

The General President: Seeing that you are prepared to take a risk of that kind it does not matter about wages at all; it does not matter whether you get any or not, does it?

*(Mr. Candlish did not answer.)*

Mr. Peter Murphy: I sent a wire back to say, "Standing by Executive Council."

The General President: Then you dissociate yourself from the others?

Mr. Peter Murphy: I am getting to another point. I want to ask you if you communicated with me after I was in touch

with the Superintendent of the Canadian Pacific? I want to know that.

The General President: I cannot tell you. You, first of all, go to this meeting, and you sign a paper declaring for a certain thing, and when I sent you a wire, "Are you prepared to follow the instructions of the Executive Council and the Rules and Constitution of the Union?" you say you sent back a wire that you were going to stand by the Executive Council?

Mr. Peter Murphy: Yes.

The General President: Did you do so?

Mr. Peter Murphy: Your wire came very, very late. I think the other Officials in that particular Branch will tell you that.

The General President: What was my wire?

Mr. Peter Murphy: "Are you standing by the Executive Council?"; and the time you gave me to answer that wire was up then.

The General President: And ever since then you have been acting, although you were standing by the Executive Council, in concert with the others?

Mr. Peter Murphy: No one has been in communication with me since that day. Riley shifted the 'phone and put it in the top room. I was in communication with a shore Captain of the C.P., who was in communication with you with regard to manning a ship; when down there two days before he asked me to leave the office while he spoke to someone in London; I thought it was you; and he told me you had been in communication with me.

The General President: That is so, behind the backs of your colleagues.

Mr. Peter Murphy: It was not a case of that; it was the same morning, it is all in the one morning, only I thought you had written me a letter, and I had not got it. It was not a question of saying what the letter might be, or which way I would have taken it; but I am asking you: Did you communicate with me?

The General President: I cannot tell you. I communicated with a good many people while I was lying in bed, and I cannot tell you whether I did or whether I did not. But that is a very immaterial point. What I want to know is this: Were you offering to supply the men, although you signed this document that you would not?

Mr. Peter Murphy: It was not a question of supplying the men. A remark was referred to me which made me believe that someone had received a letter.

The General President: I cannot understand it myself. All right. Does anyone wish to ask any questions? Then, that is all.

*(Mr. Peter Murphy, Mr. Aldridge, Mr. Candlish, and Mr. Kenny then withdrew.)*

The General President: Now, Mr. Findlay, that is the last, and we will discuss this problem in camera.

Mr. Findlay: I would like to say that I am quite satisfied that so far as the meeting is concerned, these men cannot complain with regard to not having had their case heard by you gentlemen. I think it is only right I should say that before leaving.

The General President: Thank you.

Mr. Findlay: And I thank you for giving me the privilege of hearing what has been said. I will make that report to the T.U.C. General Council.

The General President: Thank you very much.

*(Mr. Findlay then withdrew.)*

The General President: Now, Gentlemen, we have to come to the most important part of the day's work, and that is what penalty are we going to impose on those men. I will start, first of all, with McVey; and I am bound to say the impression left on my mind was that McVey was not straight. Take those telephonic communications. Nobody knew anything about them. Do you believe that? I do not. It was quite evident to me from what Rogers said yesterday that he had been in conversation with McVey with regard to the Strike situation. If McVey could talk to Rogers I do not see why he could not talk to the others who are mentioned. Therefore, we did not get a straightforward answer on that point. And his excuse that he put up was about the lamest thing that ever I heard in my life coming from a man holding a responsible position. It was the view of a man without any backbone at all. I will venture to say that if he had had any backbone the thing that happened on the Mersey would never have happened. (Hear, hear.) The thing that troubled his mind was his public position, as he called it this morning. He is a member of the Town Council; he is a prospective member of Parliament; and he was afraid that if he took up the attitude that we wanted taken up he would become unpopular, and then, if ever he came to an election, the crowd would have yelled, "What did you do in the Miners' Strike?" That was what was troubling his mind more than anything else.



As far as the other men are concerned, they are a very poor lot. Look at them. We have had 18 in altogether, and if I had the selection of Delegates I would have selected about three out of the lot. No more. You saw those men. Could they give an intelligent explanation of anything? It was a case of, what Peter said, and what Harry said, and what someone else said. It got on my nerves to hear that poor old chap talking. To my mind they are pensioners, and have been pensioners for long enough. Then you had Murphy. The mystery about Murphy is why he has not been discharged. He was not good enough for the Central Office; he was put out on the Docks; his average income from the time he started up to date has been about £3 10s. a week, for which he has received £5 2s. If that is not imposing on the Organisation, I want to know what is. It is said, and I believe it is true, McVey dared not discharge him. That is said all over the place, and I think there is some foundation for it. I have told McVey more than once: Why do you keep him on; what good is he; why do you not get rid of him? And nothing has been done.

As far as McVey is concerned, I am satisfied he is not fit to be a District Secretary; he is not fit to be an Official at all. If he goes to the Annual Meeting you will hear a lot of things there that you have not heard to-day. If he wants to go to the Annual Meeting, he can go there. I am going to ask: What are we going to do about McVey? You will remember he put some questions. First, the expenses of the injunction amounted to £150; he wants to know whether we will relieve him and the others of the burden of that £150. I do not want to be hard on anyone, but I want to safeguard our position, and I am going to do that. I do not want to make them bankrupts; but I am going to see that our position is safeguarded. I advise in that case that we suspend McVey for a period of three months and see what happens; because if all rumours be true, they are going to form branches of the Transport Workers' Union. That is rumoured. If that is true, then the moment they start on that I am going to advise we have our costs; because if they want to fight us they have got to pay the whole bill. Then the next point is, what wages, if any, will you give them from the time they stopped work? Shall we give them anything, and, if so, what?

Mr. McGhee: I think the first thing to do is to deal with them with regard to the suspension, and then consider these other things afterwards.

The General President: Then, with regard to the Superannuation money. They all more or less have something to draw from the Superannuation Fund. I would advise that we pay them that and finish them up in the Superannuation Fund.

Mr. McGhee: Hear, hear.

The General President: Shall we give them an appeal to the Annual General Meeting? I must advise you that we cannot

prevent that. The Rule, I think, is very clear, that if they are not satisfied with the decision of the Executive Council they can appeal to the A.G.M. Therefore, I think that appeal must be allowed. Then a question he asked was: Will we allow them expenses for attending the meeting of the A.G.M.? I have been thinking over that very carefully, and I want to put a very serious proposition before you. You see, under the Rule you can suspend a Branch or Branches that are acting contrary to the Rules. Now, supposing you had a Branch of 1,000 members and they acted contrary to Rules, and you decided to suspend the whole of the members of the Branch, would it be possible to think that you could go to the expense of bringing 1,000 men up here to go before the Executive Council to state their cases—each individual? I think your answer would be, in that case, "No." (Hear, hear.) I think you would say, "You can send so many men to represent you"; and that is just exactly what the Finance Committee has advised in this case. They considered that six men were quite enough to come and put the case before this Council; and if you judge of what has happened to-day I think you would have said three were enough—

A Delegate: One.

The General President: Never mind, six; because I am sure all the rest did not add one item to help the situation at all; in fact, they rather hindered each other by the number they called up. So I do not think the Rule should be stretched to say you should pay the expenses of 18 or 20 men, when six men would have been quite able to put the case. Now, those are points that you have to consider. I think we ought to deal with those points first. Now, first, shall they have an appeal to the Annual Meeting? I have advised you to rule at once that they must:

Captain Tupper: We accept your ruling.

The General President: Is that the right interpretation?

This course was agreed upon.

Mr. Ley: Do you mean the whole of the 18 or 20 men to appear before the Annual Meeting? I should say four or six would be plenty.

The General President: If you said four, do you mean that the expenses of the four will be paid?

Mr. Ley: Yes.

The General President: Will someone put that, that they be allowed to appeal to the Annual Meeting, but the expenses of four men only will be allowed?

Mr. Jones: I will move that,

Mr. Sprow: I second that.

Mr. Doxford: The thing that strikes me is this. You have got 21 men here now. Nothing has been said of the other 17 you are not going to have at the Annual Meeting. Are their expenses going to be paid up to date? If they agree to four being what you might call the deputation for the rest, will the other 17 who do not appear before the Annual Meeting be receiving money up to date?

The General President: That is a point you have to consider separately.

Mr. Doxford: You will have four men receiving money and 17 receiving none, and if you differentiate in that way it will probably cause trouble.

The General President: What do you mean by four men receiving money? Do you mean to say wages?

Mr. Doxford: No, I mean expenses.

The General President: The four men would be receiving it.

Mr. Doxford: And the other 17 would not be?

The General President: That is, if that resolution is carried.

Mr. Doxford: To my mind, I think it should be a clean cut—all or none.

Mr. Gunning: On a point of order. Have they not already been told a deputation of six only was to be allowed to come?

The General President: Yes.

Mr. Gunning: So that the other men have come on their own.

Captain Tupper: And we should be in order in keeping it to the six.

Mr. Cathery: I sent word down to Liverpool enclosing a cheque for £18, telling McVey that we were quite prepared to pay the expenses of six men to come up to this Council. Mr. McVey wired back, "Meeting of suspended Officials desire opportunity to meet the Executive Council on Tuesday. Will you grant fares and expenses in order to give each Official a fair hearing?" We sent word back to the effect that we could only guarantee the expenses of six men. Therefore, you will see that six men is all we took the responsibility to pay for, and no more.

The General President: Now, there is a resolution before the meeting, and that is that the appeal must be allowed to the

Annual General Meeting according to the Rules; and we allow the expenses of four of them from now to the Annual Meeting.

Mr. Doxford: As an amendment I move six, to keep it in order with the telegram which has been sent. If you have agreed to six, keep to six.

Captain Davis: As one of the Finance Committee that agreed that six of them should represent Liverpool, I have been thinking the matter over on what has happened throughout the day. Now, each of those men has been charged individually, and they have been charged collectively, and under common jurisdiction—common trial—if you charge a man—which our President has done to-day—each man has the individual right to appeal. I submit that. But one cannot but recognise that those men when charged individually will plead poverty. What can be said against that—and I am trying to put the case for one side and the case for this Executive, and the fairness with which we submit it to them, that this Union would defray the expenses of six, we must in some way anticipate the success or otherwise of our application. Those men will plead poverty; but we must set off against that their arrogance on the fairness of our offer that six of them—six of the most able, I take it, when it came to the selection—should appear here. But I just want to point out as one of your Trustees, as one who considers it an absolute waste of money for all those men to come along and reiterate the same statements, which they did to-day—it was absolutely a case of repetition. But I cannot help reminding myself that they have been charged both by our General President and by the unanimous wish, I am sure, of the Executive—they have been charged, individually and collectively. And, having regard to the fact that we have done it and did not ask them to be represented this morning, they have, in my opinion, an individual right of appeal to the Annual General Meeting. When there is such an appeal, and I take it they have the right to appeal, it does seem to me that, having been here individually, there is no possible escape from the course that they have the right to appeal to the Annual General Meeting.

The General President: We have never agreed to pay the expenses of any more than six.

Captain Davis: No.

Mr. Doxford: I take it there is no rule to that effect.

The General President: There is no rule that provides for expenses; no rule at all. It is entirely a matter for the Executive and the Finance Committee. You have allowed for six. If the others take the responsibility of coming here, that is their business and not ours. (Hear, hear.) I think it would be better to say, if there is any appeal it will be the six, and we will not allow the others to come.

Captain Davis: That is it.

Mr. Cathery: Will this letter from Mr. McVey help you? It is dated 17th:—

“ I am enclosing receipt for £18 towards expenses for attending the Executive Meeting on Tuesday next at eleven a.m. I have, however, to say that the majority of the men suspended are desirous of being heard by the Executive Council, and they do not propose to appoint six to represent them. Whether they will all manage to obtain the expenses or not I am unable to say. However, all who can attend on Tuesday will be there as requested.—Yours faithfully, CHARLIE McVEY.”

Mr. McGhee: I should like to say a word or two on this question of expenses as a Trustee. If the question were not raised at all when they were told to attend at this Council they would require in law to pay their own expenses, as everyone does if they want their case heard; then, of course, we would have to pay the expenses they were put to. That has been admitted by the President at the very beginning. But we chose to consider that they were poor men, and that they had 200 miles and more to travel; and, I suppose, as much from the North-East Coast; and so, we said it would be absurd for us to allow these men to come to the Executive Council without knowing the position. The Finance Committee considered the fact, and said, “ Well, this is a case in which all the men have been acting under a similar breach of the Constitution. There is nothing complicated about it, the case of one is the case of all.” So we said we would allow them to appoint six. In fact, four was the first suggestion, the President will remember; but the President himself, who is generally more generous in these aspects, suggested six, and six were accepted, and, I think, two from the North-East Coast were accepted.

There is no obligation on us to pay anyone expenses unless we voluntarily accept the responsibility of it. I would therefore say that we ought to act exactly towards the Annual Meeting as we have acted here. We should allow them to nominate their six to make a statement to the General Meeting, if they like, on behalf of the Mersey men, and two on behalf of the North-East Coast; and I think we should stick to that. There is no Rule, as far as I know, and there is no law providing for such a thing. This is the first Union I have ever known do it before—and I have known a good many; this is the first Union that has ever been so generous as this Union is in these respects. Not only have expenses been paid for people to come here, but wages have been paid to them while they were under suspension in some cases. But this was a flagrant defiance of the decision of the Council, and we decided their wages should cease from the time they were suspended. I suggest there is no necessity for arguing the question from any other standpoint than that of the voluntary offering we made to them, and that was six, and two in the case of the North-East Coast; and we should repeat that offer if they want to come to the Annual General Meeting.

Mr. Ley: I move six.

Mr. Griffiths: Will that include Mr. McVey?

The General President: They will select their own representatives.

Captain Tupper: Have all who came from the North-East Coast been paid?

Mr. Cathery: No, I have not heard of any appeal from the North-East Coast.

Mr. Doxford: They have not gone away yet.

The General President: Have they asked?

Mr. Cathery: No.

The General President: We have no right to bother about that. That is a question we know nothing about. Mr. McVey has asked, therefore we know of it; but the others we know nothing about. A meeting of this Council means a lot of money, and I do not think we ought to waste money. Then the resolution is that if they want to appeal, if they press it, we will allow six.

Mr. McGhee: To state their case.

The General President: I will put that. Those in favour hold up their hands.

On a show of hands there voted:—

For the resolution	...	...	31
Against	...	...	0

The General President: Now, the next question is the legal expenses incurred up to date over the injunction. I respectfully suggest to you that that matter stands over until we see how they go on.

Mr. Lang: I will move that.

The General President: If they fight, we will fight.

Mr. McGhee: Would it not be better to remit the decision to the Finance Committee?

The General President: It is too big a job, I think. I think we had better have Executive instructions, and that is, that that matter stands in suspense until we have seen what they are going to do. Mr. Cathery suggests the next Executive Meeting; I do not object to that. Now, it has been moved that the ques-

tion of the legal expenses stands over until the next Executive Meeting.

Mr. Connolly: I will second that. In the meantime, if there is any part taken by them we should bring it to the notice of the Head Office and Trustees, and they should be empowered to take action to counteract these people within the three months if they start an opposition Organisation.

The General President: Those in favour of the resolution that the question of the legal costs in connection with the injunction stand over to the next Executive Meeting, hold up your hands.

On a show of hands the resolution was declared to be carried unanimously.

The General President: We come now to the question of the Superannuation money.

Captain Tupper: I move that it be paid.

Agreed.

Mr. Catherly: Most of them have got some. The amounts due to them respectively are as follows:—

	£	s.	d.	
Donnelly ... ..	8	3	0	Due from Officials Guarantee.
J. Aldridge ... ..	32	0	0	
D. Kenny ... ..	32	0	0	
Jowett ... ..		Nil		
Candlish ... ..	32	0	0	
Murphy ... ..		Nil		
Sam Lloyd ... ..	30	0	0	
Warburton ... ..	32	0	0	
Galvin ... ..		Nil		
Allen ... ..	5	0	0	
P. O'Connor ... ..	20	0	0	
B. Gallagher ... ..	20	0	0	
O'Connell ... ..	32	0	0	
Jenkins ... ..	27	0	0	
Cosgrove ... ..	20	0	0	
Beckett ... ..	18	0	0	
McVey ... ..	40	0	0	
Parkin ... ..	40	0	0	
Basson ... ..	32	0	0	
Murphy ... ..	22	0	0	
White ... ..	12	0	0	
W. J. Green ... ..	9	0	0	

Captain Tupper: On a point of information. Before we vote on that the matter of suspension should come, because it looks as if it was certain we had pledged the Executive to

dismiss them; otherwise, if we passed that it looks as if we had done that preparing to dismiss them in the end.

The General President: What does the Superannuation Rule say about men leaving before their time is up, or anything of that sort?

Mr. McGhee: It says it is to be refunded. It can be retained if they work against the interests of the Union; but it is a very complicated question.

The General President: What does the Rule say?

Mr. Jarman: Is not there a clause with regard to defamation?

Mr. McGhee: The clause says, "Any Official or employees of the Union who enters the service of a rival Organisation, or who works against the interests of the Union shall, on being found guilty of such conduct, forfeit all claim on the Superannuation Fund of the Union."

Captain Tupper: That was my point.

The General President: So it is in our hands.

Mr. McGhee: No, not quite. That Rule would not give you it, because you would have to decide another thing.

The General President: Does the Rule say the money shall be paid back.

Mr. McGhee: Yes.

The General President: Let us hear that.

Mr. McGhee: It deals with a whole lot of different things, such as, not re-elected, or if he retires, or if he dies, and it is all paid back with 15 per cent. interest on it.

The General President: They can have all their money back plus 15 per cent. interest?

Mr. McGhee: Yes, on the amount contributed by them.

The General President: Then we can pay all the money back?

Mr. McGhee: Yes, you can. I do not know how Mr. Cathery gets these figures.

The General President: Is it plus or minus?

Mr. Cathery: This is the amount due to them.

The General President: You have read that once.



Mr. Cathery: Yes; but I was going to state this is the total amount due, being the amount they have paid in and the interest due.

The General President: Then that is plus?

Mr. Cathery: Yes.

The General President: Now we are clear on that. It seems to me we can pay them back.

Mr. McGhee: I would draw your attention to what Captain Tupper has raised, and I think it is a very important point, that you must deal with the merits of the cases of these men before you can do this. You have not decided yet what you are going to do with them. If you decided to restore these men to their positions you would not require to touch this Rule at all.

The General President: We cannot restore them to their positions when their jobs are filled.

Mr. McGhee: Then you have to deal with that at once, and let the Executive determine to support your policy, whatever it may be.

The General President: I want a clear and definite lead. Are we going to pay this money, or are we not? I am informed the Rule says we must pay them.

Captain Tupper: If they are dismissed the Union.

Mr. McGhee: If they are out of the service of the Union.

The General President: If they are dismissed from the service of the Union?

Mr. McGhee: Yes; but they are not dismissed from the service of the Union yet. They are appealing to the Executive, and you have not taken the decision of the Executive.

The General President: That is a highly technical way of putting it. I would rather have a plain straightforward issue: Are we going to pay it or not?

Mr. Jarman: The Executive has first to endorse your action.

The General President: I will put it in this way: That all men who are dismissed will be paid their Superannuation money with a plus.

Captain Tupper: That is it.

The General President: Will anyone move: That in the case of those who are dismissed we pay them their Superannuation money with a plus.

Mr. Allen: I will move that.

Mr. Street formally seconded.

The General President: Now, you understand what it is, we shall refund them their Superannuation money, those that are dismissed. Is there any amendment to that? Then I will put it to the vote.

On a show of hands, the resolution was declared to be carried unanimously.

The General President: Everything is unanimous here—perfectly unanimous. Now, some of those men, or, I believe, all of them, have an idea that they are going to get their wages from the time they were suspended right up to date. That is their idea. Those we dealt with yesterday we finished right up without any money, except in the exceptional case of Murray, who has not been dismissed. All those who were dismissed have finished when they were suspended. What is your view as to to-day's lot?

Mr. Ash: Did not some of them get pay after being suspended—those we dealt with yesterday?

The General President: They were suspended forthwith.

Mr. Ash: But I believe some of them got three weeks' pay after that.

Mr. Cathery: Those were the two who resigned; they got three weeks extra; but not the suspended men—that was Hagen and Barnes; they resigned their positions, and we gave them three weeks' wages when I settled up with them.

Mr. Ash: Did not Rogers get three weeks' pay?

Captain Tupper: Yes, but he took it illegally.

Mr. Jones: Did not Rogers get three weeks' pay when he was suspended?

The General President: No. He was paid two weeks' wages without my knowledge. My orders were that he was finished; but, unfortunately, the Newcastle Official was not aware of that, and Rogers was drawing his wages for two weeks afterwards. Now, what is your view?

Mr. Ash: I would like to make an appeal on behalf of these men. There is a Fund set aside to assist Officials who get wrong with their money. Whatever they might say about you, Mr. Wilson, or any of us with regard to the policy of the Union, or anything else, you have a good heart for assisting fellows in trouble; and in the circumstances, do not forget it when these

men are up against it. I think it would be a very good idea to fetch these men whom you have accused with regard to the finances outside the Strike, in front of the Annual Meeting when you have finished with them, and it is no good opening it up again.

The General President: Mr. Ash, you are a wonderful pleader for anyone who does wrong. Do you think that I said this morning all that I could have said?

Mr. Ash: No, I do not think you did.

The General President: No. I did not want to do it because it would have prejudiced their case, and I did not do it. But I want you to remember, Mr. Ash, and everyone else, that I have suffered a martyrdom for six years through Liverpool. Do not forget that. It has been sweating blood out of my body for six years; and those men who were here to-day are responsible, McVey in particular. For what reason I do not know. I have given him no offence; but he in particular, backed up by the others, have for six solid years been poisoning the minds of the men of Liverpool against me; subscribing to all kinds of unjust charges and insinuations; but, above all that, I have got one thing to consider, and most important to me, that is, the ordinary member of the Union. When you come to think there are scores of those men dragged out of their ships, and starving—who is caring for them? What are the Officials' families more than the families of the ordinary member? The ordinary member has had a struggle to exist on low wages and want of employment, but the Officials have had their wages in season and out of season. Then there was one man I could have tackled—I believe his name is Kenny—who never did for six months a day's work for the Union, and drew his wages all the time. Then he comes along when the General Strike is on and takes part in this. You would have thought in that man's case he would have said to himself, "By gad, the Union has been generous to me, paying my wages for six months, and I have not done a stroke of work"—you would have thought he would have said, "If I have been sick for six months I will be sick for two more months and keep out of it." That is not a man I would give much consideration for.

Take another one of them, Mr. Murphy. I could have subjected him to closer examination, but I refrained from doing it because it might have appeared to be prejudice. That man, a Delegate at Southampton, over head and heels in debt, women writing to me clamouring against him, I had to shift him from Southampton to Liverpool to get him out of his troubles, and then he joins them. But, worse than that, I am a personal sufferer. He came up one Sunday night about three months ago in a sidecar in a great hurry—and I always notice that when anyone wants to "touch" me for money it is always a rush in job: "Hullo, gov'nor, how are you; glad to see you looking so well." (Laughter.) He rushed in on a Sunday

night, and I said, "Hallo, what are you doing here?" He said, "I am in a devil of a trouble." I said, "Oh, what is the matter?" He said, "There is a sailor who left me £50 or £60 and while I have been down at Portsmouth my wife went on the spree and spent £36 of this man's money, and he is to come home on Friday, and if I do not have the money to pay him I shall be in a very awkward situation." I said, "Murphy, that is a very tall story, about you leaving £36 and your wife going on the spree. I cannot help you out of the Union funds, and just at this present moment I have heavy liabilities to meet myself; I have a son at Geneva costing me £8 or £9 a week for the last ten or eleven months out of my own pocket." He said, "Well, if you will do that for me, my God, I will pay it back a pound a week." It will be nearly six months ago now, and I had to wait three months and write him half-a-dozen times before I got £1, and I never got any more since; so he is owing me £35. I could have told him that, but I refrained from doing so because it might look like prejudice. So, when you weigh them all up, Mr. Ash, do not be deceived. I have got the weight of every one of those men.

There is another gentleman, a very stout gentleman. When I went to Liverpool last November he came into the room, where I had brought them together, and he had as much fat and grease on the sleeves of his coat and down the front of his coat as would have made a dish of excellent ox-tail soup if I had scraped it off, and all done by leaning across the bar of the counter of a club. I have got them all fixed, you observe. There are two or three decent men there, I will admit, but the bulk of them I would not give a pin for. I cannot say I have gone down on my knees and prayed, but when the General Strike took place and gave me an opportunity of clearing out this unsatisfactory crowd, I lay back in my bed and said, "Thank God, we are going to unload that lot at last." (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Jarman: What I was going to say just now was this: Are we in order before the Executive have endorsed your action, in discussing what we are going to do with their Superannuation and the other things? The Executive have not yet endorsed your action of suspending them.

The General President: Will anyone move: That the action of the General President in suspending those members at Liverpool was strictly in accordance with the Rules and Constitution, and that the Executive Council approve of it?

Mr. Allen: I will move that.

Mr. Jones formally seconded.

The General President: Is there any opposition, or does anyone wish to move an amendment to that? Then I will put it to the vote.

On a show of hands there voted:—

For the resolution	...	...	31
Against	...	...	0

Mr. Gunning: It is a unanimous vote.

Captain Davis: I respectfully submit that we ought to deal with Mr. McVey and the other Officials and find out what the intentions of the Executive are in regard to penalties, if any, to be inflicted upon them, as we did with the Officials yesterday; and then come to whether any money should be paid them; let that automatically follow.

The General President: Then we will deal with McVey, if it is your desire. What are we going to do in his case?

Mr. Allen: Before we consider his case, is it a fact that when this resolution was passed at the last Executive Council with regard to the ballot, Mr. McVey was one of the strongest supporters of that resolution?

Mr. Sprow: Yes.

Mr. Allen: Then why should we show any consideration for him? He was the strongest supporter of this.

Mr. Connolly: We have heard a good number of people, and, with the exception of one individual, I could not catch his name, the position they took up was that they would do it again tomorrow. Therefore, I do not think the Executive Council should show any sympathy. There was one man who said he was sorry for what he had done, and he knew he had done wrong; but, with the exception of that one, none of the others vindicated their position.

The General President: If you want a lead from me, I will give you one. (Hear, hear.) My opinion is that McVey should be dismissed from office, and should hold no office in this Union for a period of two years. That is to say, he is going to take his chance. If anyone is wanted after two years' time, and the Executive Council choose to appoint him, that is their business.

Mr. Ley: I do not agree with that. Mr. McVey, as far as I can see, has been the prime mover in this business, and, therefore, I advocate his expulsion from the Union entirely.

The General President: We could do a lot of things in the heat of temper and be sorry for it afterwards, and I think it is always good to temper justice with mercy. Now, the suggestion is to dismiss him now. Let us look at that calmly and quietly. That is a pretty heavy sentence, to dismiss a man from his job. It is not a small thing, you know. What are his opportunities of getting a job? Not many opportunities, that I can see, present

themselves to a man of that type. He says he can go to sea again. Well, he may, or he may not. But you are depriving him of a job; that is rather heavy; and you say for two years he shall not hold a job in this Union; that also is rather heavy. Then Mr. Ley goes one step further and says that we should expel him from the Union. If you expel McVey from the Union you are going to say that McVey will not be allowed to ship. Is not that right?

Mr. Gunning: That is so.

The General President: You cannot expel a man and then let him go through without P.C.5, or an employment form. So you are adding on to the sentence all the way round. Do you say that he cannot act as an Official for two years?

Captain Tupper: Or an Executive Officer.

The General President: Yes. What is the chance of his getting a job at the end of two years in the Union? Very slight. Then, if you go a step further, and say you will expel him from the Union, you debar the man from earning a living. I must ask you not to go too far. I think you will be wise to go in moderation.

Mr. Gunning: There is only one point that comes to my mind on this. You have a resolution before the Annual General Meeting respecting the age limit of the Officials, and the age limit of some of those Officials is 70 years. You yourself, Sir, are not getting any younger.

The General President: Have you found that out?

Mr. Gunning: Yes, I have found that out, Sir. I mean in years, I do not mean in energy; and I understand that in two years' time you are arriving at the age of 70. With regard to that I would say it should be for three years, and not for two years in the case of McVey.

The General President: Personally, I do not think you need worry much about that aspect; because if he is barred for two years the chances will be that it will be a good many more years before he gets a job. That is my opinion.

Mr. Flett: With regard to the suspension of Mr. McVey, I would extend to him, like many others, all the sympathy possible; but, knowing as I do, he is not a fresh hand, not a new member on the staff of this Union, it is not the first time he has been here on the same question. I think, if my memory serves me rightly, it is five or six years since I had the unpleasant duty of moving that his resignation be accepted. It was not accepted at that time, but it ought to have been a lesson even then to Mr. McVey to act straight in the future

from that date. As I have said, my resolution was not carried at that time, but that in itself should have been sufficient as a lesson to him never to commit himself any more. I think that if you dismiss him from office for a period of three years, not from membership, that would meet the case; give him a chance to make his living, as he says he can do, at sea. No matter how; give him a chance to live. Dismiss him from any official position in the Union for three years, and I think it would serve its purpose.

The General President: Does anyone else want to express an opinion? Now, will it be for one year, or two years, or three years?

Mr. Dench: I move that we adopt your suggestion, Sir, and suspend him for two years—that he be dismissed from the service of the Union as an Official, and not allowed to hold an official position for at least two years.

Mr. Connolly formally seconded.

The General President: I will accept that as the resolution: That Mr. McVey be dismissed from the service of the Union as an Official, and that he will not be allowed to be nominated or accepted as an Official or Executive member for a period of at least two years.

Mr. Allen: I beg to move an amendment to that—That the period be three years.

Mr. Fleet formally seconded.

The General President: Then I will put the amendment.

Mr. Cotter: I think I have paid as much for law as any man in this room on Trade Union questions of this very kind and on this very point. I want to make it clear to you that the decision of the Judges on this is that what you are doing now is out of order. You cannot prevent any member of a Trade Union having every right that the Rule book calls for. That has been definitely laid down by Mr. Justice Russell. We went to Court; we wanted to suspend an Official from holding office for two years, but we were stopped. As long as the Rule book is there, every member of this Organisation is entitled to every line, dot and dash in that Rule book, and the learned Judge made that clear to us, and put us out of Court—and we paid for it, as you know.

The General President: I am sorry to say I cannot agree with you, because our Rule is very definite on the matter. Under our Rules we can suspend any member or Official from holding office.

Mr. Cotter: What you are doing is preventing a man from going to an election for election.

The General President: That is my reading of the Rule, that we can.

Mr. Martin: What will happen if he is nominated by two financial members to the Executive Council?

The General President: His nomination will be refused if that resolution is carried.

Mr. Ash: I do not think you need bother very much if you suspend Mr. McVey for two or three years. There is not the least doubt that these men who are suspended will be picked up by the Transport Workers' Organisation or the Trades Union Congress irrespective of the Transport Workers, and will form a Seamen's Branch out of that Organisation to combat the position in regard to taking into consideration the General Strike. That is very serious; and it seems to me from one year's end to the other as we go through life, nearly all the funds are eaten up in fighting each other in the workers' movement. I hope, Mr. Wilson, you will be careful and not lead us into the position where we have to do this thing in the future. You have been careful to try and relieve that in regard to Mr. Findlay from the Trades Union Congress; you were very wise in the tactics you took there, and very manly in doing it. Carry on that and try and break down this position which others are trying to bring up in regard to forming a ring inside or outside in the Transport Workers' Organisation, or wholly under the supervision of the T.U.C. I say this, knowing a good many things. I know, whatever you might say about Mr. McVey, he is a public man by nature; he may be weak in some things, the same as every man is; none of us but runs up against difficult positions in different stages of our lives; the judges here to-day might have to be defended to-morrow. Many of us have had to ask a certain amount of indulgence and consideration from our friends at times. Let us try and keep the best men amongst us if possible. If a slip has been made, and a certain amount of punishment has to be meted out, do not strain the position by that punishment.

The General President: I have been to Liverpool recently, Mr. Ash; I arrived home a week ago; I have been there five weeks; and the unanimous opinion of the Mersey from the men—and they are the most important to my mind—is that they declare that if Mr. McVey goes back they cease paying their contributions. Are we going to take back a man who will stop the contributions being paid? That is No. 1.

Mr. Ash: Do you mean the seamen say that?

The General President: Yes,



Mr. Ash: I am not alluding to seamen; I am alluding to Organisations which represent five or six millions of men who have the power to do things whenever they want to do them.

The General President: The men who led us into the General Strike?

Mr. Ash: That is so; and the men who let us down in the strike—the Officials did that and not the five or six million men who make up the Organisations.

The General President: We are doing £400 a week in the Mersey now at a time when 75 per cent. of the ships are laid up. If Mr. McVey goes back the men will stop paying; that has been carried not by half-a-dozen in a meeting, but anything from 70 to 300. Do not tell us where we are; we know where we are. I know where we are. And, another thing, the employers would not work with him. Do you understand that?

Mr. Ash: You mean the Shipowners would not?

The General President: Yes.

Mr. Ash: I know nothing about that.

The General President: That is the position. That is what you have to consider.

Mr. Ley: That was just the point I thought of when I spoke to you a few minutes ago. I consider that McVey is an enemy of this Union, and therefore an enemy outside the Union cannot do us the harm that one inside could do. Whatever time Mr. McVey and his colleagues are inside this Union they will do us all the harm possible; therefore, get them out of it.

The General President: That is too extreme. Anyhow, I will take the vote whether Mr. McVey is barred for two years or for three years. I will put the three years first. Those in favour of three years put up your hands.

On a show of hands there voted:

For three years	...	...	...	12
For two years	...	...	...	20

The General President: Then two years is carried. Now, the resolution will be, that Mr. McVey be dismissed from office and be not allowed to take any office in the Union for a period of at least two years, nor to become a member of the Executive Council, Those in favour of that show your hands,

On a show of hands there voted :

For the resolution ...	...	...	29
Against ...	...	...	0

The General President : That is carried. Now, the question is what wages, if any, do you allow Mr. McVey from the time of his suspension?

Mr. Martin : I would move a month's notice.

The General President : The Rule says a month's wages in the event of his resigning. Has anyone anything to suggest about it?

Mr. Allen : I propose we pay him four weeks' wages.

Mr. Pearce formally seconded.

The General President : Is there any amendment? Then, I will put that to the meeting. The resolution is that we allow Mr. McVey four weeks' wages. Those in favour hold up your hands.

On a show of hands there voted :

In favour of the resolution ...	...	29
Against ...	...	1

The General President : That is carried. So he is allowed four weeks' wages. I think that completes Mr. McVey's case. With regard to the legal expenses, we have already decided, I think, that that matter will stand over until the next Executive meeting. We will now take Mr. White. You have heard all about Mr. White. His record is not a brilliant one; he played a very dirty part, I think, in the Court job; and, as I told him this morning, we do not know yet what he did with the £82. He certainly is not a fit man to be an Official. Looking after a Branch taking £70 or £80 a week he has to have a cashier.

Mr. Connolly : Dismiss him. I will move that.

Mr. Dench formally seconded.

The General President : Any limit on the time before he shall be allowed to take office?

Mr. Flett : Does that mean he is going to be expelled from the Union?

The General President : No.

Mr. Flett ; Dismissed from his official position?

The General President : Yes ; and any limit of time you may decide upon before he is allowed to be an Official again.

Mr. Allen : I move that he be not allowed to take office for at least seven years.

Mr. Connolly : I will second that.

The General President : The resolution is that White be dismissed from his office and not be allowed to take office again for two years. An amendment has been moved to that to the effect that the period be seven years. Those in favour of the amendment please hold up your hands.

On a show of hands there voted :

In favour of seven years ...	...	23
In favour of two years ...	...	3

The General President : The amendment is carried. Then the resolution will be that he be dismissed from office and be not allowed to hold any official position for seven years. I will put that.

Mr. Damm : Will you include, " Nor to be a member of the Executive Council " ?

The General President : I said any official position. Those in favour of the resolution please hold up your hands.

On a show of hands the resolution was declared to be carried unanimously.

The General President : Then White is dismissed from office, and it will be seven years before he can hold any office in the Union. Now, the next point is whether you will consider any allowance of wages for him, and, if so, how much?

Mr. Doxford : I propose that there be none in his case, as it is an extreme case.

Mr. Connolly : I will second that.

The General President : It has been moved and seconded that in the case of White we allow no wages from the time of his suspension. Is there any amendment on that? Then I will put it to the vote. Those in favour of the resolution hold up your hands.

On a show of hands there voted :

In favour of the resolution ...	...	24
Against ...	... ..	0

## INSURANCE AMALGAMATION PROPOSALS.

The General President : Then the resolution is carried. Now, Gentlemen, I must ask you to break off here for a while. Sir Norman Hill, the head of the National Health Insurance, promised to be here at five o'clock, and he is here now, to explain to us his idea of amalgamation—the amalgamation between our Approved Society and the Seamen's National Health Insurance. We cannot ask him to wait, and I will request him to come in now. (Hear, hear.)

The General President : Let me explain a little before he comes in. You know there is a National Health Insurance which was founded at the same time as we founded our Approved Society. We have gone on now for 14 years or more; but recently there have been negotiations going on to see whether it would be possible to fuse the two bodies together, the object being to save money. I am told that at the present time there is about £10,000 which goes astray every year through men deserting ships, their cards getting adrift, and through men not surrendering their cards.

*(Sir Norman Hill then entered.)*

I was briefly explaining, Sir Norman, why we have discussed the question of amalgamation. I have said that at the present time I am informed that about £10,000 a year goes astray through men not surrendering cards, and through men losing cards, and so on. That is quite a considerable amount of money. Hitherto, all cards that have not been surrendered but afterwards found have gone up to Kew. Now, each Society is allowed to go there and search for the cards that belong to it; but the great difficulty is that there is nothing to identify the cards, as to whether they belong to the Seamen's National Health, to our Approved Society, to the Prudential or any of the others; so you can only claim cards that you are quite sure belong to you; all the others, goodness knows where they go to. Now, the stamps are paid for. Sir Norman Hill has worked on a scheme to do away with the cards altogether, to have what they call a schedule, and when a ship signs on every man's name will be written on the schedule of the Society he belongs to, and all other particulars, so there will be no mistake about it; and when the stamps are taken out the stamps will be properly accounted for. At the present time the Government, I am told, has been getting £10,000 a year for quite a long time. Now, Sir Norman has an idea that that money can be saved. There are many other advantages in amalgamation. One of the most annoying things to me always has been the scrapping for members; we try to steal as many members as we can from the Seamen's National Health, and they try to steal from us. I look upon that as wasted energy.

Now, if we were all in the one Society there would not be that stealing, and we ought to get on better. Sir Norman and I agree on this one point. It must not be supposed for a moment that the amalgamation, or fusion, is going to make a great deal of

difference in the management expenses. Some people would be so foolish to say that it will, but I do not. There may be a little saving here and there; but I am not at all sure that there will be such a great saving, because there is what are called vested interests. We have all our insurance staff; Sir Norman has got all his; and every one of the staffs, whether it is ours or whether it is the others, they all think they are indispensable. For instance, there are two Heads, Mr. Godfrey and Mr. Bowden. If I were to say to Mr. Bowden, "Mr. Godfrey is a much better man than you and can manage the job better than you," he would become annoyed. If I went and told Mr. Godfrey that the other fellow was better than him, he also would be annoyed. So I have settled in my mind that there will not be a great deal of saving. There will be some, I admit, as far as the management is concerned.

The Finance Committee and the Executive have considered this. Mr. McGhee is adamant on wanting to hold on to our Approved Society, and he always has been. I am more broad-minded than Mr. McGhee. He is an Ulster man, and they generally say that an Ulster man looks at his own territory and does not look at anyone else's. (Laughter.) I am cosmopolitan. I am broader in vision and view than that. I personally can see great advantages in having the two together; it is only getting rid of what I call the scrapping job and trying to steal the cards from the one or the other.

I was deputed to see Sir Norman Hill on it. The general opinion is that it will be all right. But then you come up against the vested interests again. The vested interests say, "Well, if they want them to come over, let them come over to us. That is what we say." The other man says, "Well, if the National Union of Seamen thinks it is good, let them come over to us." So there you are. You are tied up in a knot between the two.

As you said, I was deputed to see Sir Norman Hill. I suggested to him that it would be better if we were to retire Mr. Godfrey, because I have explained I never like two experts on one job; they always get scrapping with one another and I do not like it. I approached Sir Norman very cautiously on the job, and I must say the good gentleman was rather astonished. He thought it was all wrong. I said, "Well, Sir Norman, what is your idea?" He said, "I have a different view of it altogether." I want to say this before Sir Norman, that he and I have worked for over twenty years together on different Government Committees, and I must say, Sir, although you are here, I have to say that a more high-minded gentleman I have never met. (Hear, hear.) Everyone has confidence in Sir Norman Hill on the Advisory Committee of the Board of Trade; I had so much confidence in him that I used to nominate him for the Chair every year—and I am going to tell you why; I thought he was safer in the Chair than being at large. (Laughter.)

But, anyhow, there was perfect confidence in Sir Norman Hill; and I can say this, that he has been now fifteen years at the Head of the National Seamen's Health Insurance Society, and I

am sure his one ambition has been to do the best to make it a success. (Hear, hear.) Not only that, but there is the Lascar Fund, which works in conjunction with that, and it is a very important matter, as you will appreciate when I tell you that there is over £500,000 there now and accumulating every year, and it may accumulate even faster. Mr. Cathery tells me there are 600 old men who are getting 10s. a week.

Sir Norman Hill: That is this year. We added 600 this year.

The General President: Well, all those old men are getting 10s. a week. Now, that money belongs to us as well as to the National Health Insurance. We are co-partners in that. And Sir Norman's idea, and I share it, is that we hope to see the day when the men will get 30s. a week out of that Fund. (Hear, hear.) Just think of that now. When a man reaches 65 years of age he is going to get 30s. a week. Surely it is our duty under every circumstance to work to bring that about. (Hear, hear.) And when we have men like Sir Norman Hill, ready to throw their lot into it to help us, it is our duty to assist them to build it up and make it the success that it should be.

Sir Norman Hill did not agree with my proposition. His view was this: If we fuse together he would take charge of the National Health Insurance to get in the money, and we would take charge in our Society of the paying out of the money. That is to say, they would be the money-getters and we would be the money-payers. Sir Norman says that in his opinion, and I give way to him on that, because he has been actually deeper into that than I have—he says that would be quite possible; and he has come down here to-night to explain to you how he thinks it is possible. Then there is the question of the constitution of the Committee. You will understand the Board of Trade appoints the Committee for a certain number of years, I think it is three.

Sir Norman Hill: For every valuation.

The General President: Yes, every valuation the Board of Trade appoints the Committee. Now, hitherto the Committee has been composed of seven men, I think, representing the Seamen; the Shipowners have representation, but the actual working of the Society has been in the hands of the seven men appointed by the Board of Trade. Well, we are entitled to appoint, and have appointed, two men—Mr. Sprow and Mr. Henson. The other representatives have been the Marine Workers, who had Mr. Cotter and Mr. Lewis. That makes four. Then there is the local Fishermen's Society of Grimsby, Mr. Collins—that makes five; and then there are two men representing, one, the engineers, Mr. Bramah, and another representing the Officers. That has been the constitution of the Committee up to now.

There will be another appointment on the Committee shortly, and I was going to propose that we approach the Board of Trade

and ask for four representatives; because the Amalgamated Marine Workers' Union has now gone and the majority of the men having come to us in all sections, we ought to have the representation that the Marine Workers had. That would give us four. Then there are another three, so that really we would have the majority in our hands. Sir Norman Hill is quite willing that we should have the control of the payment of benefits and that he should have, with his Secretary, the control of getting the money in. I do not think, Sir Norman, I can say more; and I will leave it with you.

Sir Norman Hill: Gentlemen, I have very few words to add to what you have heard from Mr. Wilson. Mr. Wilson has put the position very clearly before the Executive. But there are one or two points I would like to deal with. First, I do not know whether you realise that the funds, and the only funds, that are available for health insurance in your case, the case of the Seamen, are represented by the money which is paid for the stamps that are bought from the Post Office. As you know, in part that money is deducted from your pay; in part it comes out of the pockets of the shipowners. That is where the money comes from that goes into the Post Office. His Majesty's Government gets that money through the Post Office. Now, in return for those payments you each get on to your cards the stamps that are appropriate to your voyage. Those stamps are of no value whatever to you as individuals until you have got them lodged with the Approved Society of which you are a member—lodged in your name with that Society. If anything happens to that stamp before it gets credited to your name, it is just as if you were on your way to the savings bank to deposit 5s. and you lost it in the street. It has gone.

Now, Mr. Wilson has told you that he estimates that we lose—the seamen generally lose—£10,000 a year; or, to put it in another way, that £10,000 is paid for stamps each year, which £10,000 does not get to the credit of any individual seaman. That may be in the case of your own Approved Society; but with regard to seamen generally I am perfectly sure it is nearer £50,000 than £10,000; and that has been going on year after year. Now, what was the remedy for that? We worked it out. It is not I who worked it out. We had Mr. Chambers's help when we did it; and we talked years ago to members of Parliament, when we could not convince the Officials, and we put before them a definite scheme. I rather think the details of the scheme, the schedule of the scheme, came far more from Mr. Chambers than from me. Anyhow, we did it across the table; and we said at every pay-off when the Master has to turn in the articles and settle all your accounts, lodge a schedule of the whole of the members of the crew and put down in black and white the dates which he has got in his official log, when a man was engaged and when he was paid off, and in another column the amount which is payable for his weekly contributions under the Health Insurance, and total that column and let the shipowner hand in the money to the Superintendent where the pay-off is. Then send

all that money up to Central Office in London with the schedule, and when we have got the money and the schedules we, as a matter of bookkeeping and of administration, can get the money to the credit of the right people.

Supposing we cannot. Supposing some name is so badly written that we cannot read it; or supposing—and you know it is not impossible—that a man has made that voyage under a name which does not appear in his Approved Society—we have known of cases where another name has been desirable for one voyage only. We have got the money, and when we have done all the dissecting we can, if we find there is a certain amount of money which we cannot identify with any one individual seaman—it is seamen's money—and if we have got all the seamen in one Society, that money can go to the Society and be applied for the benefit of the seamen. (Hear, hear.)

You know, it is a very big thing we have been fighting for for years to get. I think we are just on the point of getting it. I am sure we are on the point of getting it if we are all together. The only difficulty that has ever been put up against it, and it was a very silly point, was that seamen are in 1,600 different Societies and Branches, and it would be a tremendous job to dissect those schedules and send the right amounts to 1,600 Societies. That is the way they talked to us until we got right down to hard figures. You know, out of the 1,600 there are less than ten Societies who to-day have 95 per cent. of all the seamen. So there are 1,590 Societies who have got 5 per cent. of the seamen—and this is a thing that is going to hold up a great big reform of this kind! You know, it is silly to talk like that. But if we are all together I know we are at the last hurdle and can get over it.

Now, if you want to decide about dividing up a bear's skin, I believe the most important point is to catch your bear; and to my mind the first big point here is to get the money that is paid for the stamps. I think I know something about that; and I think I know about the best way of getting it; and I believe I know something about the way of handling the Officials in the Departments so as to carry the reforms that are necessary to get, to get the money in; and I think the staff we have at Leman Street is a very efficient staff on those lines, and I should be sorry to see that staff dispersed until we have made it thoroughly effective to get the money in. It is a big point, I agree with Mr. Havelock Wilson that we must not exaggerate the economies to be got from amalgamations. People are very fond of talking about that, and then when it does not eventuate people think they have been misled. But my great point is that the amalgamation will get in the money. Supposing I am wrong; supposing £50,000 is too much; well, I will not take Mr. Wilson's figures; if we take a figure between his £10,000 and my £50,000 we have not a bad figure. What figures have you got? You have got a figure between the two, which is £30,000.

That is the first big point, and it is a big point on which I do insist with all the knowledge I have got from having watched this



as closely as I can ever since 1912. 'It is of the utmost importance to every single seaman who is serving—of the utmost importance. And, mind you, it is of more importance to-day than it ever has been before. If you leave a widow, that widow, and if you leave children, those children, are going to come on the Widow's Pension and the Children's Pension, but it depends on whether you are insured under the Health Insurance; so unless you keep your accounts right you are depriving the widow and child of the chance of getting their pension and allowance. In the same way, to get your pensions at 65 instead of 70 you must be in Health Insurance; that is, your stamps must have got to your own individual credit in your own Society. So it is more important than ever that we get in the moneys which are paid voyage after voyage for you, and that we get it into the right credits.

Now, the second point is: What are we to do with the moneys when we have got them? Years ago, in 1912, when this Committee was passed, I was working alongside with Mr. Havelock Wilson, and I think I am right in saying that he and I both thought then that the only way of really getting the best for the seamen was to keep them all in one Society—that was at the beginning. Then it went on a long way and I worked with Mr. Chambers in settling the Rules and Constitution of the Seamen's National, bearing that in view. Mr. Chambers was as much responsible as I was for drafting the Rules and the Regulations under which the Seamen's National is now working; and we provided for the point which I think we are now considering to-day, and what we said in our Regulations was: The Committee of Management may from time to time employ as its agent any Society whether an Approved Society or not in such manner as it thinks fit in connection with the administration of benefits and the collection of arrears of contributions of its members and generally or in such places as may be specified.

Now, what Mr. Chambers and I both had in mind at that time was that we would make a big central Society to get in the money, to keep the accounts, to deal with the doctors; we then had to deal with tubercular matters; we would make a big central Society to do that, but that if your Union or any other Union said, "Now, with regard to the administration of the benefits we are more in touch with our men than you are, than the central Society," then the National Society could work through the particular Union the administration of the benefits of all the members of that Union; and what we thought—and I am sure we were right in thinking it—was that it was only by proceeding on those lines that we could get the most money to distribute as benefits. When you come to the question of benefits you have this question to consider: Is this man a malingerer? You are the best judges of that. "What can we do to help this man; he is a decent man; we will recommend him for convalescent home treatment. This doctor does not seem to be handling these men right, or these men do not seem to be handling the doctor right; we are the judges of that"—you, the Union, the men's fellow-

workers are the best of judges. The administration of the benefits, to my mind, wants special abilities and special knowledge, and a special type of man. I do not think it is the same type of man as you want to get in the money. There you want special knowledge and special ability to deal with masses and masses of red tape, some of which is not tied to fans, and with Departmental Officials, Parliamentary Committees, and all that kind of thing; and, above all else, you want the most accurate of bookkeeping. If you saw the books that we keep—I do not know whether you go to look at your own—they are a mass of detail; absolutely a mass of detail; and you want the greatest precision and the greatest accuracy; and, of course, it is rather an expensive matter and you do not want to duplicate that.

That is where I think it is so easy to make this arrangement. As Mr. Havelock Wilson has told you, you have now an effective majority on the General Purposes Committee. Clearly you are entitled to nominate a majority of the insured members' representatives on that Committee. You are clearly entitled to that. There are a good many on that Committee with whom I have worked for a great many years now, and I think they will all tell you that on no one single question which has arisen in regard to the administration of benefits, or anything of that kind, have the Shipowners ever voted; they have always left it absolutely to the representatives of the insured members. (Hear, hear.) They are here and they will contradict me if I am wrong. Those are the lines on which I would like to proceed. I do not believe there is any question of principle involved, not the smallest question of principle.

I believe that if Mr. Havelock Wilson, with your approval, would tell your chief man, Mr. Bowden, to meet my chief man, Mr. Godfrey, to put their heads together and make this into a working proposition because it was going to go, it would be done. There would be no trouble. There is no question of principle that I can see. Now, I am perfectly sure it can be worked through on lines which would keep in your hands the control of the administration of the benefits to your members; and I am also sure that where we could help, and where we would help, by working together is in getting the money so that there is money to provide benefit out of.

I will not keep you any longer, but there is just one word I would like to say with regard to the Lascar Fund (we call it the Seamen's Pension Fund now), because when you called it the Lascar Fund the lascars thought they were entitled to it; so we call it the Seamen's Pension Fund. The day before yesterday I signed the cheques for the next month's pensions, £3,000; that is running to £36,000 a year. That is not safe, but we are making it safe; and within reasonable distance I have no doubt that instead of signing a cheque for £3,000 each month I shall be signing a cheque for £5,000 or £6,000 each month—that is, if you leave me there as Chairman.

Then there is the very last point. So far as vested interests are concerned, as a rule I hate the name; but there is one vested

interest we can put at your disposal absolutely. I had the honour of serving as Chairman of the Committee of Management on the election of that Committee since the formation of my Society in 1920; that place is at your disposal. It is a long time to have ground away; I have retired from my professional work now and I come up specially, always once a month and sometimes more than once, to attend the meetings. It is a bit of a grind, and when another gentleman is found to take the Chair I shall retire without any grudging feeling at all. On the other hand, if I can be of any use in working through and licking into effective operation of this Organisation, I shall be only too glad to go on doing it. (Hear, hear.) There is one way in which I can do it, such as putting on record and making perfectly clear the spirit of this amalgamation. I am Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, I am also Chairman of the General Committee—the General Committee generally meets once or twice a year; the Board of Trade representatives attend it; the General Purposes Committee, the full Committee, always meets each month, and sub-committees of it, on which the insured members only are represented, meet several times during the month. Now, if you want me, I will stop as Chairman of the General Purposes Committee to do my best to lick this into shape. I can retire from the Chairmanship of the General Committee, and if it is your wish I have no doubt your Chairman will be elected as Chairman of the General Committee, and there you would have it made perfectly manifest the spirit in which we are amalgamating, that we are not stealing you and that you are not stealing us.

I think I have said all that I can say; but if there are any questions I can answer I will do so, as I am only too anxious to put at your disposal any and all the information I have got.

The General President: You have heard Sir Norman Hill, Gentlemen, and I know that he, like us, is a busy man; he has a lot to do; he is not going home to rest, he is going home to work. If any of you would like to ask any questions of Sir Norman Hill, I am sure he will be only too pleased to answer you.

Captain Griffiths: I have listened very attentively to Sir Norman Hill, and I want to congratulate him on a very plain speech on a skeleton scheme. I would like to know this for information: Sir Norman made the statement that 90 per cent. of the seamen are in about ten Approved Societies.

Sir Norman Hill: 95.

Captain Griffiths: Out of a possible 1,500. Seeing that this is a national measure, would it be possible under this scheme of yours that all the men of the sea should be in this Approved Society, to take them out of the other ten?

Sir Norman Hill: That means an Act of Parliament, and I am not sure. The commercial Approved Societies like the Prudential have got a good many friends in the House of Commons,

Then you have another body like the Catholic Thrift, where religion comes in, and they have a good many friends in the House. If you apply compulsion, I think you might be beaten. But if you provide the most effective organisation and show by results that you can do far more for seamen in their own Society than they can do elsewhere, I think the seamen will do the rest.

Mr. Jarman: There are, I believe, quite a large number of cards unclaimed which have been lying at Kew since 1912.

Sir Norman Hill: Yes.

Mr. Jarman: In the event of an amalgamation, would it be possible for the Society to claim those cards?

The General President: They are butter in the dog's mouth!

Sir Norman Hill: I think we have already captured them for the Seamen's Pension Fund.

Captain Davis: With regard to the title of the amalgamated company; there are only two, and one would be the subsidiary Society. Who would be the amalgamated Society (as it were) and who would be the subsidiary Society? Would it be yours, the National, or ours, the Approved Society?

Sir Norman Hill: My idea is that there is only one Approved Society, and that is the Seamen's National. Then that Approved Society under its authority embraces you as the Union; you are to administer the benefits to your own members. You see, we have to provide for every man who offers; that is the Act of Parliament; we have to provide for the Fishermen, for the Engineers, for the Officers, who are under insurance. We have to provide for everyone. Supposing the Engineers' Society, the Engineering Union, said, "We want to administer our benefits to our members." We should agree. I would have only one Approved Society. I do not think the name matters; if you like to change the name we can change it. But I would have only one Approved Society working through you to all your members, and you can do that in whole or in part just as you found advisable.

For example, if you find it as effective and better to deal with the doctors through a single Society, do it; if it is administering the sickness or maternity benefit, and so on, and you want to do that direct with your own members, do it. We really did think it out, Mr. Chambers and I, at the beginning, and we have the machinery by which all that can be done.

Mr. Cotter: Is it a fact that at the last valuation this Union had 30,000 odd and the Seamen's National had 50,000 odd—take amalgamation, if that came about we would certainly recommend those 50,000 to take the benefits through this Union, so we should get practically control of 80,000 outside the Engineers, who are

a very small number. That is my main point, but instead of two Societies dealing with 75,000 men, there is the possibility of getting 70,000 benefits through this amalgamation.

Sir Norman Hill: I am not quite sure that I follow. The united Society would make sure that every single sixpence paid into the Post Office to buy stamps in respect of those 75,000 men came to its credit. We would make absolutely sure of the money. How are we going to distribute that money? It must be strictly under the Act. You come in with your lists and say, "With regard to all these members we can see to it." That is your affair. We have to put up the money according to the Act, and you have to see to the distribution. You can say to us with regard to medical attendance on those men, "We want the central Society to arrange that, because, you know, the doctors are very peculiar people; they are developing more powers and putting one Approved Society up against the other to get as much money as they can." You might say, "We want one Society to deal with all the medical benefits." That is right. Or you might say, "We want to deal with our own members in regard to our own doctors"; that is right. We can make a business bargain; there is no principle in it, it is only detail.

Captain Tupper: What I want to get clear is this, that if we hand over the collecting of the money and the cards—whichever system may be adopted—of our present members to you, do we, as a *quid pro quo*, get the administration or the giving out of the benefits of the whole of the Seamen's National Approved Society?

Sir Norman Hill: You could not do that outside your own Union. We could not hand over the Officers and Engineers.

Captain Tupper: I did not mean that. I meant the rank and file.

Sir Norman Hill: Your own men, yes.

Captain Tupper: And members of your Approved Society now for your National Health Insurance?

Sir Norman Hill: I think any man who is a member of your own Union, there will be no question about; but if you are thinking of a seaman who is not a member of your Union, and he protested against it, I think he would have to get the benefits from his own Approved Society. There is one point I would like to put to you: If we get our schedules through, there will be no question of collecting cards; that has all gone; it is adjusting schedules.

Mr. Cotter: Let me raise my point again in order to make it clear. There are a mass of men in the National Seamen's Health Insurance Society who belong to this Union. There will be

nothing to prevent us recommending those men getting the benefits paid through this Organisation?

Sir Norman Hill : Nothing at all.

Mr. Cotter : Nothing?

Sir Norman Hill : We could not compel him, of course. We could recommend, if you brought about amalgamation, the vast majority of those men in that Organisation to come along and get the benefits of this Organisation. That is what you agree to, I take it.

The General President : We will have a meeting of our Approved Society to-morrow. I think we have elicited all the information from Sir Norman Hill that we require, and I am going to ask you to accord him a vote of thanks for coming. (Hear, hear.)

The vote of thanks to Sir Norman Hill was put to the meeting and carried by acclamation.

Sir Norman Hill : Thank you very much, Gentlemen; good night.

*(Sir Norman Hill then withdrew.)*

The General President : Now, Gentlemen, we have a lot of work to do yet, and I propose that we adjourn for a few minutes before we go on with our business.

## RESUMED CONSIDERATION OF CASES.

*(After a short interval.)*

The General President : Now, Gentlemen, we want expedition to get through with the job. We have dealt with McVey and White. We have now the others to deal with. I want to tell you I have not any jobs for any of them; all the positions in Liverpool have been filled by very good men; so good, that when they went there the income was £80 a week and now it is up to £400 a week. We have done £400 a week for three weeks, and I think the chances are that the income will improve; and there is no necessity to make any change. The prevailing opinion of the men is that they do not want any of them back—none of them. I am going to recommend that all the other Officials outside those we have dealt with, be dismissed from their offices. That is to say, my decision will be upheld; and with regard to the future they will have to take their chance like any other ordinary member if a vacancy occurs, and if, in our judgment, we think they are worth giving a start we will do so. That will be a big punishment, because they will lose their jobs.

Then you will have to settle the question as to what wages you will give them. We have already decided in one case to give

him four weeks' money; so that I take it in the case of those men you will do the same. They have finished as Officials, and they will get four weeks' money. That is all I have to say; it is now for you to decide it. Tell us what you think.

Mr. Dench : In the case of Murphy, I understand he is not a seaman at all; he is a clerk. I suggest that he should be expelled entirely from our Organisation.

The General President : I am asking you to discharge the lot.

Captain Tupper : Not to expel them.

Mr. Jones : Does not Murphy belong to the Clerks' Union?

The General President : Yes.

A Delegate : Does he get any superannuation?

The General President : That is Peter Murphy.

Mr. Cathery : Michael Murphy has £22 belonging to him, and P. Murphy has nothing. Is his name Patrick or Peter?

A Delegate : It is Peter.

Mr. Allen : I take it that Parkin is not a seaman.

The General President : He is the same as the others. His job is filled by a much more capable man.

Mr. Gunning : You want a resolution to deal with the whole lot?

The General President : Yes, we will deal with the whole body; they are all on the same level.

Mr. Flett : I move that we take the same procedure as in the last case—four weeks' money and dismiss them from all official positions.

Mr. McCartney formally seconded.

Mr. Flett : With regard to the suspension : I say that ought to be left to the discretion of the Executive Council if any vacancies arise.

The General President : I think that is wise.

Mr. Flett : I say that because I do not think it is right that because a man has committed himself once he should be condemned for life. If they are in a position to redeem themselves and qualify themselves for a position in the future, it is up to the

Executive to consider that and put them in a position to satisfy us that they are qualified for it. But they will have to change their conduct first.

The General President : Now, it has been moved and seconded that the whole of them, except the two we have dealt with already, be dismissed from office ; that we put no bar up against them ; it is a matter for the Executive to act in the future ; if we find that they have made good and there is room for an Official they will have to take the same chance as an ordinary member ; they will be appointed on their merits ; and there will be no suspension of membership. Mike Murphy, the clerk, is finished ; he is not a member ; when we dismiss him that is the end of him. Now, is there any amendment on that ?

Mr. Ley : I do not think it is right for those men to have a chance to get in any position whatever on the Executive Council or at the Annual General Meeting for a few years.

The General President : How are they going to get in unless the Executive Council or the Executive Officers appoint them ?

Mr. Ley : They probably may try to get back, anyway.

The General President : What I want you to do is to look at it from a practical point of view. There are one or two among those men—if it comes to filling a job I might find that those men, one or two I have mentioned, might be good enough to fill it in preference to a man who could not do as well as they could. If we adopt the resolution we leave the door open for that contingency.

Captain Tupper : The Rule states now that the Delegates are appointed from Head Office.

The General President : Yes ; they are all appointed by the Head Office and approved of by the Executive.

Mr. Hoare : I heard a remark passed—I have often spoken to this man you have referred to, Michael Murphy ; he was often told in my presence that he had no right to be there, and I, as an old Official in the early days, who was a number of years out but never left the Society—I said, “ No, because you never went to sea in your life ”—I said it in the presence of Frank Riley—“ you are taking another man’s job, and you would not have been sent here except because of the cards,” and he said, “ I cannot be sacked.”

The General President : That is right ; that is the reason he got his job. They wanted me to discharge him. I said, “ No, let those who put him on and use him discharge him, and then we shall get to know something.” If I had discharged him it would be : “ Havelock Wilson.” Let the men who did the dirty



work discharge him. At any rate, now he has discharged himself, and perhaps we shall get to know something later. Now, Gentlemen, you have the resolution before you.

Captain Tupper : I move that the question be put.

Agreed.

The General President : You quite understand what it is. Let us be clear. All those Officials are dismissed; there is no bar upon them about being members of the Union; there is no bar on them as to the limit of time that they may get a job; but they will have to take their chance the same as an ordinary member who has never been an official. Are we clear on that?

Several Delegates : Yes.

Mr. Dench : Is Mike Murphy to be allowed four weeks' money the same as the others? He is not even a member of our Organisation.

The General President : He is finished.

Mr. Dench : It has been suggested we should pay them four weeks' wages as well as the others.

The General President : That is another thing.

Mr. Dench : He is an exception, I take it.

Mr. Gunning : He is not included in the resolution.

The General President : Then we will leave Mike Murphy out of this job and deal with him separately. They are to be finished; they will get four weeks' wages; there is no bar put upon them outside of what I have mentioned. Now, all in favour of that resolution hold up your hands.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution .....	27
Against .....	0

The General President : The resolution is carried. Now we come to Mike Murphy. He is not a seaman. He, I take it, you dismiss. The only question is whether you give him a month's money or not. What is your idea on that?

Captain Davis : In my opinion I would not make any exception to the rule in this business. They are all rather in the same boat; and seeing that you are finishing up with him I would suggest that he gets the four weeks' money the same as the rest.

The General President : Do you move that?

Captain Davis: Yes.

Mr. Ley seconded.

The General President: It is moved and seconded that Mike Murphy's services are dispensed with, that he gets four weeks' wages, and no more employment by the Union because we can get plenty of sailors and firemen, cooks and stewards, to do his work as well as he can do it. So it will be a chance for a sea-going man. I will now put the resolution; those in favour say "Aye"; those against say "No"—the resolution is carried with one dissentient.

The General President: We now come to London. We are now going to deal with the London Officials. There is George Reed and seven other men, and I am going to ask you to some extent to deal with their cases on a different line from that which you have taken in regard to those who have just been dealt with. I will tell you why. They committed the same offence as the Liverpool men did, with the exception of this difference: when they found they made a mistake they immediately stopped all opposition to the Union and sent a letter expressing their regret, withdrawing any appeal to the Executive Council, and throwing themselves entirely on your mercy. (Hear, hear.)

I will have the letter of Mr. Reed read. All the other letters are the same, with the exception of that from one man, a man named Campbell; he is the only man who is getting the £2 a week from the T.U.C.; the others have never had a penny from the T.U.C.; they were invited to go and take it, but they would not do it. Now we will have Reed's letter. That is as follows:—

"To the Executive Council, National Union of Seamen, London, S.E.1. Gentlemen,—No doubt most of you are aware that during the General Strike I, as Secretary of the Tower Hill Branch, called a meeting of the members in which I took part and allowed them to pass resolutions contrary to the Constitution of the Union and its rules. I must admit I was warned by the General President, Mr. Havelock Wilson, that I was doing wrong, but I was carried away by the orders of the T.U.C. for a General Strike, and force of circumstances over which I had no control, and I let myself go. You know what has happened since. The General Strike was a miserable failure and I am one of its victims. The General President, owing to my actions, was compelled, for the protection of its members and the welfare of the Union, to restrain myself and others from calling members on strike. I was suspended from duty and an injunction was served on me to compel me to obey. From a constitutional point of view the General President was perfectly justified in his actions, as subsequent events has proved he was right and I am wrong. I regret now I did not listen to his common sense and advice. I have no cause to complain, only to say I am sincerely sorry for what has happened.

I still hope to continue my membership in the Union, as I cannot afford to be idle. I must get off to sea as soon as possible and earn my bread. Let me conclude by saying I hope that if in some future date my services can be utilised by the Union to tackle any difficult job that may arise I shall be only too pleased to offer them to you for what they are worth.—I beg to remain, Gentlemen, yours faithfully, GEO. REED.”

All the others, as I have said, with the exception of Campbell, sent a similar letter. Therefore I think their case requires exceptional treatment compared with the others. When they found themselves in the wrong they immediately admitted their wrong; they apologised; they told me, “ Well, we do not want to trouble the Executive Council; we know we have done wrong, and it is not for us to come and justify or to beg. We have to apologise, and that is the end of it.”

Now, when you compare that with what we have had from Liverpool and what we have had from the North-East Coast, I think, as fair-minded men, you will take the view that they are in a different boat altogether. But, different as it may be, in my opinion they have got to be discharged. (Hear, hear.) Then at any future time if their services may be required they will have to take their turn the same as anyone else.

In connection with that lot at Tower Hill, there are three or four who were simply ballast; but there are four, perhaps, who were really good men; but I want them to go through it the same as the rest. No favours. They did wrong. We have a right to impose a punishment; and I would recommend to you that my decision be confirmed—that is, dismissing them—and that they get four weeks' wages; and then at some future time if they make good and there is a vacancy, and they are good enough to fill it, they get their chance. That is what I advise there.

Captain Davis: When you said you were going to discharge them all, I did feel that while you put forward some mitigating features in connection with the letter, it would be difficult at this sorry time and at this juncture to make fish of one and flesh of another. I think at this juncture it is only right for me to say how sorry I was this morning when I heard one man from Liverpool make a statement which, I take it, was largely acquiesced in by the majority. I came here this morning hoping that the Liverpool Officials would have been prepared to admit error. But this is what was said—and I have to stand to-day by those Officials who bore the brunt of the battle—one man said “ the finger of scorn ” would be pointed at them and they would stand condemned. Condemned for what? Condemned because they carried out the instructions of the Executive, which every right-minded, sane Trade Unionist had a perfect right to do. By implication he meant that every one of our Officials who stood four-square stands condemned. I respectfully submit to you and the Executive Council, Sir, that those Officials of ours who stood four-

square stand high in the minds of men whose opinion is worth having. Therefore I submit in all seriousness that what the Liverpool Officials did this morning was an insult. They had a stock answer that the conditions at Liverpool forced them. Wherever the men in any port were given a lead—and I saw leads being given in the Bristol Channel, and I will confine myself to Swansea, Cardiff, and Newport—Swansea, one of the hottest places, from a Trade Union point of view, in the country, where the men were told the Constitution of their Union, and they were signing on without anything whatever. I submit that when you come to view the whole circumstances of this case the men only wanted a lead, a conscientious lead; and I am going to say that the majority of the difficulties would have been overcome if that lead had been forthcoming.

I did think this morning that when those Officials came here, having regard to the whole of the circumstances, the turn of events, the fact that this Executive had done something for which they should have been complimented—I did think they would have come here in a different spirit; but they came here, to my surprise and sorrow, and said that if the same set of circumstances happened again they would repeat their conduct. What they meant by implication was that they would again turn down the findings of this Executive Council with all its wisdom. I agree with the General President that you cannot make fish of one and flesh of another. I say four weeks' money for those men also; and, furthermore, that when opportunities present themselves they should be reinstated according to the wisdom of the Executive Officers. I thought it only right that I should say it, because a more disappointed man never came to a Conference than me to-day, to find those men adamant.

Friends, you cannot conduct a Union on such lines. It is wrong and it will destroy Trade Unionism if you turn down the findings of your Executive Council. You heard Mr. Findlay say the same thing this morning. Whoever led them, led them in the wrong path, led them up the wrong road; and I do hope in the days that lie before them they will get into solitude with their own thoughts—if such leadership leads them in such a path—and decide for themselves what is right and what is wrong.

The General President: We had finished with the Liverpool chaps and we are dealing with the London men. I submit that, honestly, the London men have done the right and manly thing.

Captain Davis: I agree.

The General President: At the right moment. And, as I have said, by doing that you never lose anything. If a man is wrong and he says he is wrong, get to work and put it right.

Captain Davis: And Wilson will forgive him!

The General President: Every one of those men said he did wrong—those men from Liverpool—and then each one of them

made an idiot of himself by saying he would do it again. The London men said, "We did wrong; we are sorry; we leave ourselves in your hands." You may think I am very drastic in saying to the London men, after they have done that, that they should be dismissed; but I want to tell you this. This is an important constitutional question—(hear, hear)—and every Official of this Union has got to understand his first duty is to the Constitution. (Hear, hear.) His second duty is to the Committee that is governing the Union. And if he breaks through those, then he has a right to be punished. Although I may be reluctant to inflict punishment on any of the London men after their apology, in my opinion the necessity of the case for good government requires that they shall go through it the same as the others, only not to the same extent. Therefore I recommend you to uphold the decision that they are discharged; that they get four weeks' money—you can give them more if you like; make a distinction and give them two months' money if you so decide, because they have not defied you, they have not persisted in their opposition, they have not threatened to form new Unions—do not forget that.

During the last five weeks in Liverpool we have been threatened all the time that if we did not reinstate them they were going to form a section of the Transport Workers' Federation. Do not forget they have been in daily conversation and conference with them. The London men have done nothing of the kind; they have kept themselves aloof—except one man. I want you to make an exception in that man's case—the case of Mr. Jock Campbell; he has been in touch with the opposition; he has been getting £2 a week from the T.U.C.; therefore there must be a difference there. But with the other men, you can make a distinction, if you choose, in giving them eight weeks' wages, seeing that they do not continue their opposition. Those are the lines on which I recommend you to go. But they are all discharged. I will not say, of course, what Jackie Fisher said, "Sack the lot!"

Mr. Flett: One point with regard to that letter from Mr. Reed. I see he makes a statement there whereby the General Strike was a miserable failure. I would like an expression of opinion as to what would have been his attitude had the General Strike been a success.

The General President: I cannot tell you; I am not a thought reader. But he had sense enough to recognise it was a failure, and he apologised for the silly action he took. That is enough for me. But he is discharged, and he has got to remain discharged and take his chance the same as anyone else.

Mr. Gunning: I think he realised within 24 hours of his action that he had committed a serious blunder.

The General President; He did, and all the others,

Mr. Flett : Having heard that, I move : That we act on your recommendation, 'Sir, making it two months' wages with regard to the London men, with the exception of Campbell.

The General President : We will deal with Mr. Campbell separately. Now, it has been moved, with regard to the London Officials, that their suspension stands good—that is to say, they are dismissed from office; they are to receive two months' wages, making a distinction between them and Liverpool who persisted in their wilful conduct right up to now; and that with regard to reinstatement they will have to take their chance the same as every other member of the Union as vacancies may occur. If they are likely to be better men than those who are offering for service they will have their chance, subject to the approval of the Executive Council.

Mr. Jones : I will second the resolution.

The General President : Does anyone think it ought to be otherwise? If so, please let us hear about it.

A Delegate moved that the question be now put.

Agreed.

The General President : Now, the question is that the London Officials' suspensions be confirmed—that is, that they should be discharged; but in view of them apologising and recognising their wrong at the right moment we make them a grant of two months' wages instead of the one month that has been given to the others in consequence of their opposition; and in regard to the future they will have to take their chance of getting a job the same as any ordinary member, as vacancies may occur. That is the resolution I am going to put to you.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution .....	28
Against .....	0

The General President : Then that is carried unanimously.

#### CASE OF MR. CAMPBELL.

The General President : Now we come to Mr. Campbell's case. Mr. Campbell has been receiving £2 a week from the T.U.C. Parliamentary Committee. I do not think that is right. I would like you to make a difference in his case, and say whether it is one month or two months' wages that he should receive, seeing that it is alleged he has been paid by the T.U.C. for about the last seven or eight weeks. If, as alleged, Mr. Campbell has been receiving money from the T.U.C. for any length of time we give him only one month's wages; but if he has not been receiving it we give him two months' wages.

Mr. Doxford : I will move that.

Captain Tupper : And that he is removed from office?

The General President : Yes; the same conditions as the others in every other respect.

Mr. McCartney formally seconded the resolution.

The General President : I will now put the resolution. Those in favour please hold up your hands.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution .....	26
Against .....	0

The General President : The resolution is carried.

The General President : On the question of the superannuation, we will treat them in the same manner as the others, I propose. Their superannuation money, if they want it, will be refunded. With regard to the costs of the injunction, that matter will stand over until the next Executive Council meeting. Is that agreed to?

This course was agreed to.

The General President : As we want to get finished early to-morrow if we can, I am going to recommend that we meet at 10 a.m. I thank you, gentlemen, for your patience.

#### VOTE OF THANKS TO OFFICIALS.

Mr. Jones : Before we finish I would like to move a vote of thanks be given to all the new Officials who took over at Liverpool, because in my opinion they have exceptional circumstances to work against.

The General President : I will tell you a better plan than that. You get a comprehensive resolution ready for Thursday morning and submit it to the Annual General Meeting, which is the supreme governing body of the Union.

Mr. Jarman : With regard to the Officials who are carrying on at Liverpool, they are thanking the Executive Council by the income being £200 up to-day for this week. (Hear, hear.)

The General President : Then we will trust to Mr. Doxford to bring up that comprehensive, omnibus resolution on Thursday. (Hear, hear.) We are now finished for to-day, gentlemen, and I thank you.

*(Adjourned until the next day, July 21st, 1926, at 10 o'clock.)*

# Executive Council Meeting.

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## THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS,

WEDNESDAY, JULY 21ST, 1926.

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The General President: Now, Gentlemen, we will go on with the Agenda. Has anyone any remarks to make on the Minutes of the meeting held on April 22nd and 23rd?

Mr. Fleet: I move that those Minutes be adopted.

Mr. Dench formally seconded.

The General President: Is there any question arising out of the Minutes of that meeting? Then is it your pleasure that the Minutes be adopted and signed as correct?

This was agreed to.

### GENERAL PRESIDENT'S QUARTERLY REPORT.

The General President: Gentlemen, the next item is the General President's Quarterly Report. I think I have given the substance of the Quarterly Report during the past two days. That being so, I ought not to have many further observations to make. But there are one or two points that I think might be emphasised. I have been quite a long time in the Trade Union movement, but I have never seen in all my experience a state of affairs such as obtains to-day; and I am directing my remarks now more to the ordinary member than to the Officials. (Hear hear.) It is evident, from my observation, that the one concern at the present time of a good many of Officials—I say "a good many" advisedly because, fortunately, they are not all of the same way of thinking—come to the conclusion that a Trade Union exists for their benefit only. As far as our members are concerned, the members' interests are of secondary consideration. Now, if any evidence was required on that point, I direct your attention to the exhibition we have had here for two days. First, the man Osmer. Can anyone reasonably state that that man was a fit and proper person to be an Official of this Union? The most charitable thing that I can say of the man is that he was an imbecile—nothing more or less.

Mr. Ash: I am sure he was.

The General President: But, imbecile as he was, he had his eye on the main chance, and that was to think that he was the one man who should have an appointment in the Union, and that



under no circumstances or conditions could he be removed. Having once taken up an official appointment he apparently felt he ought to be there for the rest of his natural life, or pensioned off on a good substantial pension. Then we will take Mr. Rogers, of Newcastle. There is a man—an outsider—who came here under circumstances which are easily explained. During the strike of 1911 he was a Socialist lecturer, and he addressed meetings around Newcastle and elsewhere and was found very convenient as a speaker. His oratory would not attract me, but evidently it was attractive enough to have him recommended as a man for a post in the Union as a kind of collector. From that position he came to be Secretary, and during the whole of that time, although I have not complained about him, the best part of his work has been propagating principles of the most extreme kind. I am not objecting to a man propagating extreme principles. As far as I am concerned, I do not care what your politics are, any of you—(hear, hear)—but I do mean to say this, that your first consideration ought to be your bread and butter—(hear, hear)—and you have no right to exploit your moderate views or your extreme views at the expense of the Union and its members. (Hear, hear.) That is a fair proposition. Mr. Rogers has been one of the active men in the Minority Movement. What is the Minority Movement? If I understand the Minority Movement, it is to “ginger up” what they call the dull and lethargic Trade Union leaders. That is to say, that if a Trade Union leader is not insane, then he must be inoculated with the microbes to make him so. I think that is a gospel which is very dangerous, exceedingly dangerous to any movement, and exceedingly so to the ordinary man.

Take, for instance, Mr. A. J. Cook as a sample. Everyone now declares that Mr. A. J. Cook is mad; and I believe they have thought it for months, and perhaps for years. Yet no one had the courage to say it until I said so. Now they are convinced it must be right because I said it. (Laughter.) I read in the “Daily Mail” this morning that one of his own people, Mr. Spencer, of Nottingham, declares that the German miners’ leaders declare it and Cabinet Ministers have declared it. But not one of them dared say it until I did; and no one contradicts it; not even Mr. Cook himself has contradicted the statement that his mental balance has gone.

To come now to the Liverpool Officials. I had a good opportunity of looking at them collectively yesterday, and I believe if I had seen them all together as I saw them yesterday, I may have been tempted either to go into a lunatic asylum or commit suicide. First, we will start with Mr. McVey. There is a man who for nine years has been drawing a good salary; because, remember, that, independent of his own wages, he has had a daughter employed in the office at £3 a week who did not do the work; a little girl in Liverpool, now in the office, was doing all the work at a less wage than McVey’s own daughter was getting, and she was the slave of the establishment, the others could come and go as they liked. Mr. McVey has had a good salary; he has not lost on the deal, anyhow. It will take a lot to convince me that he has made any sacrifice.

Now, I want to be charitable. What has been the position of affairs on the Mersey for nine years? I am amazed when I hear most of this Executive, who have been here more than a day, talking about "consideration" for their past services—"we ought to be charitable." I am told I ought to cultivate the Baldwin spirit. I have no adequate idea what that really means; but I am told I ought to cultivate it. Well, whether I am right or wrong, I always put principle before sentiment, because I find sentimentality is very often not worth five minutes' consideration. It is my business and I have tried to set a good example myself as far as I can. The first interest is the Union and the members; that is the first thing we ought to consider if we are decent and thoughtful. My life has been one great struggle to carry that out. (Hear, hear.) I may have failed. A man must never be judged by himself. Never be judge of yourself, because you may over-estimate your ideas and your principles and your work. But as far as it has been humanly possible I have endeavoured, first, to set a good example as to work. Whatever those who are opposed to me may say, I do not think they can honestly say that I have ever neglected my work or that I have ever spared myself in doing my work (Hear, hear.) In that direction, and in all other directions, my one study has been, right or wrong, the Union and its members first and foremost in everything.

Now, when I come to a man like Mr. McVey I am faced with this: That he has had one ambition in life and one ambition only, as far as I can judge of the man—being impartial—and that ambition has been the political game; first, to be a Town Councillor, then to be a Member of Parliament. Well, it is very commendable in its way. I myself have no right to complain on that score. I was for twenty years a Member of Parliament, and I had therefore ample opportunity of assisting its work. But I have since had time to weigh it up, and in a way I tell you now, honestly and candidly, I look upon the twenty years I spent in the House of Commons as twenty years of a wasted life, as far as the Union is concerned. That may startle some of you a bit. Why have I come to that conclusion? Can it be said honestly that I did nothing in the House of Commons in those twenty years? I have a colleague sitting in this room, Mr. Richard McGhee, who was a colleague of mine in the House of Commons, and he will tell you there was no man who sat in the British House of Commons who could show such a record of work done as I did. (Hear, hear.)

If anyone disputes that, or has any doubt on that point, let them consult "Hansard"; let them take the Parliamentary Debates from 1892 up to the time that I left Parliament, and let them read those debates; let them look over the work and see what I accomplished; and I think it will bear out what I have said, that no man ever sat as a single individual and did more—because, remember, in my time there was no Labour Party, it was a one-handed job. But, fortunately, I had a good backing, first in the Irish Party, and somehow or other I always could get support from Conservatives and from Liberals, and in that way I was able to accomplish a great amount of work. The Workmen's Compensation Act took me 25 years to get through the House of

Commons. I never gave up for one moment for 25 years—Food Scale, and scores of other things, and yet I tell you this morning it was wasted energy as far as the Union is concerned.

Now, can I explain it? Yes I can; if I could not explain it I would not say it. I had an idea that if I could turn out a good legislative programme every year it would mean that every man of the sea would become a Union man. That is what I thought, and that is what the majority of you would naturally think would be the result; that if you could go down to a ship and you could say to a crowd of men, "Well, boys, I have got you the Workmen's Compensation Act; I have got you a new Food Scale; I have got the Repatriation of Men from Foreign Ports here, and a hundred and one other things," you would naturally think, if you said that, the men would all say, "Well, Wilson, that is fine; put me down as a member." That is what you would have thought, is it not? But I want to tell you this: It had just the opposite effect. I used to inform the men when they were arguing against the Union: "Have I not got the Compensation Act for you?" See the look of contempt that would come across their faces. They would eye me up and down and say, "You did it? Parliament did that; the Board of Trade did it"—everyone did it except me or the Union. Oh, no; it had not the slightest effect on making Union men.

Then, what was I working for? For whom was I working? I was working for non-Union men. It is perfectly true that some of the Union men got the benefit of it. You cannot gainsay that fact. But these men were paying for services rendered, the Union men were—the other men were not. So I discovered I was in this position: While I was receiving pay from about 5 per cent. of the men that I had benefited, 95 per cent. who got the benefit never subscribed a single copper. Now, think that out. Is that good business? I would have got that 5 per cent. sure enough whether there had been a Compensation Act or not; the time that I had to give in Parliament prevented me from getting another 25 per cent. that I would have got if I had been devoting the whole of my attention to the Union instead of devoting the best part of it to Parliament. Now, look at the logic of that argument in any way you like. Think it out. I do not want you to take it down because I say it. Think it out; and I believe you will come to the conclusion that I am not very far out when I say—twenty years of misplaced energy, which might have been better used had it been spent wholly in the interests of the Union.

Now, at the present moment there are some people who want legislation on every conceivable subject under the sun. First of all, they want you to send men to Parliament—that is the first start: "Let us send a lot of men to Parliament." I remember the time when the miners had two Members of Parliament along with myself; they were not doing badly at that time. Now they have got 42 Members of Parliament, and what does Mr. A. J. Cook say? Mr. A. J. Cook says that the miners are worse off now than they have been at any time for 50 years. If that is true, what have the 42 Members of Parliament been doing? What have they been doing to waste their time so? And notice this:

to-day, if a Trade Union Official is elected to Parliament there is another man looking for his appointment in the Trade Union movement; and so he comes along at an Annual Meeting and he shouts, "One man one job." (Laughter.) So everyone at the Conference says, "That is right; one man one job; that is quite a good solid principle. All right; we are all in favour of that." Then, you see, the Official who has been promoted to Parliament is a man with ability and brains and has been well trained, but he is put on the shelf at the House of Commons—"not required." You know what it means on board ship when they are stowing away luggage that is marked, "Not required during the voyage."

Now imagine what effect that is having on men generally. Think it out. Everyone cannot speak in the House of Commons. If you take the Parliamentary Debates—there are over 600 members—see how many speak in the course of a week; see how many speak in the course of a year; you will discover that their number is very insignificant. What does that man do all the time? He sits loafing around there. Go any night to the smoking-room of the House of Commons, and there they will be sitting gossiping—nothing to do except attend to a little correspondence. How does that affect a man after four or five years? He is not much use afterwards. (Hear, hear.) Well, would it not be better if the Trade Unions were to take those men again and keep them at their appointments building up the Trade Unions?

Now, you might ask me this: "What have you got to put against legislation; there must be an improvement in the conditions of the people?" That is all right; I subscribe to that. But, which is the best way to do it? Parliament, to me, is the "long, long road to Tipperary." I have seen dozens of Bills introduced and after long and strenuous debates when those Bills are passed into law it is like the labouring of the mountain—all that comes forth is a very little mouse. And so if you minutely and carefully weigh up the legislation you will discover, after all the talk of what these wonderful Bills were going to do, when you come to the final kernel of the thing it proves somewhat insignificant and falls short of the original intention. But that is not the end of it. That Bill, when it becomes an Act, has got to be administered by Government officials; and the Government officials take good care that the regulations connected with those Acts of Parliament are framed in such a manner as to take another 10 per cent. off the effectiveness of the Act. So that when you get down to real bedrock you get something extremely small. That is legislation.

Let me now turn your attention to the Trade Union side. Build up a strong Trade Union. It cannot ever be too strong. But there is one thing you have got to mind in doing that. There is a danger to it. You can get a strong Trade Union, but by foolish actions, by taking stupid decisions, you may reduce that Trade Union down to a myth. It has happened with me. It has happened in my own case. I am not reading anyone else a lecture and allowing myself to escape—do not think that. I look at my own experience. In two years I built up a Union of nearly 90,000 members—not bad for a young man to build up a Union of seafaring men 90,000 strong in the short period of two years.

And what did I think? I believed that the world was mine. But how long did that last? It lasted a very short time; just about two years, and then we were worse off than ever we were before. So that the building up of a Trade Union is all right, but when you have once built it up you have to take the greatest possible care of it.

A lot of people do not understand me, and I suppose that is pardonable; because I have in my time done some of the most extraordinary things that ever any man did. I have been a kind of law unto myself in many ways; and I have no doubt that a good many people who might have a very kindly feeling towards me have never been able to understand me. And so you can be misunderstood, yet you are desirous of doing the best in the world for everyone. I have preached for the last twelve years a policy of peace and of establishing goodwill between employers and workmen and everyone else. Well, because I have done that I have been called a renegade, a traitor, a "twister"; it has been said I was in the employ of the shipowners, that I was doing well out of the job, and all that sort of stuff. But let us weigh it up.

The year 1911 was a very costly effort on my part; and if I am a cripple to-day I can honestly put it down to the extraordinary efforts I had to make in 1909, 1910 and 1911—(hear, hear)—which efforts not only put our Union on its feet, but put hundreds of other Unions on their feet, Unions which were on the verge of bankruptcy. (Hear, hear.) I said at that time, looking at the past, looking at the successes and looking at the failures, "If this job comes off I am going to pursue an altogether different policy from that which I have pursued in the past." And so I have. Now, have we, as seafaring men, lost by it? (Cries of "No.") I do not think so. Because at any period during the last 14 years, with the exception of the War period, we might have been wiped out at any moment. During the War period it was not quite possible for that to happen, except this: If the Government had done what they were urged to do, that is, to conscript the men of the sea—and that is what certain people tried to do—if such had come to pass, that the whole of the men of the sea had been conscripted, you would have had no Union.

Captain Tupper: They had it all printed, but you stopped it.

The General President: Yes; it was all planned out; everything in readiness. But we stopped that. During the War period our Union and others made very big progress. Then we come to the most dangerous period, the time when War wages had to cease, and we had to get back to something like normal, taking into consideration freights and prices. That was the most dangerous period of the lot. Because there were a lot of people out to say that War wages should be maintained in peace time. Now, if anyone reflects on that they will find how impossible it was for it to be done. As a result of the War 10,000,000 more tonnage was created. That brought about keen competition amongst the shippers; freights went down until they came to the pre-War level. I am going to ask any sensible man here, how

could you pay War wages on pre-War freights? Pre-War, from the North Country to London, freights were 2s. 9d., 2s. 10d. and 3s. a ton, with a wage of 28s. and 30s. a week—those were the wages. With wages 100 per cent. above pre-War, the freights are down to 2s. 9d. and 2s. 10d.

Mr. McGhee: More than 100 per cent.

The General President: I have taken 100 per cent. as a round figure and as being easy to handle. I will estimate it at 100 per cent. Now, can any man explain to me how it was possible to make those ships pay on the lower freights which they had a trouble to make pay with wages at 28s. and 30s. a week—how could they make them pay with wages at £3 and £3 10s. a week? Think that out. My difficulty was to convince the men of that very important fact; and many Officials of the Union disagreed with me. In fact, on more than one occasion very serious crises occurred, not from the men as from some of the Officials, who were telling the men, "There is no necessity for a reduction." Of course, the men believed it; because no man will believe there is any justification for reducing his wages. You may argue as you like, but say to a man, "Are you in favour of accepting a reduction of wages?" and he will immediately say, "Certainly not." But when you go to him when he is on the point of signing on and you say, "Well, you had better come out," he says, "Put it off this trip; wait until I get away to sea." (Laughter.) Is not that just what happens, and is not that the common sense of the whole job? (Cries of "Yes.")

Now, I had to face that. I had to carry that through; and that has made my position a very difficult and trying one indeed in all these years. Because, from whatever cause I do not know, but everybody levels their attacks at me. You would imagine I was the whole Union; that no one else had any say; and that you, the Executive, were all obedient followers; that you come here, and Wilson says, "This is white," and you all say, "Yes, it is white"; and if I turn round the next moment and say, "No, it is black," you would all say, "Yes, it is black; we were mistaken." That is the kind of picture that is painted.

Then there is another class of men who give me no end of trouble, the men who are always out to paint the miseries and hardships of the sea. I do not think that a seaman necessarily wants his hardships painted for him. Do you not find them at sea? If the food is bad, do you not know it? If the hours of labour are long, do you not know it? Of course you know all about it. Then, what is the good of me getting up and telling you that your food is bad and everything else about it? If I make a lot of that you have the right to say, "All right, Wilson, but when are you going to make it better?"

Take a man like Mr. Shinwell—Emmanuel Shinwell. For the last ten years he has been on the "stump" telling the seafaring men that their conditions were disgraceful and disgusting. He has been doing that now for twelve years or more. But what has he done to put them right? (Cries of "Nothing.") Can anyone

here refer me to one good thing that Emmanuel Shinwell has done in twelve or 15 years? If I can be told it, and I find I am wrong, I will apologise to Emmanuel Shinwell. He has created disruption in the ranks of the seafaring men. Because, carry your minds back and you will find that amongst the men going to sea some of them, as in the case of shore workers, want something for nothing. They say, "Get us an advance of wages and we will join the Union." Have you ever heard that? I have a few times. Well, you get them 10s. a month advance and you say, "We have done it; ten bob on; what about it?" They reply, "Oh, ten bob; what is that? Why did not you get the sovereign? You make it a sovereign and we will join." You make it a sovereign. Then they say, "Oh, things have changed altogether now; it ought to be £2." Then they talk about their accommodation and their food—will we try to improve it? If you succeed, then they have the calm audacity to tell you, "You did not do that, it was the Maritime Board; it was the generosity of the shipowners."

Now, I told you that a lot of people do not understand me. I want now to clinch that point. If I could get on the "stump" I would advise the seafaring men in this way—the Union men I am speaking of: "Suffer, suffer, until those 'suckers' get into the Union." But there are a lot of kind philanthropists in the world who imagine that by talking plausibly the men will join the Union. They will do nothing of the kind. We have got to find out ways and means of compelling those men to join the Union—(hear, hear)—and when they have joined the Union then I think we have a right to do something for the men who do join. Not to do it beforehand and have them insult you by saying you have done nothing. Make them pay. To do that we want an effective Union, a strong Union. I want to educate the majority of the men to help to build up the Union; because, if you can get 50 per cent. of the men working, helping you to build up the Union, you can do it more rapidly than you can do it on your own. I think that is a solid principle. And when you have done it and you have built up your Union, be more careful than ever. Because if you go to the shipowners and say you have half a million of money behind you, is it not common sense to believe that the shipowner is going to pay more attention to you and to your talk with half a million of money behind you, than he would if he knew you were on the verge of bankruptcy? Is not that right? Is not that true? (Cries of "That is right.")

So that when you have got your half a million behind you, do not go and waste it. Make that half a million of money into an insurance fund. Do not boast about it to the shipowners, because that is no good; just quietly, now and again, in the most casual manner lead up the conversation to it and say, "We are not going bad just now, Sir; we are up to half a million, and, with a little bit better trade, we shall get up to one million pounds." What does the shipowner think then? He thinks, "By gad, those fellows are well entrenched; we shall have to be very careful how we handle them." And when they come to cutting down expenses, what are their thoughts then? They look all over the ledgers and they say, "There is that Manager getting so many thousands;

there is that Superintendent Engineer getting £1,000, and the Superintendent Steward getting so much"; then they look at the sailors and firemen and stewards and they say, " Ah, well, we had better not go too heavy on them boys, they have got a million pounds of money; that is about right; we will take a little off the Superintendent Engineers and the Superintendent Skippers; we had better discharge the office boy, discharge a couple of typists—yes, we shall have to exercise vigorous economies at home, we must not go abroad." Is that common sense or not? That is the policy which Havelock Wilson has been trying to force home for the last ten years. Have we lost by it? (Cries of " No.") I also say " No." Compare our position with the position of any Union in the country to-day, none excepted, and if you are fair and you are just you ought to be able to say with a clear conscience, " The Seamen's Union stands above all others." (Hear, hear.) That is a fair proposition.

I want you during this Executive Meeting to keep those points in mind. We are not through our troubles yet, and I do not suppose we shall be for some time to come. But if I can only impress on you to keep your Union in front, to keep the interests of the members in front; to give a fair crack of the whip to the Officials—and you have the right to do that; a man who takes an Official's appointment ought to have the respect of the members; he ought to be able to command the goodwill of the members, but nothing more than that; if he commits an error of judgment or wilfully does something to damage the Union for his own selfish gains, then I say that man is not entitled to any consideration whatever. Because if Officials will look at their duties from the standpoint that I try to look at them from—I feel myself that I am holding a most responsible position, a sacred trust—what can be more responsible, I ask you, than to be trustee (that is what it means) of the destinies of 130,000 or more men? The interests of every one of that number are dependent on you. If you are foolish you can destroy those men's interests. If you are a thief you can rob those men. If you are dishonest you can make money by selling their interests.

I mention myself because I am President, but even the lowest Official in the Union has to some extent the same responsibility resting on him. (Hear, hear.) And is it not fine for any man to be able to say honestly, " I have done my duty?" (Hear, hear.) But is it not much better to have everybody saying when you have gone, " Well, by gad, that fellow did his duty well?" You cannot hear it, it is perfectly true—at least, I am not too sure of that, because, according to Sir Oliver Lodge and a number of other scientists, they can talk to the men in the next world; I am not at all sure about it myself; I have not tried to experiment—but it is fine to know that you have left a monument behind you; first, in the shape of a good Union, that is a fine thing; second, in the confidence, at least, that the world will be charitable to you and will say, " Well, that fellow did his best." It is a great proposition; it is a grand thing; and I ask you who are Officials to bear that point in mind.

To-day we are going to deal with some important aspects of the case for our future. There is a strong feeling that the time



has arrived when we should cut out what they call the political stunt. (Hear, hear.) The time has arrived when we should recognise that the membership of the Union is not composed of any one particular class. (Hear, hear.) We have Anarchists—Jack Ash and myself are two. (Laughter.)

Mr. Doxford : I object to Mr. Ash being included.

The General President : I do not know whether Jack is the President of our party or not ; but we are the only two Anarchists in the room, and I could logically argue it out that we are. (Laughter.) Then there is the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Liberals, and the Tories. We cannot fasten ourselves to any one party, not with justice. So that the time has arrived when we should weigh up stock and ask ourselves : Is it profitable to be bound down to any political party? That is what we have to do this week. But you will remember this : The joining of the Labour Party was done by a ballot vote—do not forget that ; therefore the severing of our connection with the Labour Party must inevitably be done by a ballot vote. (Hear, hear.) All that you can do is to recommend to the Annual General Meeting that a ballot vote be taken. If the Annual General Meeting passes that in a resolution, then the ballot vote will be taken, and we shall be able to know definitely what is the feeling of the men. If the majority declare we must stick to the Labour Party, then we must stick. But, on the other hand, if the majority say we must leave them, then we must leave them, and every man in the Union must be loyally bound down by the majority vote ; whether he likes it or not he has got to subscribe to the wishes of the majority.

I think I have said quite enough. I am sorry that we had those very unpleasant duties to perform yesterday and the day before—(hear, hear)—very, very unpleasant tasks ; but, unpleasant as they were, it does not deter me from doing my duty ; and I am going to do it, make no mistake. There is only one thing which will stop me from doing it, and that is for the Annual Meeting, or any other body, to lift me out of the Chair. As long as I hold this position I shall fight with all the force at my command, but the right thing will be done. That is how matters stand. But it is really obnoxious to me to have to try men, and, worse still, to show them in their true colours. I never like to give anyone away if I can help it. But, of course, if they come and invite me so to do it is imperative for me to act, and I do not apologise for so doing. I consider they are fools to ask for it. I said a lot yesterday ; but I might have said a good deal more, and perhaps it is as well that I did not. But it is a very unfortunate job ; yet in the interests of the Union I appeal to this Executive : Do not fail to do your duty. (Hear, hear.)

The integrity of the Union must be upheld, and, above all things, the Constitution of the Union must be defended and maintained at all costs. Anyone who wants to break that Constitution is a traitor to the cause. Men should not be so weak as to exclaim, as they did yesterday, "The terrible state of affairs with which they were surrounded." Good heavens ! what did they think of me? Did they think I knew nothing? Did they think I had been

nowhere and had had no experience? "Surrounded by intimidation"—all weak and foolish excuses, the whole lot of them. They wanted to be surrounded by intimidation, they wanted that as a plea to allow them to play the political stunt. That is the game. "We have our public positions to defend and look after"—what does that mean? It means playing to the political gallery at the expense of the Trade Union. A more contemptible and mean thing I never heard in my life..

Do your duty. If you think your political stunts are likely to interfere with you doing your duty, then quit your damned politics. You do not get your bread and butter out of politics, you get it out of the pockets of the men of the sea; therefore their interests must come first and all other things must be subservient to that. Gentlemen, I thank you. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Jones : I beg to move the adoption of the General President's Report.

Mr. Sprow : I will second that.

The General President : You are now at liberty to criticise what the General President has said, and please do not be afraid of hurting the General President by any remarks you may make.

Mr. Ash : I am what you might call a child of the ocean, pure and simple. I have spent the whole of my life on it, and I have not had those advantages, either before I went there or during the time I was there, that some people have had. I cannot understand why it is left to me to give the opinion of the Council first, although I claim, Mr. Wilson, it is an honour that I should have the privilege of giving what I think an honest opinion. When I went to your first Conference in London I had very little use for the Labour Party. I was asked outside the first large meeting, previous to taking the first vote about the Labour Party, by six gentlemen to enter the debate; but I did not intend to enter into the debate at all. However, when they pointed out to me that it was a step in the right direction to emancipate the workers, I went without my dinner—I got a sandwich and a glass of beer only—and then I got behind a curtain and compiled that speech on which you complimented me at the time. I have given them my credentials since honestly. Although I do hold advanced views, I cannot say that I am in the Communist Party. Further I am in no Anarchist Party—

The General President : Do you repudiate me, John?

Mr. Ash : I do hold on to what you might call Anarchist views.

The General President : Hear, hear. (Laughter.)

Mr. Ash : Now, it so happened that for the first time in the history of this nation there was a Government in office of the Labour Party. I hesitated in regard to my views as to the Labour Party, but I never did anything against them. Now, along came the General Strike. I have always been for many years against

your sectional strikes; I have seen 90 per cent. of them an utter failure. Strikes must happen if the market is glutted through the introduction of science to production. You must have a stoppage in the output in some shape or form. It is either a lock-out or a strike. If you put a machine in industry, and these machines have got to be put there, this machine puts men and women out of work, naturally; and the result of it is that there is a glut in the market if there are no wages paid to those men and women. Mr. Doxford wags his head; there will be time for him to take the pulpit when I come to anchor. (Laughter.)

If you put a machine there and it displaces men and women, the wages they got when they made the materials by hand are abolished, comparatively speaking. The result is that when you multiply those machines by hundreds and thousands you are applying science to nature, and you are creating commodities which displace men and women all over the world. The result of it is that the next best thing to do was to have a General Strike. If a single, sectional, strike is of no value, the next thing was whether it would be a good thing to create a system which would lay down tools altogether. You have never had that process before in the world, as I said yesterday; and you are challenging those who are in power. Well, they laid down their tools altogether. What happened? Stanley Baldwin networked the Industrial side with the Capitalist side. When the other side threw public opinion against the Unions the men at the head of the Unions collapsed. They did not try and get public opinion in favour of them. Well, this Strike came on, and I was asked to back up the seven hours for the miners. I am not against the miners; do not misunderstand me—

The General President: I am very tolerant, but I must bring you back to what I said: Criticise me as much as you like, but do not go away from the point.

Mr. Ash: Then I will have no propaganda work. If I slip a word in here and there you must forgive me. (Laughter.) The result was the General Strike was finished at a moment's notice. Without ever asking anyone, they finished it. I claim that a system of that kind is not sufficient for me to back up; and you will understand why I hold the advanced views I hold. With regard to the great trouble in the Union, I would say that as soon as the trouble started I could see that if you called out the men of the Mercantile Marine of England it would break the Maritime Board. I could see another thing, that, if the Maritime Board was broken, P.C.5 was finished. Then I knew that those men wanted to break up the Union, and I got on to my old bike and got round to the Officials and gave them my opinion. Some of them listened to me very carefully, and those may not have been affected very much. The result was that some of them went on the other side, and we had the result of that yesterday. But I did my best during that time to paint the different purposes with regard to keeping our Union sound and whole; because I know that the whole of the atmosphere outside is against us. I do know that there are some people outside who have reason to be against us;

but we do know that the gentlemen in business in England have a jealous eye on the Mercantile Marine of England, seeing that it is a branch of the Navy. We lost 5,000 men in the War in the Navy, and I do not know how many we shall lose in the next.

The General President : I want to ask Mr. Ash one question, and I do not want him to make a speech in reply. Did you ever read the story—I am speaking on your economics—of the candle-makers of France? The candlemakers of France were a most important body, especially in Paris. In those days there were no windows at all—no glass—and they depended on candle light in both the day-time and the night-time. One day, along came a man and invented glass windows. The candlemakers got very indignant about that. Nearly every man was a candlemaker and nearly all his family was in the business. These candlemakers said, “ Good heavens ! if we have glass windows in houses there will be no necessity for candles ; look at the hundreds and thousands that will be put out of work ; ” and they sent a deputation to the Minister of Trade, and they said to him, “ Look here, see what you are going to do. Here we candlemakers are a very important body, we get our living by making candles, and now you have allowed some fellow to invent glass windows so that people will get daylight into their houses without the aid of candles. What is this most important body of ours going to do? You are going to wipe us out and destroy our industry by this new fakement.” The candlemakers were told that the world must progress, and the world progressed so much that shortly the candlemakers did not have to provide candles for the daytime and had to make up for it in some other way. What was the result? The result was that those who were candlemakers before became glassmakers afterwards, and that industry improved one thousandfold and hundreds and thousands of more men were employed in making glass than were ever employed in making candles.

Mr. Doxford : I wish to second the adoption of the President's Quarterly Report. After the two exhausting days he has had I am surprised at his energy ; I knew the ability and spirit of Mr. Wilson, but what he has done to-day after the two exhausting days he has gone through has astonished me. I do not know how it is possible for him to have done it. Not only has he given a résumé of the history of the struggles and trials and failures that he has gone through, but he has given us a mighty good lead for the future. He has lit a beacon light for the other men in this Society to guide them in the future, and his experience, where he has failed to show them the sands that he has got on, and to see that they do not make the mistakes he made. I am sure that if the lines he points out are followed the success of the Society, which is going on well to-day, will increase to such an extent that this Union will be a model for others to copy. I have listened to him with interest and I know it will do me a lot of good, and perhaps it will do the other men more good than me, because they have more years before them than I have. I have great pleasure in supporting the admirable lesson you have given us this morning, Sir.

Captain Davis : In a few words I would like to support the vote of thanks for your most interesting and instructive address

this morning. I am sure it would be a revelation if it were possible for such an address to be broadcasted to the men who are ploughing the ocean to-day. I know very well that in the midst of all the agitation and all the contrary opinions you have, Mr. President, in my opinion—and I do not want to be unduly complimentary—rendered, in an atmosphere, very often, of suspicion, a service to the men of the sea; and, I say it most conscientiously, you have rendered a service to Trade Unionism generally. (Hear, hear.) I was very interested, and I have to thank you for that sane and instructive address which you have given to us this morning. (Hear, hear.)

**Captain Tupper :** In supporting the resolution, I should like to say that I think you missed ramming home the point of what was done for the men of the sea during the War. I had the privilege to attend a Cabinet meeting with you where there were Labour leaders in the Coalition Cabinet. Mr. Wilson went into the room and he sat down, and the first thing we knew was that it had all been cut and dried and a Labour Minister came round to the back of Mr. Wilson and showed him a copy of the scheme for the conscription of seamen. Mr. Wilson immediately fought that tooth and nail; so much so, that when he quoted old Acts of Parliament even Sir Edward Carson had to leave the room and get some books of reference, and then he came back and said Mr. Wilson was right. I say that had not that happened that day, and had not Mr. Wilson fought that tooth and nail, the men of the sea during the war would have been receiving the same pay as the soldier in the trenches, and he would not have benefited by the increase of wages and betterment of conditions that he had during the war. It was entirely due to Mr. Wilson's fight at the Cabinet Meeting that day that the seamen of this country were prevented from being conscripts.

**Captain Griffiths :** I should like to congratulate you on your speech, Sir. The second part was one of the finest arguments the Communist Party could hope to have. With regard to the industrial part, I am sure that every member of the Executive and other right-thinking people outside will agree that the President of the Seamen's Union is one of the finest, one of the greatest, industrial leaders that the world has ever seen. (Hear, hear.) When I look back to the early '80's, and I picture to myself, as only a Welshman with imagination can, when I left the Bristol Channel in an old windjammer, with £2 10s. a month, in a dark, miserable, dirty hole right in the forepeak, where you had to have candles burning in the daytime as well as in the night. The least said about the food the better; the conditions of life on board ship then and now are hardly to be compared. When you see the men of the sea to-day, the conditions that they have and the wages that they get, all that in the main has been absolutely brought about by the intelligent leadership of the President of this Union. (Hear, hear.) I do not think that any man can help but say—at any rate, every man of the sea—that when Havelock Wilson passes away behind the curtain of mystery he will have left a mark behind for the men of the sea that will last longer in the memories of men and women

than the granite monuments hewn from the quarries of Aberdeen.  
(Hear, hear.)

The General President : Does anyone else wish to speak? Then I will put it to the vote. Those in favour of the adoption of the President's Report hold up your hands—on the contrary—that is carried unanimously. Now, I would like to correct Captain Griffiths. He said that the first part of my speech was all right, but that the second part was the finest tribute that ever could be paid to the Communists. It shows that he did not understand what I said—in the second part, anyhow. I will let the first part go as you and I agree on it. You do not seem to understand me with regard to the Communist Party. I am not against the Communist Party; I never have been. What I am up against the Communist Party for is that they are not honest; they come along and they advise everyone to join a Trade Union, do not they? But when you search their literature through they tell you—they do not disguise it—the reason why they advise you to join the Communist Party is to break up the Trade Unions. It is one section of them who say that. The activities of the other sections are to endeavour to force the Trade Unions into impossible positions so that the Trade Unions will be defeated, and then they will say, "Parliament is no good; Trade Unionism is no good; let us have a revolution." That is where I part company with them. If they would be honest and stick to what they say they are after, we would understand them. But on the one hand they say : Back to your Unions; and on the other hand they say they are doing everything they can to destroy them.

Captain Griffiths : On a point of explanation. I made the statement that the finest argument the Communist Party could use would be the argument put forward by our President. The Communists say Parliament is of no use to you; if you listened as attentively as I did to our President, in all his wisdom, he made the statement that Parliament was of no use to you, and that after twenty years of it he was absolutely fed up, and after months and years of work, after all the trouble inside the mountain, you only produced a pill. If the Communists saw that speech they would soon have pamphlets printed, "Wisdom from the mouth of Havelock Wilson; Parliament is of no use." That is the reason I made that statement.

The General President : I never said Parliament was no good. What I did say was this, that I looked upon my time in Parliament as twenty years of wasted efforts as far as the Union was concerned.

Captain Griffiths : I agree.

The General President : That is different from saying that I said Parliament was no good. I said that 20 years in Parliament had been wasted time to me as far as the Union was concerned. Then I went on to say that a better remedy than wasting time there would be to build up your Trade Unions and make them more effective. I was quite

clear and definite. I never said Parliament was no good. I meant that from a Trade Union point of view it was more important to build up your Trade Unions than to send a lot of men to Parliament to idle their time away.

#### GENERAL SECRETARY'S FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

Mr. Cathery (General Secretary): I think you have all before you, Gentlemen, my statement, so there is no need for me to go into an elaborate speech in dealing with the finances of the Union for the last three months. You will find them very carefully itemised as far as it was possible to do it, under every heading, so you will at a glance see the position of the Union for the three months—income and expenditure for the quarter. But as it is customary just to go through it to put the matter in order, I will take the opportunity now of placing the Financial Statement before you.

“In placing before you the Financial Statement of the Union for the three months from April 1st to June 30th, 1926, you will note the total income received at the Head Office from all sources was £25,567, made up under the following headings:—

	£	s.	d.
Cash from Branches: Sailors and Firemen ...	12,546	4	0
Cash from Branches: Catering Department...	2,696	4	0
Claims recovered from members ... ..	111	18	11
Rents received from property ... ..	1,083	12	1
Interest (War Stock, Indian Stock, Housing Bonds) ... ..	2,870	18	1
Approved Society—Central Administration Payment on Account ... ..	3,000	0	0
Earnings of Launch, Gravesend ... ..	34	16	10
Officials' Guarantee Fund ... ..	21	16	0
Sale of N.M.B. Books ... ..	3	5	0
Dr. Spahlinger Fund Appeal ... ..	4	12	6
Interest on Mortgages (Alva Gardens, Wood Green) ... ..	90	0	0
Refund re Men's Fares... ..	7	2	6
Refund—Sports' Committee "Asturias" ...	10	0	0
Seamen's Wives' Distress Fund ... ..	3,086	5	3
	<u>£25,567</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

The Cash Payments for the same period were as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Cash to Branches: Sailors and Firemen ...	532	1	11
Cash to Branches: Catering Department ...	65	17	8
"Seaman," Editor and Printing ... ..	531	7	2
Benefits ... ..	2,965	17	2
Salaries and Organising—			
Head Office Officials ... ..	2,524	6	9
District Secretaries ... ..	1,570	10	0
Conferences with General President, N.M.B., T.U.C., etc. ... ..	881	11	2

	£	s.	d.
Special Organising at Home and Abroad ...	1,401	15	2
Organising Expenses — Catering Department ...	1,342	1	3
Meetings (E.C., Finance, etc.) ...	920	2	0
Property Expenses ...	96	11	3
Grants to Members owing to General Strike and Coal Dispute ...	11,473	8	0
Affiliation Fees (T.U.C., N.T.W.F., Irish T.U.C.) ...	658	0	0
Legal Expenses ...	1,086	19	10
Rents Paid for Branches ...	279	1	5
Office Fittings ...	308	16	2
Grants (Spahlinger £1,000, etc.) ...	1,012	0	0
Expenses re Dispute ...	219	9	5
Wages—Head Office Staff ...	1,997	14	8
Office Repairs ...	146	16	0
Audit Fees (Head Office and Branches) ...	503	19	4
Claims Recovered and Paid to Members ...	10	15	6
Insurance (Motor-cars, Boilers, etc.) ...	81	9	0
Loans (American Seamen's Unions, £450) ...	500	1	0
Caretakers' Wages—St. George's Hall and Maritime Hall ...	121	17	6
Seamen's Wives' Distress Fund Grants ...	1,994	4	4
Approved Society Central Adm. Expenses ...	1,199	6	1
Liverpool District Expenses ...	211	2	9
Rates and Taxes ...	1,060	13	3
Removal Expenses—For Officials ...	108	17	11
Bank Charges ...	446	1	6
Superannuation Fund ...	52	10	0
Bonus to Officials ...	474	13	11
Motor-Car Expenses ...	39	19	6
Motor-Launch Expenses ...	31	18	3
Officials' Guarantee Refunded ...	16	0	6
Board and Lodging for Officials ...	76	14	0
Wages paid from Head Office ...	36	0	0
Funeral Expenses—J. Cheminant ...	1	15	0
Printing, Stationery, Postage, Telegrams, Telephone, Firing, Cleaning, Carriage on Parcels, Travelling Fares, Card Index, Arrears Circulars, Ballot Expenses, Insurance and Unemployment Stamps, Miscellaneous ...	1,826	10	0
Clerk of Works' Expenses ...	75	1	6
	<b>£37,884</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>

"The income for the present quarter remitted from the Branches to Head Office is shown as £12,546 4s. from the Sailors' and Firemen's Section, and £2,696 4s. from the Catering Department, making a total remittance of £15,242 12s. 10d.

"You will note the total income from all sources is shown as £25,567, and the total expenditure is shown as £37,884 3s. 10d.



" We have also expended on the property at Southampton £5,142 10s. 6d., which is added to the assets of the Union at the Annual Audit.

" Under the heading of ' Benefits ' we have paid out during the quarter the sum of £2,965 17s. 2d., made up as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
120 Accident Benefit Claims ... ..	597	9	4
9 Shipwreck Benefit Claims ... ..	38	0	0
54 Death Benefit Claims ... ..	540	0	0
558 Old Age Benefit Claims ... ..	1,642	0	6
18 Hull Sickness Benefit Claims ... ..	148	7	4
	<hr/>		
	£2,965	17	2

" I have to report during the quarter the death of two members who were in receipt of Old Age Benefit.

" The number of new members enrolled during the quarter was 5,498 in the Sailors' and Firemen's Section, and 1,792 in the Catering Department, making a total new membership for the quarter of 7,290.

" From the Emergency Fund we have been able to make grants to members who were not in benefit at the date of shipwreck in 24 cases at a cost of £76; in 27 cases where members met with accidents, but were not in benefit at the time, £74 10s.; to the dependents of 38 members who were not in benefit at the date of death, £135 11s. 6d.; and £134 2s. 6d. has been spent in grants to members for assistance in ill-health, distress, etc. This makes a total expenditure of £420 4s. from our Emergency Fund for the benefit of our unfortunate members.

" It is with sincere regret I have to report the death of our old colleague, Mr. J. Cheminant, of Birkenhead, who was for many years the Secretary at that port; he passed away on June 5th, 1926; and also Mr. Stanley Citrine, the late Secretary of our Liverpool Branch, who died at Geneva on the same day as Mr. Cheminant died at Liverpool.

" I sincerely trust that the coal dispute will soon be settled, and that things will resume their normal course.—Yours faithfully, (Signed) E. CATHERY, General Secretary."

Mr. Sprow : I beg to move the adoption of the General Secretary's Report.

Mr. Ley : I will second that.

The General President : Are there any questions?

On question, the resolution was unanimously agreed to.

#### BUSINESS OF THE UNION AS AN APPROVED SOCIETY.

The General President : We will now take the business of the Union as an Approved Society. Before Mr. Bowden commences with the business of the Approved Society, I would like to direct

your attention to what was said last night by Sir Norman Hill. I am bound to say that I was somewhat disappointed. When I had a conversation with him I understood that the payment of benefits to the officers would be reserved to the Seamen's National; but when Sir Norman was questioned last night he appeared to me to answer to the effect that they were going to pay all the benefits of the members of the Seamen's National. (Hear, hear.) That is not what I thought it would be. I want to direct your attention to that because you will have to pass a resolution recommending a course to the Annual Meeting, and we should not be under any misapprehension on this point as to what we are going to do.

Weighing it up last night and this morning, I have thought to myself: Where do we come in? Do we come in the back door, the side door, or what door? Now, look at it. They are going to undertake the collecting of all the money—that is quite right. We are supposed to pay the benefits; but if we are only paying the benefits of the members we have now as members, where do we come in? It looks to me as though we were going to hand ourselves over with no corresponding advantage to ourselves. (Hear, hear.) We can get in all our money ourselves that we are entitled to have; there is no question about that. There is only the additional £10,000 from the schedule, and I have asked Mr. Bowden, if we do not amalgamate will the schedule system be adopted. He tells me it will; therefore we shall get our share of that £10,000, or whatever it may be. So that, weighing it up, it looks to me that they want their hand in our pie and we shall not have any hand in their pie. That does not seem to me to be equitable, and when we come to that part of it, just keep that in mind.

Mr. McGhee: I want to express the very great pleasure with which I have listened to your remarks; because I am glad that you have really seen where it leads to. Unquestionably it not only leads to their having their hand in our pie, but in our handing over to them the pie entirely.

The General President: We will discuss that later. Now, is it your pleasure that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Approved Society held on February 14th, 1926, be confirmed and signed as correct?

Mr. Lang: I beg to move the confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Approved Society held on February 14th, 1926, and that they be signed as correct.

Mr. Jones formally seconded.

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

Mr. Bowden:

"Membership: Up to and including June 30th, 1926, we have received a total of 81,224 applications for membership, being 355 or an average of 27 per week since April 1st, 1926. This shows a heavy decrease on the previous quarter, which was an average of 40 per week. Of these 61 are on transfer

from other Societies, an average of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per week, as against an average of  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per week for the previous report. Particulars are as follows :—

- 5 from Seamen's National Insurance Society :  
1 Consent ; 1 Appeal ; 2 Awaiting decision ; and 1 Cancellation.
- 9 from National Amalgamated Approved Society.  
6 Consents and 3 Awaiting decision.
- 11 from Prudential Approved Societies :  
7 Consents ; 1 Appeal ; 3 Awaiting decision.
- 36 from Miscellaneous Societies :  
29 Consents and 7 Awaiting decision.

" I have to ask that all the applicants be admitted, subject, in the case of transfer, to consents being received, or on a decision in our favour on appeal, or on any outstanding matter being cleared up."

Mr. Flett : I beg to move that the applicants be admitted on the conditions mentioned.

Mr. Dench formally seconded.

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

Mr. Bowden : There are 126 applications to transfer out, an average of  $9\frac{3}{4}$  per week as against a previous average of 16 per week. I give a summary of the cases with particulars of the action taken in each case as follows :—

- 62 to Seamen's National Insurance Society :  
25 Consents ; 10 Cancellations ; 27 Still in Suspense.
- 23 to National Amalgamated Approved Society :  
5 Consents ; 10 Cancellations ; 2 Objections ; 6 Still in Suspense.
- 7 to Prudential Approved Societies :  
3 Consents ; 1 Cancellation ; 3 Still in Suspense.
- 34 to Miscellaneous Societies :  
13 Consents ; 7 Cancellations ; 1 Objection ; 13 Still in Suspense.

I have to ask that the action taken in each of these cases as noted on the records be endorsed.

Mr. Mitchell : I beg to move that the action taken, as noted, be endorsed.

Mr. Street formally seconded.

On question, motion unanimously agreed to.

Mr. Bowden : Finance : I attach a statement showing the cash income and expenditure for the three months ended July 2nd, 1926. The statement is in agreement with the statements furnished to the Finance Committee at each meeting and then verified by comparison with the Bank Pass Books.

Benefits : The Benefit Statement is for 13 weeks ended July 3rd, 1926. For purposes of comparison I append the weekly average for the previous four quarters :—

Period ending.	Maternity.	Sickness.	Disablement.	No. on Dis. Ben.
June 26th, 1925 ...	£84 ...	£287 ...	£198 ...	420
October 2nd, 1925 ...	£84 ...	£311 ...	£192 ...	431
December 31st, 1925	£83 ...	£341 ...	£217 ...	465
April 2nd, 1926 ...	£86 ...	£389 ...	£222 ...	496

Comparing the totals with the previous report we get :

	April 2nd, 1926 (13 weeks).			July 3rd, 1926 (13 weeks).		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Maternity ...	1,125	6	0	1,060	6	0
Sickness ...	5,063	0	3	5,267	5	7
Disablement ...	2,888	5	5	3,017	13	9
	<u>£9,076</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>£9,341</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>

The weekly totals are as follows :—

Week ending 1926.	No. of Mat. Claims.	Maternity Benefit.			Sickness Benefit.			Disablement Benefit.			No. on Dis. Ben.
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
April 9...	45 ...	97	8	0	416	3	11	222	13	7	502
" 16...	46 ...	99	4	0	409	15	7	213	13	4	501
" 23...	35 ...	75	6	0	466	9	2	239	16	8	516
" 30...	36 ...	77	2	0	426	8	10	219	19	2	523
May 7...	16 ...	34	14	0	322	17	11	217	2	0	507
" 14...	39 ...	85	6	0	396	11	5	223	16	2	528
" 21...	44 ...	91	14	0	489	3	7	248	1	4	542
" 28...	31 ...	66	8	0	385	1	5	239	8	7	521
June 4...	41 ...	87	18	0	418	18	8	220	18	5	517
" 11...	33 ...	71	16	0	404	16	0	262	4	4	537
" 18...	38 ...	82	0	0	399	6	11	250	13	5	532
" 25...	39 ...	83	16	0	377	7	0	231	4	0	530
July 3...	50 ...	107	14	0	354	5	2	228	2	9	535
Total	493	£1060	6	0	£5267	5	7	£3017	13	9	

Additional Benefits : In accordance with the resolution of the Council dated September 23rd, 1921, I have to report the following additional benefits administered :—

*Additional Benefit No. 11.—Arrears and Members in Distress.*

	£	s.	d.
Reported last meeting ...	565	17	9
Now reported (five cases) ...	6	5	4
	<u>£572</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>

*Additional Benefit No. 15.—Payments to Hospitals.*

	£	s.	d.
Reported last meeting ... ..	1,550	0	0
Now reported ... ..	95	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£1,645	0	0

*Additional Benefit No. 15a.—Fares to Convalescent Homes and Hospitals.*

	£	s.	d.
Reported last meeting ... ..	391	6	3
Now reported (21 cases) ... ..	24	14	7
	<hr/>		
	£416	0	10

*Additional Benefit No. 16.—Appliances.*

	£	s.	d.
Reported last meeting ... ..	325	8	10
Now reported (19 cases) ... ..	40	4	9
	<hr/>		
	£365	13	7

*Additional Benefit No. 17.—Optional.*

	£	s.	d.
Reported last meeting ... ..	324	1	8
Now reported (178 cases) ... ..	109	8	3
	<hr/>		
	£433	9	11

*Additional Benefit No. 2.—Dental.*

	£	s.	d.
Reported last meeting ... ..	2244	13	0
Now reported (129 cases) ... ..	351	8	2
	<hr/>		
	£2596	1	2

*Summary.*

	£	s.	d.
No. 11 ... ..	572	3	2
No. 15 ... ..	1645	0	0
No. 15a ... ..	416	0	10
No. 16 ... ..	365	13	7
No. 17 ... ..	433	9	11
No. 2 ... ..	2596	1	2
	<hr/>		
	£6028	8	8

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TRADE  
UNION APPROVED SOCIETIES.

In accordance with the instruction of the Executive Council I attended the above Conference. I moved the following resolution, which was carried unanimously :—

" This Conference is impressed with the loss of contributions belonging to foreign-going Mercantile Marine members, due to the operation of the card system, and requests the Ministry of Health to institute the Schedule system, as recommended by the Royal Commission, at the earliest possible date."

I was elected to serve on the Executive Council of that body.

It is obvious from the observations made by the Controller of the Ministry of Health, who was present at the Conference, that a system of partial pooling of the surpluses of Approved Societies will be instituted in the near future.

Many other questions of general interest were discussed, including the Spahlinger system for treating tuberculosis.

Audit : I have to report that the accounts of the Society have been audited to December 31st, 1924. The certified accounts and Auditor's certificate are on the table for inspection by any member of the Executive Council who desires to do so. The accounts will be printed in full in the report to the Annual General Meeting. The cash book was audited to June 4th, 1926.

Mr. Ley : I beg to move the adoption of that.

Mr. Martin formally seconded.

On question, motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Is there any other business? Very well, then we will proceed to the next item on the agenda.

#### FUSION OF THE APPROVED SOCIETY.

The General President : You are now in order in discussing Sir Norman Hill's interview and the possible effect of the proposed fusion.

Mr. McGhee : After Sir Norman Hill sat down last night, Sir, you very adroitly suggested I should rise and put some questions, but I did not accept your invitation. However, as you know, I have been very intimate with the negotiations on this subject all the way through, and I have been, of course, acting for the Finance Committee in the matter. There is nothing that Sir Norman Hill said last night that I would not endorse cheerfully. I would go further and say that with one exception, which I shall point out, Sir Norman Hill is actuated by the very best intentions towards seamen, in that he wants a scheme by which he will be able to distribute to seamen all the money that is contributed for seamen. He and I are at one there so far as that goes. But the one point that I cannot reconcile myself to is fusion, not in our Approved Society, but in their Approved Society—a totally different thing. The moment that we agree to extinguish our own Approved Society by burying it in the National Seamen's Approved Society, this Union has then and for ever completely

separated itself from all interference in the Approved Society work. The moment you hand yourselves over to the National Seamen's Society you hand over all your assets and all your obligations and you hand over all your duties. Do not forget that. Not a single operation can you as a Union then do. If your Executive want, you can get it and make any management you like, you can deal with it all here now as an Executive; but never again will it come before you at all, and never again will it come before your Finance Committee or before your Annual General Meeting after you have been quietly fused into the National Seamen's Society. You can make any alteration you like of its Constitution—I do not mean that you yourselves can, because you cannot, but the law can and the House of Commons can. But at present it is governed by 21 men. Those 21 men are every one of them nominated men. I know what was in the minds of two men—I knew long before Mr. Cotter came to inform us—in whom we had the most complete confidence, Father Hopkins and Mr. Chambers, but we convinced them, and they both admitted we convinced them, they were entirely wrong in allowing themselves to be led into what was called the foundation of the National Seamen's Insurance Society.

We set up our own Approved Society and it has been going on ever since. As long as you do not amalgamate with them, of course, you will maintain your own Approved Society. But had I been putting questions to Sir Norman Hill last night—and I do not think it would have been a good thing to do—this is the question I should have put: What is to hinder your Society coming over to our Society? (Hear, hear.) Sir Norman Hill says, "We want you to come together; we want them all to come together." Yes—

The General President: I think I can throw light on that. The reason of that is, about them coming over to us, you would have to repeal one Act of Parliament and bring in another.

Mr. McGhee: Of course, I know that. Certainly you would, because this National Insurance Society has been set up by statute. That is a point that they cannot extinguish themselves by coming over to us. But do not forget that the point we made in connection with interviews and in connection with negotiating with Sir Norman Hill, in which I have taken part—I have put this proposition to him: Surely if you want us to come together, and if you want to strengthen our Union—and I pointed out the necessity of strengthening Mr. Wilson's personal position, because of the attitude he has taken up on other issues—why cannot you come to us? He said, "Well, of course, you know of this statutory bar." I said, "Yes, I know; but what has been a statutory bar can by common consent be statutorily altered, and I have been assured that we would have the countenance and support of the Commissioners in asking for an amendment of the Act, provided that the others would agree to it." I know of no reason on earth why we should give up our own Approved Society, which is surely an asset, which I am sure it is morally; I am not talking about it financially.

Mr. Wilson touched on a point last night, and it was new to me, I admit, in his speech preliminary to the remarks made by Sir Norman Hill. What he said was this: The theory of this thing is that they will do the collecting and we will do the expenditure administration. The moment that was said I felt: That is not a bad idea if it can be worked out. But if we go into their Society that cannot be worked out; that is beyond your power. The 21 men will not only do the collecting, but they will do the expenditure; they have set up a small committee, the General Purposes Committee, I think they call it.

The General President: It is a committee of seven.

Mr. McGhee: Yes. No seaman has any responsibility for any one of the seven. No seaman in the world selects any one of the 21. No seaman in the world can criticise anything they do. But you here can criticise what has been done since the last quarterly meeting. The Annual General Meeting to-morrow and the next day will be able to criticise anything that has been done for the whole year; and they will be able to give fresh instructions if they want to.

The General President: I want to save time and as far as possible prevent the Delegates' minds being confused. Do not you think if we have four members on that committee representing us, which we would have, that this Committee can criticise them?

Mr. McGhee: No; they are administering under a statute.

The General President: This Executive is not going out of existence.

Mr. McGhee: I know; of course they are not.

The General President: Then this Committee can criticise and instruct the four men who represent us.

Mr. McGhee: They can to the extent of tendering advice; but the law defines their duties apart from you altogether.

The General President: If they can criticise them to that extent they can also demand their removal.

Mr. McGhee: I can do that, too; any outsider can do that as well as the Executive. But that is not the point. The point is that you have absolutely no power whatever over administration as a Union. That is my point. This is the National Seamen's Union now. The National Seamen's Union, so far as the Approved Society is concerned, ceases to exist after you have amalgamated with the National Seamen's Approved Society; and I am delighted to know you have seen my point so clearly to-day. I am quite certain of one thing, that I have never doubted your genuineness in these things for a moment—no matter whether you are in favour of this amalgamation or not—I have never



doubted your genuineness in working this thing in the interests of the men, therefore I am glad that you have now come to see that the amalgamation is a question that would be one-sided; and I am perfectly certain there is not a single difficulty which need stand in the way of us all working together, provided they come into our Approved Society so that the Union will be the manager of the whole concern, just as they are to-day of our own Approved Society.

A point has been raised and I want to deal with it before I sit down. When this Approved Society was set up I was a member of the House of Commons; Mr. Wilson himself was in Australia; he had been negotiating a good deal before that and I had an opportunity of coming into contact with Sir Norman Hill. Sir Norman Hill represented the shipowners and I represented the Union, acting on the advice of Mr. Wilson himself. In those days, however, we were very much suspicious of each other, and whatever was done on behalf of the shipowners I always accepted it with suspicion and took care to examine and carefully analyse it to see that they were getting no advantage over us. Then we had the Secretary of Mr. Lloyd George, who was running the Bill at the time, and that Secretary interviewed Sir Norman Hill at one time and me at another time, and then suddenly there came on the scene suggestions from the Board of Trade that not one of us had heard a word about before that, and those were to set up a new and independent Society. Representations were made at that time—mind you, the Insurance of Seamen Society was not talked about in those days—but there were representations made, that if we would only agree to that, the Board of Trade would see that we had a fair show on this committee. I admit that both Mr. Chambers and Father Hopkins were captured by that proposal. I put the thing straight to the Board of Trade representative: Does this mean that our Union as a Union will have a dominating control? He said, "Not at all; we do not intend you to have any control whatever." I said, "How can you expect the Union will hand its membership over in that way in view of the fact that the Government then actually acceded to the ordinary Industrial Societies that they should set themselves up as Approved Societies? All I can say is that if you want that you must set yourselves up as an Approved Society, and I do not think you will have much show once this thing is started. The National Seamen will undoubtedly absorb you all. I think you know we are still a very strong Society, but before I would assent to it I am sure there are men here who would know we should summon a special General Meeting," and a special General Meeting was held in Liverpool.

Now, not only was there no dissent from my proposal that we should set up our own Society, but Father Hopkins and Mr. Chambers both confessed that it would be an absolute necessity to defend the Rules of the Union; and from that day to the deaths of both gentlemen—and Mr. Chambers's death was long after Father Hopkins's—both steadfastly stood to the conditions that if there was to be an amalgamation it must be the Society that is not connected with the Trade Union to come into our Approved

Society. No one had more to do with this question than I had, and I was strong that there should be only one Society, but that it should be our Approved Society. Of course, the Commission have recommended that that could not be possible. As Sir Norman Hill told us yesterday, he could not take even these 5 per cent. out of the other Societies because there would be such a row over it. But I said I could not see any reason why in an agreement between these other men and ourselves they should not join our Society and have an overwhelming body of the seamen in this; and I would endorse without the slightest hesitation that the shipowners have man for man on it with us. I have no quarrel with the shipowners in this thing; they are as much interested as the men are.

Now, all money collected for seamen should go to the seamen. The shipowners are as much interested in that as we are. Every charge you make on the shipping industry that does not go to the seamen is a loss to the seafaring men—I mean the shipowning section. And now we are on the Maritime Board I will never at any moment believe we could not set up a committee of shipowners and seamen entirely chosen from this Executive body or by this Executive body or by our Union; and that is the line we should take. I am perfectly certain that Mr. Wilson, from my 35 or 36 years' knowledge of him, the more he thinks the more he will see how much he would be endangering this Union if we were to suppress our Approved Society and press the representation of that committee.

The General President: I would like to correct, if I may say so, what may be taken as a misapprehension on your part with regard to the position of the Board of Trade when this legislation was first proposed. I was in touch with Sir Norman Hill, representing the shipowners; I was in touch with Sir Walter Howe as representing the Board of Trade. At that time, if you remember, the impression we all had was that there would be a money payment; that is to say, that contributors would pay in cash over to whoever was appointed as collectors. Now, I saw the danger of that, because it was rather a complicated thing, and what I was afraid of was that in the collection of this money there might be a great many mistakes made, and if those mistakes were made and we were administering an Act of Parliament it might bring grave reflection upon us, and also in the management of it; so I agreed with Sir Norman Hill and with Sir Walter Howe that whatever Society should be set up would have a sort of joint control—the Government represented by the Board of Trade and the shipowners and ourselves also represented. So that I actually agreed to that. I wanted to have a semi-independent body to keep a check on the shipowners and ourselves. So that I really was one of the promoters of that system and subscribed loyally to it.

But after I left England to go to Australia, during the debate in Parliament the question of Approved Societies arose. I had never heard of that up to date; I was a stranger to it altogether. When I was in New Zealand I got a telegram from Mr. Chambers saying, "Do you approve of us having an Approved Society of

our own?" Believing that we would stand better in managing the business entirely ourselves, and we should get to know about the card system, I wired back to Chambers, "Yes, I approve of a Union Society system." But there is no reflection which can be thrown on the Board of Trade or the shipowners for what happened, because I was a party and I was consulted before I left. The Approved Society was an afterthought that came along, and certainly I put my hall-mark on the Approved Society in preference to the other.

Mr. Cathery: May I say one word on this? What the President has told you is correct, and when he left this country he was under the impression that there was a National Society and not an Approved Society to be worked. No sooner had Mr. Wilson gone away than Sir Walter Howe sent for me and told me to bring up a deputation to his office. Father Hopkins, Mr. Chambers, and myself went up and saw Sir Walter Howe, and we naturally expected that there was going to be something to our advantage when he sent for us. Eventually he sprang it upon us that the system was to be that there should be 21 representatives to be appointed on the Committee, and out of those 21 representatives there were to be only two representatives representing the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union. We asked Sir Walter what he meant by that. We understand that the arrangement was—between our President, Mr. Havelock Wilson, and Mr. Lloyd George, before our President left the country—that the scheme had to be worked by the shipowners and ourselves. Sir Walter said, "I cannot help it, Cathery, that has passed through Parliament; that is the law; and if you do not like to have that then you have got to take the responsibility." I said, "Sir Walter, does that mean that we could not set up an Approved Society of our own if we so desire?" He said, "Well, you can please yourselves what you do, but that is the position." Immediately we left a cable was sent out to Mr. Wilson telling him the position and asking him if we could set up our own Approved Society; and from that day we have done it.

Mr. McGhee: There is one point on which I would like to correct Mr. Wilson. I assure you that when you went to Australia there was no contemplation whatever for a Board of Trade representative to be on it.

The General President: I must disagree with that.

Mr. McGhee: I assure you it is not right. I took my instructions from you.

The General President: You will pardon me. I know what I discussed with them. Why I was in favour of it was that I wanted some independent body to have the control, over and above the shipowners and ourselves.

Mr. McGhee: I assure you there is an error in it, either in your instructions to me or in your view. Mr. Cathery knows that the

time we took strongly at the time was that we should not allow any interference outside the shipowners and ourselves, as we were the only ones interested in the money.

The General President : I was party to the Board of Trade having control, and I have given you the reason why.

Mr. Cotter : I think Mr. Wilson's statement is absolutely the correct one. I took part in the negotiations at the time. I happened to represent the only Seamen's Society at the time—the Hull seamen—to give evidence on the payment of sick benefit to seamen. That was to Mr. Watson, the Actuary, and Sir Walter Howe and Sir Norman Hill. With regard to the statement Mr. Wilson has made, I was there when it was practically agreed that the Seamen's Insurance Society be set up under a special section of the Act—Section 48. That was agreed, and I set about instructing our fellows to come into that Society. It was not until I attended your meeting at the "Star and Garter" Hotel in Liverpool, when Mr. McGhee sprang that bombshell on me to say they were not coming in at all, and I had to call meetings of our fellows because I did not want to take a different course from you. Eventually they agreed with the exception of Glasgow, which set up a special Society of its own under Shinwell, which Society collapsed in six months. We went into the National Seamen's Society.

I want to make it clear, and I ask you what advantage is it to me to suggest to the seamen of this country an amalgamation of this kind if it was not for their benefit? And I want to remove any suspicion out of the minds of anyone here. I have been fighting for that Organisation since it was formed; I now belong to this Organisation, and I shall fight as hard for this Organisation. (Hear, hear.) What is the position to-day, and what has been the position for years? As Sir Norman Hill pointed out—and I shall accept his figures as against any other man's in this country, because he knows what he is talking about—there has been between £10,000 and £15,000 a year of seamen's money gone adrift. Imagine that! And that money is going into the coffers of the Government. We get a little back by going to Kew and inspecting cards, but that is all. Mr. McGhee says if we come in we hand over this, and to that I say, "Forget it; you do not." You are not going to be handed over lock, stock and barrel. Do you think I am going to be a party to that?

Mr. McGhee : Yes.

Mr. Cotter : I am not going to be a party to handing over anything belonging to this Union as long as I am associated with it.

The General President : Let us get back to where we started.

Mr. Cotter : Mr. McGhee made that statement.

The General President : We are discussing what I call an outside point and we are overlooking the most essential one. I replied to Mr. McGhee because he was putting forward a false position. Let

us come back to the point. Sir Norman Hill made a statement last night; let us adhere to that. The statement he made was that we were to fuse; he was to collect the money and we were to disburse it. My impression was that it was all of it except the Officers. Let us get right down to that.

Mr. Cotter: An atmosphere is created which takes a lot of upsetting. What Sir Norman Hill said last night, as I understood and still understand, was that the schedule would be put into operation; they would collect the money, and the distribution of the money would go through this Organisation as far as the seamen were concerned. That is what was said. I have got my own opinions and you have yours, Mr. McGhee. We may differ. I asked Sir Norman Hill this question: If they collected the money, would we distribute the money to the whole of the seamen? His answer was, "To the men that belonged to the Organisation." That was his answer. But my point is this: At the present time we have in our Organisation only 32,000 members; they have got 53,000 members. They have a few Officers; but the Officers put themselves out of insurance by saying they earned too much money—some of them want to crawl back again; and the Engineers did the same.

But the point is that I want to get, if I possibly can, control of the 80,000 members for this Union—the administration of them. Those men are adrift from our Office. If you look at your returns you will see that they are drifting weekly out of the insured section of this Organisation. If you look at your paper this morning you will find 6,000 transfers into the Seamen's National, and only five transfers from the Seamen's National into ours. That is not good enough for me. That has to be stopped; and if this fusion took place you would stop that kind of thing. If that goes on week after week, and week after week, your 30,000 will drift down, whether you like it or not. If we can prevent it we should prevent it.

I am not worrying about the management; but if Mr. McGhee only knew it, we are within one of running that Society if we get Tommy Lewis on that committee and get our four, and those four will have the balance of power, and if you get that you will have a lot to say in the power of any Organisation. If you put four men on that committee they would be as answerable to you as any other committee. Their policy would have to be reported here, because we should be your representatives, whoever was put on that committee. I had to answer back to my Organisation when I was sitting there. At the present time there is Mr. Bramah (of the Engineers), Mr. Maclean (of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild), Bill Sprow, Jim Henson, Tom Lewis, and myself. Henson, Sprow and myself have three votes; that is half the committee; if we had a fourth vote we should have the majority on that committee, and we could outvote them at any time and have our own way with regard to the policy. We should not be doing our duty to this Union if we did not see that we got the best side of the bargain. One of the first duties I should perform there would be to issue a manifesto to the Cooks and Stewards and Seamen to

come through this Organisation, and get them back to this office, where they ought to be. They are going away from you and I want to bring them back.

Another point. We have an opportunity of getting full control, if it is carefully handled, of the Seamen's Pension Fund. That is getting along now to one million of money; besides having a hand in the assets of the two Organisations. I am not sure what the valuation of your Approved Society is, but the valuation of the others is over £700,000. That is a lot of money, and it all belongs to the seamen; the whole of it; and I want to get it under the control of this Organisation if possible, and I do not care how long it takes, but we must take a step forward to get the money.

Sir Norman Hill said : First get hold of the money that is being lost to the seamen. That is our first duty. The next thing is to try and get full control of it. The shipowners do not worry me; I have only seen Mr. Cuthbert Laws at one meeting in three years, because the 21 men meet only once a year and meet for about two hours; they hear the Annual Report read, and they pass it. There are seven who meet once before they meet and three of those are Lewis, myself and MacLean. With Lewis out of the road you would have two out of those three. Again, that would be your committee because you would have the voting power. When people say you are handing over lock, stock and barrel, it is nothing of the sort. You will get control of it by voting power. Of course, you can only spend the funds according to the law. You will have no profit on the funds except benefits. I hope this Committee will agree to a scheme to amalgamate, but there is a lot of detail to be done. I want you to remove any suspicion from your minds and say that we want one Organisation for the seamen of the country as far as insurance is concerned.

The General President : I think you will agree I have acted very impartially. I am favourable myself to amalgamation, but I want to tell you I am not going into these jobs with my eyes shut. (Hear, hear.) Now, Mr. Cotter said that we were losing members, that they were transferring to the Seamen's National. There is a very good reason for that, and that is, that there are a lot of men who want to escape from coming near a Trade Union. Is not that true?

Mr. Cotter : That may be true.

The General President : At the present time men want to get as far away from a Trade Union as they can. But Mr. Cotter makes a mistake if he assumes that all those large transferences mean we are losing membership. We are not; we are actually gaining members. I know; and you have before you a statement showing how many men are transferring, have you not?

Mr. Cotter : Yes.

The General President : On the actual membership we are gaining. We are getting new members all the time. So that we are not losing on that; we are gaining by the new members.

Mr. Cotter : On a point of explanation. I am only taking your own figures. It says, "Membership"—it does not say anything else—"Up to and including June 30th, 1926, we have received a total of 81,224 applications for membership, being 355 or an average of 27 per week since April 1st, 1926. This shows a heavy decrease on the previous quarter, which was an average of 40 per week."

The General President : Do you not realise this important point, that during the last three months in consequence of the Coal Strike, and, say, 50 per cent. of the actual shipping laid up, there are not so many applications now as there would have been? So that those last three months show we have had a decrease in the number joining due to the shipping being laid up, no new recruits coming along, so we have not had as many joining this quarter as we did the previous quarter. We are here as an Executive body, and I am not going to be swayed either by Mr. McGhee or by Mr. Cotter. My duty, I take it, here is to see that the members actually understand the matter at issue. (Hear, hear.) That is my business as Chairman. And I have a duty too. If Mr. McGhee makes a wrong statement I have to put him right; if you, Mr. Cotter make a wrong statement I have to put you right; so that the members will have a fair knowledge of the actual position.

Captain Davis : I would like to direct the attention of this Executive to this conference which was held on February 26th of this year. At that conference there were present representing this Union Mr. Bowden, Mr. Cathery, Mr. Foley, and myself; and after a consultation prior to going there Mr. Wilson said, "I shall not be able to go myself, but do not let us do anything. You can say that we are rather in favour of amalgamation, but I want you to understand that the last word will rest with the Executive and the Annual General Meeting; but so that something can be done, and we shall have time to think, you will go on those lines."

What I am going to submit is that you cannot accuse a man of being inconsistent if he alters his mind after continued thought and inquiry, and, perhaps, further information. (Hear, hear.) I am in that position this morning. I am going to say that after considerable evidence and reasoning I am just about on the point of thinking that my first conclusions were not altogether correct. Because, if you remember, I asked Sir Norman Hill yesterday something about the title. I asked him whether the National was to be the amalgamated Society, and whether we were to be the subsidiary Society, and he did not answer my question.

I say that no man works with a more altruistic spirit than Sir Norman Hill; but I do not think my question was satisfactorily answered—and I will tell you why. When an amalgamated company, or anything, takes over what would be a subsidiary company that subsidiary company—which you are to-day—becomes extinct. What I first thought was this : I was thinking of a fusion, but in that fusion I never had in my mind it meant the extinction of this Organisation altogether. I submit to you this morning that from what I can gather, it certainly means the establishment

of the National and the extinction of this.' About that there can be very little discussion.

Coming back to Mr. Cotter's statement, which I am sorry to say I cannot agree with, Mr. Cotter keeps talking about this Organisation administering. This Organisation will not administer at all. You hand over to that National Society all your assets and all that obtains to-day—am I correct in that?—and they become the amalgamated company. I say that I hope something will be done in the shape of a sub-committee, and what I have said here in regard to this as a spokesman, and supported by Mr. Cathery and everyone, can be supported or undone by you, the Executive Council, after full consideration, and the Annual Meeting will endorse your recommendation more likely than not; but I say that I want you to bear in mind that I believe—and I think I am right—that it does not mean fusion at all, it means extinction.

My last point is this: It is submitted that they take the contributions, and we do the administration and paying out. But you do not do the paying out at all as an Organisation. Let us get that out of our minds. The only part you will take will be to appoint representatives. I submit that will be still your province.

Mr. McGhee: No.

Captain Davis: We shall have some jurisdiction over them.

Mr. McGhee: No, none whatever. They are appointed by the Board of Trade, Mr. Chairman.

Captain Davis: Or accepted by the Board of Trade.

Mr. McGhee: No, they are appointed.

Captain Davis: Then we shall lose something more than I anticipated. But it is something, as Mr. Wilson has said, not to be adopted too hastily. You have built up an Organisation worthy of the name, something you have every reason to be proud of, and whatever I might have said here as the spokesman of that deputation can be supported or undone by your good selves or by the Annual General Meeting. I am rather inclined to think that our first ideas may, perhaps, be modified and considerably amended.

The General President: Here, again, I must step in. Keep the most essential point before you. Now, the point is a very simple one. I do not want you to get mixed up with what one says and what the other says. Mr. McGhee and Captain Davis have painted a terrible picture to some extent of what is going to happen; they say there will be an extinction, that we shall lose our control, and many other things. As an impartial person, let me assure you that is not likely to happen at all.

Mr. Cotter: Hear, hear.

The General President: Now, Mr. Cotter, I say that is an alarmist view. I am satisfied of this, from what I know, that if



we could get the point cleared up about the income and the expenditure, the other point would be a very simple one. But I am uneasy in my mind when Sir Norman Hill tells me they want to collect the money, they want to have control of the funds, and the only part that we are going to play is the paying out to our own members. Now, I think that is clear; that is what Sir Norman Hill said. If they are going to have control of our cash I want to know what we are going to get in return. Mr. Cotter's point of view is this: "Ah," says he, "there are 80,000 members there; we will get them all under our control." Now, Mr. Cotter, you are wrong. In 1918, whether the valuation was correct or not—it affects both Societies—the Seamen's National was 70,000; in 1923 it was 53,000. The National Sailors' and Firemen's Union in 1918 was 32,000, and in 1923 it was 33,900. Now, whether those figures are right or not, they affect both Societies. I am not concerned about that.

Mr. McGhee: Hear, hear.

The General President: If we are going to hand over certain big powers to the Seamen's National I want to know what we are going to get in return. (Hear, hear.) If Sir Norman Hill would say this, "You can pay out all the benefits in respect of the Officers," I would say, "All right; now we know where we are." but he will not say that. I do not know how he could say it. Of course, he can say it, but whether he is right in saying it or not, I cannot tell you. You cannot stop a man from saying a thing, but that does not make it correct. I do not want to get into these tangled debates; let us keep to the point: What are we going to get? Mr. Cotter himself says, "It is not good enough"—am I right in saying that?—"that they retain the paying out of the benefits of all their crowd."

Mr. Cotter: I would oppose it to-morrow morning. If Sir Norman Hill said that, I would oppose it.

The General President: Very well. What have we to do? Captain Davis talks about Sub-Committees. We have had any amount of Sub-Committees on it, and we have got no further. The Annual Meeting has to decide this on Thursday, or Friday, or Saturday. I will tell you what I would advise you to do. To report to the Annual Meeting that the terms offered are not satisfactory. I think that is agreed—do you agree to that?

Mr. Cotter: If the interpretation that you put upon Sir Norman Hill's answer to me is the correct one, I will certainly say so.

The General President: That will do me. We will say, "Those terms are not satisfactory; therefore, unless you can give us better terms than those we cannot go ahead with it, and we will remain where we are." I want you to concentrate your minds on that, and nothing else—what have we to report to the Annual Meeting? All the talking in the world will not alter it. That is what we have got to do, and we have to do it between you and the Annual Meeting.

Captain Tupper : On a point of information. Mr. Cotter has made a statement that we should capture the voting power of those seven men on that Committee. But we must not lose sight of the fact that there is still a Committee above that, a Committee of 21 men who could at any time interfere with that committee of seven. But the main point in some of our minds is this, that it is making non-Union men unless you get what you ask for, because men are escaping into the Seamen's National because they do not have to put their cards in our office, and we have not a chance at them for their Union dues; and every transfer that is going now is to get away from having to render their cards in our office. Some of our officials who deal with the weekly boats who hand in their cards every six months, I think those have a chance; and I have seen in Branches that when those cards are brought in they have been able to rope in the offenders for back dues; but if these cards are not to be presented in the office, or the schedule is adopted, and the whole of the men do not come to us for benefits, we are hurting the Union.

The General President : We are going to do away with the cards and have a schedule.

Captain Tupper : I said, or if the schedule is adopted.

The General President : The schedule is for the foreign-going ships and not the weekly ships.

Mr. Clouston : After hearing the debate as far as it has gone, I have come to the conclusion that the main idea of the Seamen's National is to have the whole of the seamen in their own hands. If the first answer that was given by Sir Norman Hill yesterday meant that the Seamen's National was to be purely a body, for the recovery of money and this Union was to be an administrative body to pay out every seaman irrespective of whether they were our members or members of the National, I would have been heartily in agreement; but seeing that is not so, I would rather fall in with the suggestion put up by yourself, Sir, that nothing should be done until we get definite terms laid down, so that we know what we are going to do, and not be led blindfold into something else. I have no trust in what has been put up by Mr. Cotter about having a voting majority in a big Council. I rather hold to the view that this Union should keep its own members in its own hands as at the present day.

— Mr. Connolly : I should like to say a few words as one of the men referred to by Mr. Cotter who do not know. The impression left upon me yesterday was this, that if this fusion came off it would leave this Society almost in the same position towards them as a Branch of this Society is to our Society at the present moment. It would be simply a distributing party for them. We should act for them as far as our membership is concerned, just as a Branch acts on behalf of the head office now. That is what I understood Sir Norman Hill to say.

Mr. Doxford : It seems to me that the laymen here are at sea ; and the experts have not given them very much of a lead, one or two practically contradicting each other. But about the 80,000 men ; it seems we are handing over the moneys of 30,000 men with no counter-balancing support from them. With regard to the 50,000 that they have, we have nothing to do with the income at present, and we shall not have anything to do with it in the future ; but they will have something to do with the income from the 30,000 members we at present have gathered together. But the distribution will only be to the 30,000 for whom we now distribute. That is not equitable at all. So I am very much opposed to it under the present conditions, and until these matters are cleared up I think we ought to let matters stay as they are. I am pleased to think there will be a schedule instead of cards. I understand that £10,000 is lost for this Union through misplaced and lost cards. If the schedule without amalgamation could be brought in and that £10,000 could be saved, certainly it would be a big advantage and a step in the right direction. For the rest, I think it had better stand over to a future date, and I will favour a recommendation of that kind to the meeting.

The General President : It cannot stand over. You have to make up your minds to-day either the one way or the other : Are the terms satisfactory, or are they not ?

Mr. Doxford : On the information that we have received this morning, I would say they are not satisfactory.

The General President : That is the point. And what is to be our recommendation to the Annual Meeting I am going to advise you that the terms are not satisfactory, and therefore we intimate to the Seamen's National that unless we can have more satisfactory terms we are not going to proceed any further with the amalgamation. (Hear, hear.) But, please, I beg of you, do not hold a suspicion that everyone is going to have the better of you. (Hear, hear.) Because, remember this, that since the days when the Approved Society was formed up to the present time a great change has come over the situation. In 1911 we were fighting the shipowners. For five years after we were in a state of suspension. We said, "The shipowners are waiting the chance to put it about us"; the Shipowners said that we were waiting an opportunity to put it about them; therefore, there was an air of suspicion all round. But since then we have got Maritime Boards, we have come together, we know the weight and strength of each other, and the position is altogether different; and I want you to look at it from that point of view.

With regard to Sir Norman Hill, it was admitted by Mr. McGhee and by Mr. Cotter and by myself that a straighter man never lived. (Hear, hear.) Now we have to find out what is in the back of his mind. Personally I think he means well. But here comes this important point, and do not lose sight of it—vested interests. Down at Leman Street where their headquarters are, the vested interests are saying, "We want the big control." Just in the same manner up here, but perhaps to a lesser extent, we

are wanting the big control, and between the two there is a conflict. But we are the independent men; we have control of our own destinies, have we not?—(hear, hear)—and if the terms offered by them are not good we shall reject them—(hear, hear)—and we will try to get better terms. So I am going to ask for a resolution to be submitted to the Annual Meeting that the terms so far are not satisfactory, that we must have better terms, and that if we cannot get them the question of amalgamation is finished. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Jarman : I will move that.

Mr. Martin : I will second it. I had written out a motion before and sent it up to the President for his verification. What I had written was : " I beg to move that this Council report to the Annual General Meeting that we cannot at the present time agree to the amalgamation with the National Seamen's Insurance as the present terms are not satisfactory."

The General President : We will put it in this way : " That the terms offered are not satisfactory, and we will approach the Seamen's National to ascertain if it is possible to get better terms. Failing that, negotiations closed." Is that all right? (Agreed.) Now everyone is happy and I am going to put that. All in favour of that hold up your hands.

On a show of hands, the resolution was declared to be carried unanimously.

Mr. McGhee : What I want to know is this, whether this Executive can nominate four for the Committee and they automatically therefore take their position on that committee?

Mr. Cotter : No.

Mr. McGhee : Are not such men appointed not by this Executive, but by the Board of Trade?

Mr. Cotter : No.

The General President : Now, please, that is a question put to the Chair and the Chairman is going to answer it. You are both right, and you are both wrong. It is true that the Board of Trade nominate them; but it is also true that the Board of Trade takes notice of what we say, and no doubt the four nominations that we put forward the Board of Trade will agree to. So you are both right and you are both wrong.

*(After a short adjournment the business was resumed.)*

#### RESIGNATION OF MR. McMAHON AND MR. OCKLETON FROM EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

The General President : We come now to Item No. 5 : " Resignation of T. McMahon and J. Ockleton from Executive Council, owing to both members having taken official positions with the Union."

Mr. Lang : I will move that.

Mr. Nobbs formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

#### APPOINTMENT OF OFFICIALS.

The General President : Now, a list of Officials who have been appointed. You will remember that it is the duty of the Executive Council to approve of any appointments that are made. In your absence I appoint, but it is for you to approve of it or to disapprove. With regard to the Liverpool District, I have appointed C. Jarman District Secretary.

Mr. Connolly : I move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Dench formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : I have also appointed Mr. Ben Mollan District Secretary of the Catering Section.

Mr. Jones : I move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Mitchell formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

#### APPOINTMENT OF MR. M. TEARLE AS NATIONAL ORGANISER.

The General President : I have also appointed Matt Tearle to be National Organiser.

Mr. Jones : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Allen formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

Mr. Connolly : With regard to the Assistant General Secretary, the Assistant General Secretary was appointed by this Executive.

Mr. Cathery : Rule 21 says, " An Assistant General Secretary may be appointed by the Annual General Meeting, who shall remain in office during the will and pleasure of the members as expressed through the Annual General Meeting. He shall assist the General President and General Secretary as may be required. His salary shall be fixed by the Executive Council."

The General President : We will have him appointed by the Annual Meeting first. Now Mr. William Jones has been appointed

District Secretary for the Catering Section in the Bristol Channel. Any objection to that appointment?

Mr. Nobbs : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Allen formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. Breckenridge has been appointed Secretary for Scotland? Any objection to that appointment?

The appointment was unanimously confirmed.

The General President : Mr. Clouston has been removed from Scotland to the North-East Coast to take up the appointment of District Secretary. Is there any objection to that?

Mr. Flett : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

The resolution was formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. James O'Reilly has been appointed Secretary for the North Branch of Liverpool. Is there any objection to that appointment?

Mr. Lang : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Martin formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. J. Davis has been appointed Outside Delegate at the Central Office, Liverpool. Is there any objection to that appointment?

Mr. Macartney : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Street formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. R. Norton has been appointed Delegate at the North End Branch, Liverpool. Is there any objection to that appointment?

Mr. Jones : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Dench formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : With regard to Liverpool North, Mr. Frank Riley has been appointed Secretary as a temporary measure through the recent trouble.

Mr. Sprow : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

The resolution was formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. P. Dalton, Mr. Medicott, Mr. Cannon, Mr. Grain.

Is there any objection to those appointments?

These appointments were unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. Walker has been appointed Delegate at Liverpool South Office. Is there any objection to that appointment?

Mr. Booth : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Allen formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. Robert Gray has been appointed to Birkenhead. Is there any objection to that appointment?

Mr. Macartney : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

The resolution was formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. Boys has been appointed Delegate in the Catering Section. Is there any objection to that appointment?

Mr. Street : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Merritt formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. Paddy Green has been appointed Delegate to the Catering Section (Mersey Branch). Any objection?

Mr. Mitchell : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

This was formally seconded, and on question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. J. Darbyshire has been appointed Delegate to the Catering Section (Mersey Branch). Is there any objection to that appointment?

Mr. Jones : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Booth formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. Charlie Berry has been appointed Delegate to the Catering Section (Mersey Branch). Is there any objection to that appointment?

Mr. Booth : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Street formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : North-East Coast. I do not know that this is necessary, because it is only the removal of Mr. Cumber from Goole to Shields. Then there is the appointment of Mr. J. Ockleton.

Mr. Lang : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Ley formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. Jones was and is an Official, so we do not need to deal with him. Now Mr. J. Watson has been appointed Secretary in the position of Mr. Vickerson, retired at Liverpool. Is there any objection to that appointment?

Mr. Flett : I beg to move that that appointment be approved.

Mr. Sprow formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Mr. McMahon has been appointed to Leith. Is there any objection to that appointment?

The resolution was formally moved and seconded, and on question was unanimously agreed to.

#### BOARD OF TRADE COMMITTEE.

The General President : Now the next item is the nomination of four members to serve on the Board of Trade Committee of the Seamen's National Insurance. The names are Messrs. James Henson, Joseph Cotter and William Sprow. Do you agree to re-appoint them?



Mr. Lang : Can Mr. Henson serve in that capacity?

The General President : I do not know. I do not think the fact of his resigning as Assistant General Secretary deprives him of any right to represent us on the Seamen's National Insurance Committee if he is elected. However, Mr. Cathery will perhaps write to Mr. Henson and ask if he desires to continue.

Mr. Cathery : Yes, I will do that.

The General President : If so, his name can be put forward. Do you agree to that? (Agreed.) Now we want one more name to put forward.

Mr. Ben Mollan : I move Captain Davis.

Captain Griffiths formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

#### APPEAL FROM THE WIRELESS ASSOCIATION.

The General President : Mr. Tuck, of the Wireless Association, is here and he wishes to make an appeal to the Executive Council. The discussion on all the resolutions on the Agenda will take a considerable time, and I do not like to keep Mr. Tuck waiting because he is not in a very good state of health, and I think we might just suspend what we are doing for the moment and hear him. Do you approve of that? (Agreed.) Mr. Tuck is the General Secretary of the Wireless Association. He is not over well at the moment, but I will ask him to address you.

Mr. Tuck : Mr. President and Gentlemen, I have come here this afternoon on an errand which is not altogether agreeable to me; it is one which people in my official capacity approach with a very great deal of diffidence. Our Society is a young one, and I am going to say now, as Mr. Wilson has told ourselves time after time, that we are, perhaps—or at least our Executive are, perhaps, and have been for some time—"young men in a hurry." They wanted to see the best of the world before they had helped to manufacture the means whereby they were to get the best.

When the reduction for Seafarers was put into operation last year my Executive in their wisdom, or unwisdom, took it upon themselves to resist. Not only did they resist, but they took drastic measures by withdrawing the labour of the men who were arriving in the United Kingdom to the number of nearly 2,000. I advised them in a certain way, and I did not want to be disloyal to my Executive. I would only say this, that being an older man by many years than any of them, I gave them certain advice which they did not see fit to accept, and they embarked on a series of (what shall I call it) attacks, to some extent, upon different Seafarers' Union—wordy attacks; there was nothing really behind it.

I should say that there was a lack of information which imbued them with those sentiments; but I hope that those stormy

days, which lasted 13 weeks for us, and culminated in a disastrous result as far as we were concerned—because we had to give way, and we found ourselves in financial difficulties, which my absence through ill-health in hospital these last ten weeks has not improved—they had not the courage to come forward and admit their mistakes; and, to cut the story short, until they found themselves not only financially in difficulties altogether at the end of the strike in February, but before they could make any arrangements to get the men back to work, they found that the Shipowners and the Wireless Companies were in an almost impregnable position. They would not take the men back except as they required them, for the simple reason that because of the number of ships which had sailed from the United Kingdom without operators it would be necessary to wait until the ships arrived back in the United Kingdom before they could place the men. The consequence was that we had to provide funds from various sources in order to keep these men from being absolutely at starvation point—many of them married men with young families—and we used up the whole of our funds, together with some we were able to get our hands upon at the time.

At the time that I went away sick the General Strike had just started, and we found ourselves in the position that in the agreement of resumption with the Shipowners and the Wireless Companies they provided against any measure of such a character taking place again by placing a proviso in the agreement that if a strike intervened in the reinstatement of the men the numbers which they had agreed upon to reinstate within certain definite periods become inoperative. The consequence was we found ourselves with 700 or 800 men whom we had to keep for a further period; and last week, and at the beginning of this week, the last of those men obtained positions.

To cut a long story short, we find ourselves now in such a position that we owe a considerable amount of money which we are not able to pay back—liabilities which are in my office for bills unpaid; and I have come here this afternoon to place our position before you with the idea of asking you to lend us some money until we can turn ourselves round; and we can assure you that from our past record and from lessons we have learnt from the position in which we have been placed this year, there will be no fear of its repetition, and no fear, as far as we are concerned, that there will be such an embroglio in the future.

You want to know probably what I mean by a loan from the National Seamen's Union. We appeal to the National Seamen's Union as being, what I might term, a Union controlled and advised by what I consider to be the best man in the Seafarers' movement. (Hear, hear.) Mr. Wilson and I have had little breezes at times, but I think he and I, as far as the wireless and the National Seamen's Union are concerned, have seen clearer than any of my younger Executive Council; but they have had to toe the line now, and I have made it clear to them that in the future I shall be in the same position as he is in, and certain rules will have to be made whereby no such action shall be taken in the future as has been taken in the past by our people; that the ad-

vice which is given by men who are older and in a higher position shall be followed until such time as the major portion of the membership can give their individual record as to what they desire.

I want, if possible, to be in a position this year of clearing our liabilities and allowing my Association to get down to re-organisation without any danger or without any fears of the financial position overwhelming us and stultifying the work we have to do. I hope this afternoon you will give me the privilege of carrying to my Executive the knowledge that what I advised them to do was the right course, and the course which they should have adopted, and that the National Union of Seamen have been their well-wishers and will see them through.

The General President : Now, Gentlemen, you have heard Mr. Tuck's appeal. I would like you to know how they were standing at the end of 1925. They had an income by entrance fees and subscriptions during the year 1925 of £12,637 4s. 9d., less Insurance of Personal Effects Account £162. So that their income last year was over £12,000, and they saved on the year, "balance in excess of income over expenditure for the year ended December 31st, 1924, £2,514." So they had a pretty good income last year; but I understand from Mr. Tuck that they have disbursed the whole lot and any more they could get hold of: (Laughter.)

Mr. McGhee : They are not the first who did that.

The General President : No, not the first. Then, their office furniture and fittings are worth £811; their numerous investments amounted to £6,000—but that has all gone, I understand?

Mr. Tuck : That is right.

The General President : At the end of last year they had £1,250 in the bank; loose cash or on deposit, over £2,201. Now they have no money, and Mr. Tuck comes to ask if it is possible for you to make them a loan, I understand.

Mr. Tuck : That is right.

Mr. McGhee : How much?

The General President : £2,000, I think.

Mr. Tuck : £2,000 would not leave us any margin.

The General President : Then £2,500. That is Mr. Tuck's request. If any of you want to ask Mr. Tuck any questions you can do so.

Mr. Jones : I do not want to rub anything in to them, but I should like to know whether that Circular which was put out has been withdrawn by the Executive.

Mr. Tuck : Yes, it has been withdrawn.

The General President : Now we need not go into these things. (Hear, hear.) The Wireless young men I would call the wild men; they had a good deal to say about me. We will forget that. (Hear, hear.) When I look every night at my little index card coming along at four o'clock, which shows me that since the beginning of this year we have disbursed £40,000, I scratch my head and think, "Well, Havelock, my lad, you will have to wake up." So we have our troubles as well as the rest. Fortunately the prospects are better now. If the Committee were to make a loan I understand you can offer no security?

Mr. Tuck : Except the record of the membership. We have not lost a single member; our income next year will be as good as it was last year. This year I can say nothing about it.

Mr. McGhee : What is the contribution?

Mr. Tuck : £3 per annum.

The General President : Do you think your members are likely to pay up?

Mr. Tuck : Undoubtedly.

The General President : Now, supposing it was done in this way, that we were to lend £2,500—

Mr. Tuck : Make it £3,000, and that will give us a margin. (Laughter.)

The General President : Mr. Tuck says that if they get only £2,500 they would not have enough to square all their present accounts off; and he says, could we make it £3,000? I want to ask you this, Mr. Tuck. Supposing we were to make out a series of bills this day, so many months you undertake to meet this bill at the bank, and then in another so many months another bill, and then another bill, and then another bill, and so on, until it is all paid. Supposing you had six months' grace before you start, and you have cleared your debts off, with your current income would you be able to meet those bills in a series of repayments?

Mr. Tuck : Would you start the first six months from January 1st next year?

The General President : Yes. The fair and just thing would be to ask Mr. Tuck any questions and then, when he has answered them, to allow him to retire and then we can discuss the matter in the absence of Mr. Tuck. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Tearle : May I ask this question through you, Sir : Whether it is true that all the money those men had from your

Organisation has gone out by way of loans to be repaid by the member. Is that true?

Mr. Tuck : No, that is not so. Some of it has.

Mr. Tearle : Is it true that you said when the men were asked to leave the ships, "There is no strike pay for you, but you can get money from the Union, but you will have to pay it back," and you have receipts for the money that was received by the members of your Organisation when they received the money, and that has to be repaid?

Mr. Tuck : No. Those men who desired loans for small sums got them; but the great majority of the men, who were married men with small families, or had responsibilities as single men, were given a maintenance allowance of so much per week, and we did not look for that to be returned in the slightest degree. The amount of loans which we think may come back, which have been advanced to the members, is a matter of £200 or £300—a very small matter.

Mr. Tearle : But you do admit that some of it has gone out on loan to be paid back?

Mr. Tuck : Yes, £200 or £300.

Mr. Tearle : If I were to produce a letter that had been written by Mr. Tuck's Association to one of his members when they asked for strike pay, to say that they could not have strike pay but they could have some money from the Union under a guarantee that it would be paid back, and no strike pay was paid at all?

Mr. Tuck : There was no strike pay paid as strike pay, because the Rules did not allow it. There is no Rule whereby we can be called upon to pay strike pay to our members; but we recognise the funds of the Association belong to the members, and they were doing what we asked them to do, so they were entitled to the disbursement of those funds as far as they would go.

Mr. Tearle : Why was one party allowed to receive strike pay and others received it in the shape of a loan?

The General President : I think Mr. Tuck has explained that, seeing their Rules did not provide for strike pay they had to camouflage it as best they could. That is quite legitimate in Trade Union circles.

Mr. Tuck : There is a very simple explanation, and that is, some men declined to have maintenance allowance given to them and asked that any money they received from the Association temporarily should be regarded as a loan.

The General President : We will write you, Mr. Tuck, whatever the result is.

Mr. Tuck : Thank you, Gentlemen.

*(Mr. Tuck then withdrew.)*

The General President : Now, Gentlemen, you have heard Mr. Tuck's appeal; it is for you to discuss the matter fairly and squarely, and anything that may have been said. If any man has any right to complain surely it is myself. (Hear, hear.) It was printed all over the pages in every line, "A twister," "Sold everything," "Sold everybody," but that does not appeal to me a bit, because, after all, we know the make-up of the Wireless fellows. We had them on the Joint Seafarers' Council, two or three young fellows there; I tried to instil into them good advice, but it was simply a wasted effort. But I have seen older men than them make mistakes. You have got to be broadminded in these matters. Forget it and try to be broadminded. Is it any use keeping the Wireless Association alive?

Several Delegates : No.

The General President : That is the first point that would strike me. I would say emphatically "Yes"—(hear, hear)—because an Organisation of any body of men is better than nothing. Have they committed such a crime that we cannot forget any indiscretion on the part of any Officials who might represent them? And, after all said and done, those Officials may not represent the true sentiments of the men.

Captain Davis : What are they doing there?

The General President : Representing their own views, not the men. Now, go ahead with it; it is in your hands.

Mr. Jones : I was pleased to hear from Mr. Tuck that the circular was withdrawn, because no doubt if this Council make a loan to the Wireless Association and it becomes known to the members they will want to know about it. There was a good deal of talk, because it was broadcast freely, and we can go back to the members and say, "It has been withdrawn and they have apologised for the same."

Mr. Tearle : In the first place, I realise that man to his fellows should always be kind. For my part, I feel very sorry for Mr. Tuck, but at the same time I realise that charity should begin at home. The Wireless Telegraphists have done nothing all along the line ever since they had a Union but scandalise the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union—not only Mr. Havelock Wilson but all its Officials. (Hear, hear.) They have gone round from one ship to another spreading the gospel to Engineers and Officers, and they have said point-blank that had not it been for the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union and Havelock Wilson there would have been no reduction in wages.

It is very unfortunate for Mr. Tuck to have to come here and make this appeal; but I want to bring to the minds of the ordinary members and of the Officials of this Council that we have thousands of men, Sailors and Firemen, who have very little to eat to-day up and down the country; they have wives and children. I understand from Mr. Tuck that his Association has met all its

liabilities so far, though they have a lot of bills, etc., to pay. But our first duty is to the Sailors and Firemen.

Now, the Sailors' and Firemen's Organisation, as I have said, has been scandalised and blamed from one end of the country to the other. Mr. Macdonald, one of their leading lights, scandalised us from Australia to South Africa; even cables were sent appreciating Shinwell and his gang during all the transactions. I do not want to be vindictive, but I want to say to this Council that you ought not to give to the Wireless people £2,500 or £3,000 when the women and kids belonging to the members of the Union have little to eat; some of our members have to pay 7s. and 8s. to the Union after a six weeks' trip, and they can very well take that 7s. and 8s. home. We say to our members, "You have to take P.C.5 and put yourself in benefit before you can sign on"; but the Wireless people come along and appeal to you for a gift when there are cases at home—

- The General President: They have not asked for a gift; they have asked for a loan.

Mr. Tearle: We have heard tell of these "loans" before. I take it, that it will be a gift. Let us loan something to the Sailors and Firemen; it would look better; it would be better for us; and the Sailors and Firemen are in greater need of it than the Wireless Telegraphists' Association are.

Mr. Tarbitten: I should like to associate myself with Mr. Tearle, because as a representative on the Seafarers' Council, the Wireless Association's representative, Mr. Tuck, said he had given advice to the young people, but he said, "We expect what we shall get"; he challenged Mr. McKee and other members to sit down and not take your advice. Take the Circulars they issued and the damage they did to our men. You say, Sir, you will forgive the damage done to you, but you have District and Branch Officials who get the backwash of that. If there is a chance of the Wireless people wanting an Organisation, here it is in our Union, and I think a halt should be called to a loan going out to those people. In the past you, who built up the movement, have had nothing but abuse from them, but it seems to me that when they are down and out they have only to come and see Havelock Wilson and they will get assistance. Although you have a soft side, Sir, you have had a hard side during the last two days. I hope you will keep that hard side which you have had during the last two days.

Captain Davis: This matter was brought before the Finance Committee, but I do not favour it. When one goes round the country and notices the pitiful plight of some of our members it would be grossly inconsistent on my part to show, even by this action, that we have money to burn. It is apparent it requires no further explanation that questions must automatically arise in the minds of our members when they find out, and they have the right to know, that we are lending money, or giving money, to people whose Constitution is such that, until altered, there is no earthly hope for improvement.

We had our friend, Mr. Tuck, who paid a great compliment to Mr. Wilson, and I know they were the sentiments at the bottom of his heart; but Mr. Tuck is only the fifth wheel of the coach. Had the opinions of Mr. Tuck been honoured and recognised, the Wireless men would not have been in the unfortunate position in which they find themselves to-day. Mr. Tuck has had the quietus put on him, and I was sorry to see him coming here to-day to try and patch up the position from which the Wireless men find it difficult to extricate themselves. Who knows better than myself? I have sat on the Seafarers' Joint Council, and it is right I should repeat it—Mr. Wilson says, "Let bygones be bygones," but you cannot help remembering things that have been battered at you month in and month out; and there is no redeeming feature in this institution.

It is not a reflection on Mr. Wilson altogether, it is a reflection on the men, the Executive Council, who have adopted his policy from time to time; and while I agree with Mr. Wilson when he wants to forget everything—well, we will try to forget it, but at the same time if there is any Union in this world that should have been the last to be approached it is the National Union of Seamen. (Hear, hear.) I know there are our friends in America down and out, Seamen and Firemen, men of our own type, and perhaps something may be done for them; but when you have an institution of this kind that lays down a policy—and I told them myself if no impediment intervened there was only one result for them and that is disintegration and liquidation; I told them that long ago, and they thought that I ought to be incarcerated in a lunatic asylum. Well, it has come, and to my astonishment I find them appealing to the very Organisation which is the one they should have passed over.

What I want to know is this: Is it right that because we have taken a sane policy, because we have in the face of strenuous opposition followed this Executive Council and the General President, that we should start disbursing money? I, as I said at the Finance Committee, as one of the custodians of the funds, hoped the Executive Council would discuss it on its merits or demerits and come to a conclusion; nothing pains me more than seeing an Organisation going west; but if they find that their Constitution and their activities have not proved successful, then why not have the courage to come here bluntly and say, "We feel that under your directions the best interests of our members will be served," and come and say, "We feel that the time has come to link up with you, subject to your approval."

I am just putting forward my view. I know the large heart of our President. I knew the way he was steering in his opening remarks. But then I am striking off at a tangent at this juncture; I feel that while we might from a sentimental point of view help them, are we acting fair and square by our members who, as Matt Tearle has said rightly, are down and out, lacking the necessities of life? It is not a matter of opinion, it is a matter of fact; and I do trust that you will consider those two points as an Executive: Are we worth linking up with, or are they worth lending the money to?



The General President : Now, Gentlemen, are there any other remarks?

Mr. Ash : There is one thing which evidently some of us speakers have forgotten ; that whatever has happened it is a body of opinion of the youngest men in any of the Organisations who have been struggling against mighty odds, even with the Party yourself has adopted. The strike was not according to the Rules ; but they have been struggling on to try and hold their own. They have fought a battle and put their best into that battle, and they have failed in the battle. Now, the question is whether it would be wise for us to assist an Organisation of workers that is attached to the seamen just as ourselves, and one of the most particular portions of the industry—the Wireless—the question is whether we should assist them to struggle on against the forces that are opposed to them and try and build up an Organisation, with something better to come along in the future. If it is required that these people should be in this Organisation, which is the best way you will go about getting them into it? Is it by breaking up their Organisation altogether, or subsidising them so that you will be able to get them so that they will take either your methods, or methods which you lay down, under their own auspices?

In regard to what was said about our own men, it is perfectly true that we ought to take into consideration all our people. But, is this Union broke? Why cannot we take into consideration our own people as well? If there are women and children of our own *bona fide* members starving, why should not we adopt the method of lending money to them, as this other Union has done? But I am advocating that the same assistance for a body of young men who have struggled to try and hold up their Organisation should be given. I hope you will take this into consideration, that whatever has been the position in the past, people have to learn things as they go through life ; and one of the things they learn is assistance from an Organisation of this character. If nasty things have been said, let us forget them in a case like this. It does not mean one or a dozen men, it means the organisation of one of the particular things in the Mercantile Marine—the Wireless. I am strongly in favour of assisting them.

Mr. McGhee : I think it ought to be kept before the minds of the members it is not a question of using the funds for this purpose as against the members' interest ; it is a question of lending, and if it is to be a lending it will be on the usual conditions that we borrow ourselves. For instance, we have an overdraft at the bank and we pay interest. If we lend, it is simply a larger overdraft at the bank, and they must pay. I think the Executive should give us an opinion as to whether they would advise a loan at all, and, if so, remit it to the Finance Committee to deal with it.

The General President : A loan, to pay the same interest as we pay?

Mr. Jarman : Will not that put us in the same position as the country is in with regard to the debt of France to America? We are going to borrow and lend it to them, but we shall have to guarantee that loan wherever we get it from.

Mr. McGhee : Our credit is good and theirs is not.

Mr. Jarman : Our credit has not been good in their estimation. Go aboard to-day and hear the opinion of the Wireless Operators towards this Union. I ask myself this question : What would they say to us if we do good to them ?

Mr. McGhee : I do not want to discuss the merits of the thing at all. It does not matter to me whether you lend or not. But if there is any reason for lending more than another it is the attitude of the Wireless men in the past to this Union.

The General President : That is exactly what I thought.

Mr. McGhee : Here is a body of men who have been slandering the President, and so we know all about it ; here is their Official representative coming to this meeting to-day to ask this Executive, not the individual members, but this Executive, to sanction a loan to them to save them from extinction. There could not be any more effective answer.

The General President : I have been appealing for a long time for big men. What do I mean by "big men" ? I mean by that men who will take a broad view of life. If anyone in the world has a right to complain of slander, I think I ought to have the first stripe ; because they do not seem to recognise there is anyone else in the Union—only Havelock Wilson. It does not matter what they write, they must put in "Havelock Wilson." That is to lead the world to believe there is only one member, and that is myself. But for heaven's sake forget that. Now, what are we to gain by keeping this other Union alive ? First of all, Mr. Jarman says, and Mr. Tearle says, and Mr. Jones says, these fellows have been slandering us all over the place. Is it not a sufficient victory for you to have the chief Executive Officer of the Union coming and appealing to you for a loan to keep them alive ? This matter came before the Finance Committee, and I said then, "Well, we ought not to consider this. (Hear, hear.) If there is going to be an appeal for funds it ought to come direct from the Wireless men themselves in person." (Hear, hear.) The Finance Committee agreed with me, and that is the reason we had Mr. Tuck here to-day.

Now, Mr. Tearle said we had plenty of members of our own in distress. I will put it to Mr. Tearle in this way : If we had to help all our members who are in distress it would not only require all the funds we have got, but about five times as much as we have got. It is like dividing the money of the world. If we were to accumulate or get all the wealth of the world and divide it up amongst every person it would not amount to more than perhaps two pounds, and it would be useless ; but by its being accumulated in centres and manipulated by astute men it is useful. So that that side of it does not weigh with me. If you lent those men the money you would have a chance of saving their Union, and every Union saved, to my mind, is useful to the world at large. (Hear, hear.) Am I to believe that if we help those men out they are still going to continue their slanders ? (Cries of "Yes" and

"No.") All I can say is, if that is so they would be about the biggest fools I ever met. Because need never comes once but it may come again; and there would be less chance of them coming a second time when they made such asses of themselves the first time. I do not want unduly to influence the Executive the one way or the other—(hear, hear)—but I know that if it was left to me I would keep that Organisation alive. (Hear, hear.) If it is to be done by a loan bearing interest—no gift; no excusing of interest—if it is to be done by a loan, personally I would favour doing it. However, the Council must decide that and not me.

Mr. Cathery : Fellow-Delegates, I am one of those individuals, and in my responsible position one of my duties along with my colleagues is to preserve the funds of the Union, but when I look back and see what we have done for other Unions, who have been in a somewhat similar position I can have some sympathy with the Wireless men, and especially Mr. Tuck, who, I believe, is an honest individual, and who, I believe, will carry out as far as lays in his power—anyhow, he will see it carried out—any agreement he might make. That is as far as a loan is concerned. We must not forget that in times gone by we have lent various sums of money. We lent the Amalgamated Engineers sums of money and we got that refunded. We sent £2,000 to another of the Engineering Trade Unions and we got that returned. We have lent various moneys in different ways to various Continental friends in the way of loans. Although I have criticised, as our friends of the Joint Seafarers' Council will know, these young fellows—there is O'Donnell and Robertson, I would not care if they were wiped out to-morrow—but a man like Mr. Tuck, who is practically in the position, in a small way, that our President holds here to-day, trying to keep the Union alive in all honesty and sincerity, I hope you will take a lenient view, and if it is possible to stretch a point—whether it is £1,000, £2,000, or £3,000 as a loan—I certainly think if it were left to myself—as the President has said—and I had to make a loan to them I certainly should not be behindhand in helping them. It would be like, what I might call, helping a lame dog over the stile. As we have done it for others we ought to take into consideration what we might call our brother seamen; because they are now established in the ship. Consequently I quite endorse the action of our President. It would be far better to try and keep this Union alive, because we never know what we might want at some future date. Therefore, as far as I am personally concerned, I hope you will put no obstacle in the road of helping them out of their difficulties as far as we can.

Mr. Connolly : We do not want to be too hard on anyone. I would move that this request be granted and the Union lend this Wireless Union the £3,000 as requested, but that for safety it should be left in the hands of the Trustees as far as possible. They have no proper guarantee, but there may be some ways and means with regard to guaranteeing it; and the final arrangements should be left to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Lang formally seconded.

The General President : You have heard the resolution.

Mr. Jones : I will support the resolution, although my name was mentioned with Mr. Jarman's and Mr. Tearle's. My reason was that I did not know whether those accusations had been withdrawn, so I asked that question. But I believe it will be a good thing for us, particularly as Officials, because whenever any of these Wireless men come along in the future we shall be able to say, " You were shouting about us, but you were glad enough to come to us for money." That will help us a lot, and it will show other Organisations, such as the Officers and Engineers who are not in their own Unions, that we can come forward and help them when they require it even though we are called down.

It was then moved and agreed that the question be now put.

Mr. McGhee : I would suggest the motion should involve the necessity of lending the £3,000, and I think it should also be left to the Finance Committee how much they would lend up to £3,000.

Mr. Bennett : What is your position going to be legally on this matter? You have already dealt with the Officials of your own Union for acting contrary to the Rules and Constitution, and you obtained injunctions against them. From what I understand of them, you are going now to lend money to support men who took a similar action.

The General President : No; it is altogether different.

Mr. Bennett : Then I am wrong on that point.

The General President : They negotiated for three months on wages and were unable to come to a settlement, and then they officially declared a strike.

Mr. Bennett : Very well. I want to come to the point about the prospects of getting our money back. Mr. Tuck says he hopes the men will pay up their contributions. I think you will agree that at the moment the prospects of any Trade Union strengthening its membership and funds is very remote; in fact, in my opinion, it is the other way about. You say yourself that you do not want to see any Union die—well, may we not have an application from the Marine Workers' Union for a loan? (Laughter.)

The General President : How do you know they have not appealed already? (Laughter.) Now, you all understand the resolution. The question is whether or not we should grant a loan of £3,000 to the Wireless Association; and, secondly, see that we get suitable guarantees; and particularly that such loan is to bear the usual rate of interest. Is that it? (Agreed.) Then I will put the resolution. Those in favour show your right hands.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution ... ..	23
Against ... ..	3

The General President : The resolution is carried. Now I will tell you what I am going to suggest to the Finance Committee,

that really we do not grant the loan at all out of our funds, that we do it by a series of bills, and, as those bills become due they will have to meet them. (Hear, hear.)

#### QUESTION OF SEVERANCE FROM POLITICAL PARTIES.

The General President : We come now to the resolutions. The first resolution is, "That this meeting is of the opinion that the position created by recent events in the Trade Union movement warrants our Executive Council considering the advisability of severing all connections with political Parties." We will stop there. Now, before you can deal with that you will have to refer it to a ballot vote of the members. I would like you to consider it now, and if you think the resolution is right you recommend the Annual Meeting to consider it with a view of a ballot vote being taken. That is the issue. Say what you want.

Mr. Jones : I rise to move this part of the resolution, not from Cardiff alone, but from Liverpool. We held in all about twelve meetings up there, and this was the opinion of the men whom we consulted, not only in the meetings, but in the ships; and I can assure you as far as Liverpool is concerned, and also Cardiff, it is a sore point. I have been asked when I have been away from Cardiff and told them I have been to an International meeting, "What good have you been doing there?" The consequence is that I believe if this resolution is adopted the men will believe we are looking more to their business and leaving politics alone.

The General President : Do you move that we send a report to the Annual General Meeting recommending them to consider that question and to issue a ballot?

Mr. Jones : Yes, I move that in addition.

Mr. Clouston : I want to report to the Executive Council that at all the Branch meetings of the North-East Coast each Branch unanimously adopted that resolution. It seems to me that for a long time now other members, not only of the North-East Coast of England, but in Scotland, have been desirous of severing all political association with anyone; and I think it is a right and proper recommendation to make to the Annual General Meeting on that head, so it is with great pleasure that I second the resolution.

The General President : Is there any amendment?

Mr. Cotter : I do not want to move an amendment; I want to ask you all to see where you have got to over this matter. Think of the invidious position we are in if this is passed. This year you nominated a gentleman, who is now the Chairman of the Labour Party—the very body you are talking about—Robert Williams is your nominee.

Mr. Cathery : Last year.

Mr. Cotter : This year. He is Chairman of the Labour Party, representing the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union.

Mr. Cathery : Up to the Annual Meeting of this year, and then he vacates that position.

Mr. Cotter : He sits as Chairman of the Labour Party at the next Conference. That is the position you are in ; you have nominated him ; he is your representative ; and now you want to pass a resolution of this description. Imagine what effect it will have when it goes out that the Union which has nominated the Chairman of the Labour Party is now moving a resolution of this character.

Mr. Doxford : If we think we have made a mistake in being connected with it and we are trying to remedy the mistake, the mistake can be remedied by the majority of the members, if we have no right to be connected with the Labour Party or any other Labour Organisation. Then the question of Mr. Robert Williams, or any other man being nominated, will cease in the future.

Mr. Cathery : At the Annual Meeting we have to take into consideration the Annual General Meeting of the Labour Party, which I think will be held at Margate this year. We were represented last year, and we have got to take into consideration to-morrow whether we are going to be represented at the Labour Party Conference, and, if so, we have to select our delegate. But with reference to Mr. Robert Williams being the representative of this Union at the present time, that is strictly correct. However, we are not discussing abolishing it at this moment. We have to take a ballot vote of the members ; and it will take two or three months before that can be done ; and before that time Mr. Williams's term of office will have expired. They take elections every year, and I suppose there will be other nominations, and we shall have to consider to-morrow whether we are going to nominate Mr. Robert Williams or any other member for a position, either on the Executive or for President of the Labour Party. So I do not think that would interfere at all with us, Mr. Cotter.

Mr. Jones : Might I ask Mr. Cathery as to how far our year's fees take us with the Labour Party?

Mr. Cathery : We have some to pay yet.

Mr. Doxford : Supposing our Annual General Meeting agrees to take a ballot and that ballot is taken and we sever ourselves from the Labour Party, it will not become operative for another twelve months, will it?

The General President : Who is being asked the question? I have not delegated to anyone the duty of answering questions put to me ; therefore I shall answer them for myself. My view is that the fact of Mr. Robert Williams being nominated this year has nothing to do with the present situation at all. Our members have a right to change their views when they think it proper to do so. As far as I can see, nearly every Branch in the Union has adopted this resolution ; anyhow, I can say the majority have. But that does not say that is all the members. The members in general

may take a different view altogether. But what the resolution seems to do is to take a test of the views of the members—real democracy, John Ash. (Laughter.) The last time we had a vote they decided by a majority to join the Labour Party. Perhaps this time they may decide by vote to leave the Labour Party. They have a right to do that if they want to, have not they? And as to fees, that will depend. As Mr. Cathery has very truly said, when this resolution is passed, if it is, that does not finish the job. If it is passed at the Annual Meeting that does not finish the job; it will take three or four months. So there is plenty of time to think about the fees when we get the vote in.

Mr. Breckenridge: I rise to support the resolution. At one time I thought, like many more, that if you wanted to have a strong industrial Organisation you had to be strong politically; but since the War I have realised that the Trade Union movement has been dealing more in politics and neglecting the industrial side of the movement. That being the case, I am pleased to recommend to the members to take a ballot to see whether they are in favour of affiliation or not. I think the last two days of this Executive Council meeting have brought it home forcibly to each one of us that had it not been for the political movement we should have been saved all this agony and trouble through which we have been. On those grounds I support it.

Mr. Ley: There is another little position arising out of this. I believe we are pledged to support two members of Parliament at the next election by the ballot of our members. What is the position with regard to that? Incidentally, both these gentlemen are at present members of this Union.

The General President: You want to know what will be the position of the two gentlemen who have been nominated as candidates for Parliament?

Mr. Ley: Yes; by ballot of the members.

The General President: It will have to be subject to the next ballot; that is to say, if the ballot decides against supporting political candidates, that wipes out their ballot vote.

Mr. Ash: For a number of years, about 40 years, the workers of this country have been trying to kick out of the Houses of Parliament the people who had their heel on our throats from one year's end to the other. It is a well-said thing that men who do not see eye to eye with the workers' party that this Government is not going to come out, and it will take many years before we get in again. If that is so, it is possible you will not have the Labour Party in for some time. If you strike against that side of your power—that is the House of Commons side of your power—and you strike against the industrial side by having no strikes, you are up against all these people in the country, and they have got the power to legislate. How will they legislate? It is possible that they might legislate to cut out the P.C.5, for instance. I am only placing in front of you the position as I see

it. They might legislate against us. You will have the battle against you two-fold. You will have the industrial side on the left-hand side and the political side on the right-hand side battering against you for all they are worth. We know we are strong in some directions. I have heard it said that the granite walls of the Seamen's Union cannot be pierced or forced. But it is possible that we shall have to spend all our money like water to fight an uphill battle which may take the form that we shall have to take sides with the workers of this country. We cannot do better than go on and see how things will pan out in the future. I do not know whether I ought to move an amendment or not.

Mr. McGhee: I think we ought to understand where we are in this thing. If this had come from only one Branch I do not think it would be fitting to consider it and send it to the Annual Meeting; but in view of what has been said, that the whole of the Branches have sent in a similar resolution, the thing becomes very different, and I think as an Executive we are bound, at any rate, to send it to the Annual General Meeting. Whether we should send it with a recommendation or without a recommendation may be a different thing. But I think we are bound in the face of this to send it to the Annual General Meeting and leave them to determine it. If the Annual General Meeting determines it, there is no inconsistency at all with our past conduct. For several years it came up and we always rejected it; then the pressure became so strong that a ballot was taken. The ballot came into Head Office, and the Head Office found that the ballot was in favour of it. We acted in harmony with them, and I am glad to hear to-day that the Chairman of the Labour Party is a nominee really of this Union. But it was always made clear to the members that no man was obliged whatever to be a member of any political Party because of that vote; it was only that the Union as a Union would support the Parliamentary Labour Party by the contribution the members made towards that fund. All we have to do to-day is to send this forward to the Annual General Meeting with or without our recommendation; but it is for them to determine it; and the speech of Mr. Ash and such speeches of a similar nature would be quite fitting perhaps there, or when the ballot is taken.

Captain Griffiths: I want to move an amendment: "That we send this to the Annual General Meeting without any recommendation whatever."

The General President: Then if the Annual General Meeting should ask you: "Why did not you consider this; what are your functions?" what have you to say to it? You know what the functions of the Executive Council are. We are the Managing Committee; we get certain resolutions from our "shareholders" advising a certain course to be adopted. Now, surely it is your duty to say whether it is right or wrong. So if they ask the question, why did not you consider this, what will you say about it?



Captain Griffiths : If my amendment is carried it will show that the majority of this Executive is against giving any recommendation with regard to the ballot.

The General President : But that is what you are for.

Captain Griffiths : I was inclined—only I asked Mr. McGhee—to move a definite resolution that we adhere to the former ballot of the members.

The General President : That will not do. You must understand that this is not a resolution from one Branch ; it is a resolution from nearly all the Branches, and from representative meetings, too. You cannot ignore that. You must deal with it. You must advise either that you take a ballot to test the feeling, or you do not take a ballot. That is the position. Tell me this, Gentlemen. As I have said, in this Union we have Socialists, we have Radicals, and we have Conservatives. I thought true democracy was to consult the people. Now, there is Captain Griffiths ; it looks to me as if he did not want to consult the people by his attitude. This is not true democracy, you know, James.

Mr. Bennett : If a ballot is taken, will that be a ballot of the whole of the members of the Union, or those who pay the piper ?

The General President : The whole of the members of the Union.

Mr. Bennett : Whether they pay the Political Levy or not ?

The General President : The same as before.

Mr. Martin : It seems to me that the resolution calls for a recommendation from this Council, and that is all that is being asked for. We must either support the resolution and recommend it to the Annual General Meeting, or turn it down.

The General President : We must consider it, because we are expected to tender advice. Well, the resolution I have so far is that we recommend the Annual General Meeting to take a ballot of the whole of the members.

It was moved that the question be put.

Captain Griffiths : The General President in his opening remarks this morning said the first consideration was the Union and its men. We all agree with him. We are organised in an industrial Union, from an industrial point of view, for the benefit of the men ; and I want to impress on every member here, whether he agrees with it or not, that unless you have a political arm to your Organisation as well as an industrial arm, you will only bring half your weight to bear in the battle to-day.

A Delegate : Get away !

Captain Griffiths : I have my opinion and you have yours ; it is only by listening to one another that we can form a proper conclusion. I am doing my best. If you take the Employers' Associations all over the country and in every part of the world you will find those employers are well organised industrially. Take the Federation of British Industries, with their millions behind them. We have half a million—

The General President : Will you answer me this question for my own information : Do you ever find the employers endeavouring by their Trade Union machine to drive all their members into one political Organisation ?

Captain Griffiths : I could not answer that directly "Yes" or "No." But everyone here knows as well as I do that these big organisations of employers with vast capital behind them use that capital in the Parliamentary machine. You have your big industrial combines who put up the bar against anyone who is against their rules and regulations ; and when they get into the House of Commons they favour the laws that are made for the benefit of vested interests, and then if there is anything left the workers may have a share in it. You say there is no benefit in political power. There are only two Parties to-day, whatever one might think. Whatever Organisation you are in industrially you must be in either one of those two Parties if you are going to make any progress. I want to prove to you that political power is essential to us. What I am trying to prove to you is that you cannot get the best out of an industrial concern without having your political arm in use.

The General President : And you say that after listening to that beautiful oration of mine this morning !

Captain Griffiths : I do not believe it. Because I made a little note here when Mr. Wilson said about twenty-odd years in Parliament. His name was respected, his power was acknowledged and I want to say straight here that the work Mr. Wilson did on behalf of the men of the sea in the British House of Commons has never been equalled by any other member who has ever passed through. (Hear, hear.) If Mr. Wilson was one of the leaders and one of the Opposition Party sitting in this country to-day, I guarantee that if he had fifty or one hundred men alongside of him, in twelve months' time it would not be a mouse that he would produce, but some of the finest things the seamen ever had. I am not throwing bouquets about. Mr. Wilson is too big a man to want bouquets thrown at him. I want to tell you that I believe it, and if I did not believe it I would not stand on my feet here. Just to show you what you can do from a local point of view, I sit on a Board of Guardians, and I can do more good by sitting on that Board towards assisting the seamen of this country than I could if I were not there. Again, when I sit on the City Council, I sit on the Health Committee for a purpose ; I can do more for the men of the sea who come into the Port of Cardiff by a little bit of argument than I could if I were not on that Committee.

Mr. Doxford : On a point of order. That is an administrative body and not a political body—the Board of Guardians.

The General President : Listen to me a minute, Captain Griffiths. I want to give every one of you a fair crack of the whip, but really what you are doing now is political propaganda for a certain political Party.

Captain Griffiths : I agree.

The General President : Then that is not fair to the Council. What I want to know is this : Here we have evidence from the majority of the Branches that in the opinion of the members they think this political business, as far as the Trade Union is concerned, should be cut out. Now, you are giving us what I call propaganda business for your Party. That is not fair. Keep to the point.

Mr. Flett : I rise to support the resolution, for many reasons which I shall not explain here because it is not necessary. With regard to politics in connection with Trade Unions, I am full up, and have been for many years. I take it that the British subject to-day has actually only two privileges granted to him with regard to freedom ; one is, his political opinion, and the other is his religious opinion ; and I, as an individual, take it as an insult for any man to dictate to me as to what I shall belong to in those two directions.

Mr. Booth : I see that on the Agenda there is a resolution from Newport. I believe it would facilitate matters if it were put down as an amendment to this resolution.

The General President : I cannot see how that can be an amendment to the other resolution. It says, "That we recommend the Executive Council at an early date to put forward our Parliamentary candidate in any constituency where an election is about to take place and Labour has a reasonable chance to win." I cannot see how that is an amendment.

Mr. Booth : If we dispense with the resolution, the other one would be in order. If the resolution is right, that is out of the way altogether.

The General President : No ; that ties us down to that political business.

Mr. Booth : I mean to say, if the resolution is carried, then that resolution from Newport is out of the way altogether.

The General President : We can carry that by a vote for or against.

Mr. Booth : Yes ; but if we carry the resolution as it is put forward now, that dispenses with the Newport resolution, does not it?

The General President : No, certainly not. It rather strengthens the Newport position. I shall now put the resolution to the meeting. Those in favour of a recommendation to the Annual General Meeting that they consider the advisability of taking a ballot as to whether we will continue our affiliations to any political Party, please hold up your hands.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution .....	26
Against .....	2

The General President : Then that is carried. So a report will go to the Annual Meeting to consider the advisability of a ballot on the political question. Now, the next part of the resolution is as follows : "Affiliations with foreign Unions, especially concerning the latter, so far as we are affiliated with the International Transport Workers' Federation. We, as seamen, have various political convictions, and we see good Union funds being wasted in such affiliations, which do not better us as Trade Unionists." I will explain that. At the present moment we have quite a large number of affiliations. We are affiliated to the National Transport Workers' Federation, and that costs us about £800 a year. We are affiliated to the National Seafarers' Federation, which costs us nearly £1,000 a year. We are affiliated to the International Transport Workers' Federation, which costs us over £900 a year. Now, when we come to consider the International Transport Workers' Federation, it is to a large extent a political organisation. That in itself I would not mind ; but the man who is at the head of it is one of the most mischievous men I ever met in my life. The Federation in question, as far as seamen are concerned, does not represent 10 per cent. of the seafaring men of the world ; and yet this same head person, Mr. Edo Fimmen, wants the seamen to be under the control of this Federation.

Now, one of the reasons why we formed the International Seafarers' Federation was this : They refused to allow us to have a meeting of seafaring men only to discuss seafaring questions ; they insisted that if ever we wanted a meeting of that kind it was to be called by the International Transport Workers, and a chairman from the Executive Council of that body should preside. We resented that, and we formed the International Seafarers' Federation. (Hear, hear.) Well, with political juggling of one kind and another we dropped that, and we are back amongst them again. The same tactics are going on ; and what I object to is misleading statements being issued by an Organisation of that kind.

We will take this recent mining crisis. Nearly three weeks before the General Strike took place, Mr. Edo Fimmen sent a letter to Mr. A. J. Cook promising the whole support of the International Transport Workers' Federation, that they would hold up all the cargoes on the Continent ; they would hold up everything. Now, you will be surprised to know when I tell you that Mr. Edo Fimmen had no authority to issue such a letter. Mr. Cook published it to the world at large, and workmen in general. You would have supposed the whole of the men on the Continent were

going to stop work. Now, Mr. Henson was representing us on that Federation, and as soon as I saw this letter I asked Mr. Henson for an explanation. I said, "You have been to that Conference in Amsterdam, but you have not reported to me that the International Transport Workers' Federation is going to 'down tools' when the miners come out on strike. I want to know what really happened." Henson was as much astonished as I was. He said, "Nothing of the kind took place. When they came to discuss the coal crisis it was resolved that they do nothing until they knew just what the developments would be." And Mr. Edo Fimmen had taken upon himself to send that misleading letter without any authority.

Mr. Henson wrote to him for an explanation, and his reply was this: "Well, when I had finished the Conference I was in a hurry to get away to Bulgaria, and I told my Secretary to issue a resolution on certain lines, but my Secretary misunderstood what I said." Consequently the resolution was a bogus one. I say that a fellow like that, who can commit the working men of the world on paper, is not a fit and proper man to be associated with, and it is an Organisation that is not calculated to help us in any degree whatever. (Hear, hear.) I have written to Mr. Fimmen and I have told him he is one gigantic bluff, that is all he is. He is not only a bluff, but he is untruthful. He was going to stop all the coal working on the Continent; he was going to call out all the dockers on the Continent; he was going to call out all the railwaymen on the Continent—and the work has gone on just the same. Then he has the brazen effrontery to write to the papers putting the responsibility of bringing coal into this country on the shoulders of myself and the seamen. (Laughter.) I say that is a scandalous thing. They have never done us any good; they cannot do us any good; and for that reason I would recommend you to advise the Annual Meeting to stop that affiliation, which means saving us nearly £1,000 a year.

Mr. McGhee: Is that a necessity, that it should go to the Annual Meeting? Because it is so different from the ballot. I think it was the Executive which really affiliated, and the Executive can decline the affiliation if it chooses, without the Annual Meeting.

The General President: You are quite right; the Executive themselves could wipe it out; but remember, it is said that this Executive is composed of Havelock Wilson's satellites. Therefore the Annual Meeting would be the more important body, and for that reason I recommend that you report to the Annual Meeting.

Mr. Sprow: I will move to that effect.

Mr. Allen formally seconded.

Captain Griffiths: Is the International Seafarers' Federation going along all right now?

The General President: It is alive. America and ourselves and one or two other small Organisations are there; it is the nucleus of an international connection. At the present time it is not doing any effective work, because there is none to be done—I mean to say, you cannot do anything. But, still, it is a connecting link between ourselves and America and one or two other places. I myself believe the time will come when it will be of service; but if you ask me at the present moment what service it is rendering, and I have to be honest, I must say not much, because it cannot do anything. I must be honest and tell you the truth. Now, the resolution is: "That we recommend to the Annual Meeting the severance of our connection with the International Transport Workers' Federation." Is there any amendment? Then I will put that to the meeting.

On a show of hands there voted:—

For the resolution	...	...	...	35
Against	...	...	...	0

The General President: The resolution is carried unanimously.

#### INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION.

The General President: Now, I should have told you in connection with the International Transport Workers' Federation a very dirty piece of business has recently been done at Geneva within the last month. You will remember 1918, when the Treaty of Versailles was being considered; we had a meeting of the International Seafarers' Federation, and when we knew that certain international conferences were to be held with regard to labour, we, in our wisdom, thought that we should have a Seamen's Conference to consider our questions apart from other workers. A deputation was sent to Paris, to Mr. Gompers. There are some here who went on that deputation—Mr. Paddy Flynn, of America, was one; Mr. Cotter was another; and there were one or two more. They saw Mr. Gompers and they got him to bring forward a resolution that whatever conferences were to be held the Seamen's Conference should be apart from the general Conference of workers. That was conceded. That resolution was carried at Versailles.

Then when they went to Washington, to the first Labour Conference, the Seamen's Conference was approved of. It was expected that the Seamen's Conference should be one composed of the representatives of the seamen and the representatives of ship-owners and so many men representing the different Governments.

The first Conference of that nature was held at Genoa in 1920. Now, we discovered at Genoa when we got there that there were all kinds of men who turned up presuming to represent seamen—there were parsons, there were doctors, and there were lawyers; and my colleagues and myself entered a very emphatic protest. We said, "This is a seamen's Conference, and we do not want doctors and lawyers and other people intruding upon our busi-

ness"; and it was promised to us that in future heed would be paid to our protest, and that at future Conferences seamen would be there in their true character.

Now, there has been no Conference since 1920 up till this year. It was fully expected that our Union, being the largest in Europe—and I might say the largest Seamen's Union now in the world—it was fully expected that our Union would have full representation. That is to say, that the Government would accept the nomination of a representative man from this Union, and that that man would have the right to be called upon and advise on every subject that was on the agenda. We fully believed that. I was led to believe that was so. M. Thomas, of the International Labour Office, tried to make me believe that unless I was present the Conference could not go on. That is what he wanted to convey to me. I did not care very much whether I was there or not, as a matter of fact. It turned out that I was not able to go. But I discovered there was something else working. Instead of our Union being consulted as to who should represent the seamen, the Ministry of Labour here in London ignored us altogether and sent to the Trades Union Council to nominate a man to represent the seamen, and he should select his advisers. Mr. Pugh was nominated by the T.U.C. Mr. Pugh then selected his delegates—he selected Mr. Henson, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Ben Tillett and Margaret Bondfield. (Laughter.)

I never had an opportunity of discussing the matter with Mr. Henson; but I do remember at a conference—I do not know whether it was in March or at an Executive meeting—Mr. Henson said to me, "I have been selected to go to Geneva." I never dreamt it was to represent our Union in any shape or form. I did not have time to discuss the matter with him; I assumed that this was some additional representation that we were going to get. However, when the time came I discovered that it was just the other way round; that the T.U.C. was there in all their glory and we were ignored. Now, when I discovered that was the state of affairs I wrote a strong letter of protest to the President of the Conference, Lord Burnham, and I pointed out to him what I have pointed out here to-day, that they were departing from the terms of the Versailles Treaty, that they were departing from the Washington Conference, and all that they had done was practically to insult this Union and the men of the sea. I expected that letter would have been read when the Conference started. Instead of that, the International Labour Office and our Labour Office had a consultation; it was rather a staggering thing for them—and then they were looking up records and they discovered a clause to the effect that under the Treaty it was the duty of the governing body to convene this Conference and to appoint certain men to represent the seafaring men.

Now, I have looked up that clause and I do find that it does not clearly set out that it must be confined to seafaring men at all; it does not clearly say that. But we know what the intentions were; and we know what the proceeding was at Genoa, and in that way they have tried to get out of it.

Now, when it comes to appointing the National Maritime Commission, there is a committee appointed by this International Conference to carry on the work between one Conference and another. Hitherto this Maritime Commission has been composed entirely of seamen. I was a member, Mr. Revelli, of France, was a member, Mr. Ulas was a member, Mr. Peterson was a member, and Mr. Brandigan, and one or two more. They were all seafaring men. This Conference has elected Mr. Henson. We have never given Mr. Henson any authority to represent us; none whatever. But Mr. Henson has been elected; and Mr. Edo Fimmen, who is a longshoreman, has been put on that Commission, and one or two others—all longshoremen; so that now even the Maritime Commission that should have been composed entirely of seamen and shipowners is composed of shipowners and nearly all longshoremen, with the exception of Mr. Henson. I say that is double-dyed treachery; and I blame Mr. Edo Fimmen for that more than anyone else; and if there is any justification wanted for leaving the International Transport Workers' Federation I say the justification lies in that transaction. (Hear, hear.)

There it is. They are not representing us; they are not representing America; they are not representing Australia. So really we are without representation; and we have been robbed, deliberately robbed, of a right that we secured in 1918. In those circumstances I feel that we are doing the right thing to let Mr. Edo Fimmen and the rest of the longshoremen know we are not going to be doormats for them or anyone else. (Hear, hear.) We are going to claim our rights and privileges. I thought you should know that.

Mr. McGhee : It is a most interesting story.

Mr. Cotter : Before you go on to the next question I should like to say, after hearing this astounding statement of yours, that some means should be taken whereby you should see M. Thomas himself at Geneva and have this thing thrashed out.

The General President : I think I can recommend a more effective remedy than that. They can do nothing without us that is effective. All that we could get out of that Maritime Commission we can get direct face to face with the shipowners themselves. (Hear, hear.) I advise you, after having adjured them for their scandalous conduct, to say : Go your way and we will do our business in our own way. I think you will find you will bring them to Mother Earth very quick after that. Because M. Thomas is dependent on this Union to keep the League of Nations International job running as far as seamen are concerned, and when he finds he loses the prop of this Union he will have that part cut out for him. (Hear, hear.) Now, the next resolution is from Grimsby. I am going to say with regard to this resolution that I cannot understand it. Let me read it :—

“ That this meeting of members of the Grimsby Branch strongly protests against Mr. Cotter holding office in our Union.”



What for? I think when a resolution is framed it ought certainly, at least, to give us an intelligent explanation as to the grounds of the resolution. (Hear, hear.) In my opinion it is an insult to our intelligence. Mr. Cotter has now been appointed in this Union for the last twelve months, and I want to know what they mean by that.

Mr. McGhee: I am not so sure that it is a very proper thing to put this on the Agenda at all. (Hear, hear.) I think this was work for the Officials at the Head Office to reply to Grimsby and tell them plainly what the situation was.

The General President: I want to say this in justification for Mr. Catherly, who has the responsibility of placing these things on the Agenda. If such a resolution is put up by a Branch and we take upon ourselves the responsibility of rejecting it, then that causes a great deal of trouble. Now, if it was some resolution contrary to the Rules, I would not hesitate one moment to rule it out; but I cannot say that it is against any Rule, though I can say it is very stupid.

Now with regard to Mr. Cotter. I attended a meeting in Liverpool about three or four weeks ago. The meeting was a very fine one, 80 or 90 men were present, and everything seemed to go very smoothly and pleasantly until the end of the meeting. Just when I was going to close it up, a man rose and shouted, "John Bull." He said, "I want to put a question: Do you think Joe Cotter is a fit and proper person after what has appeared in 'John Bull'?" I said, "Well, I expected that would be coming, because I have got a copy of 'John Bull' before me." Then I said to them, "Now, let us know exactly what your grievance is." The man said, "Well, 'John Bull' says he is no good." (Laughter.) I said, "Well, I believe that 'John Bull' has said something like that about myself." Then I put a series of questions to him. I said, "You were a member of Cotter's Union, were you not?" and he replied, "Yes, ten years." I said, "In that ten years did Mr. Cotter do anything for you?" He said, "Oh, yes; there never was a man who did so much for them in their lives as Joe Cotter." Then I said, "That is to the good, then. What is your grievance?" He said, "Well, the strike of 1921." I said, "Did you vote for it?" He said, "Yes." Then I said, "What is your grievance on that point?" He said, "We lost the strike." (Laughter.) I said, "Well, did you come out on strike?" He said, "No, but I voted for it all right." (Laughter.) Well, by the time we got that far—there would be about 30 or 40 Stewards at the meeting—the rest of the Stewards began to howl him down, and that was the end of the incident. That convinces me that it is easy enough for any one man to come to a meeting on an *ex parte* statement and move a resolution, and you can always get someone to second it, and it is carried. Now, before I can deal with any Official of the Union I want definite charges put forward. (Hear, hear.) And if I discover that those charges are true in substance and in fact, then I have got power to deal with it. I therefore suggest that, seeing that resolution has nothing in it except "discharge Cotter," it would be a good thing to move that it lie on the table.

Mr. Tarbitten : This resolution was sprung upon Captain Davis and myself at a meeting which we addressed in Grimsby. I may say that the majority of those men were Stewards; some of Joe's men who suffered during the strike of the Cooks and Stewards, and who have never forgiven him. We were faced with the same difficulty as you were in Liverpool, but you had the tact to defeat the resolution. But neither the Captain nor myself could; therefore the resolution had to come up from the Branch. But what I said to that meeting was this : It is too late for this resolution to come on the Agenda for this year's Executive or the Annual General Meeting—yet I find it is on the Agenda. But I hope the Council will let it lie on the table—with regard to Mr. Cotter, what has happened in the past is all forgotten—and that the Branch be told what has happened.

Mr. McLaren : I was at the meeting, and I spoke to the man, who told me outside he was satisfied with the way you tackled them over Mr. Joe Cotter.

The motion that the resolution lie on the table was put to the meeting and declared to be carried.

The General President : Now, Liverpool and Birkenhead condemn what the late Officials have done. We have dealt with that, and therefore that is off. (Agreed.)

The General President : Resolution No. 2—we have dealt with that. No further discussion is needed on that.

Mr. Jones : Are we dealing with the T.U.C. at all?

The General President : I do not think so. Now resolution No. 3 :—

“ That this meeting is of the opinion that many of the affiliations with Foreign Unions are a waste of good Union money.”

We have dealt with that.

#### OFFICIALS AND PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURES.

The General President : Then there comes this resolution which you have to consider :—

(Liverpool North)—“ That we the members of the North Branch of the Seamen's Union emphatically assert that no paid official of the Union should or will be permitted to become a candidate for Parliamentary or Municipal honours while they are the servants of the Organisation. If he or they desire to become a candidate for any such position they must tender their resignation.”

Captain Griffiths : On a point of order. Seeing that we have got on the Minutes of this Executive that we select two Parliamentary candidates, is it not necessary to have a Notice of Motion before you can dispense with it?

The General President : No. The question of the two Parliamentary candidates will depend on the future ballot that has to be taken. But this resolution is quite different. It means, that any man getting Municipal or Parliamentary honours will resign his official connection with the Union.

Mr. Ben Mollan : I think I had better move this. I do not know whether any other representative would care to do it. What was behind the minds of the members was particularly the question of the late Officials of the Branch. It was found, and reasonably found, to be correct that the time of a Trade Union Official in properly carrying out his duties was as much as any man who was an Official of the Union could do to attend to his own business. It was reasonably thought to be correct that no Official of a Union had time to attend to municipal or other matters. The question of the Compensation Act cropped up, the attendance on the part of the members on National Health Insurance Committees, the Court of Referees, and so on; and if an Official of the Union had to do all that, it was thought to be impossible for him to attend to matters municipal. It was also thought, and reasonably thought, that a man should tender the whole of his time to the body that was paying him as a Trade Union Official.

Mr. McLaren formally seconded.

Mr. Orton : I rise to support the resolution, with the exception of one thing, and that is with regard to municipal honours. I do not think we should deprive any Official of serving on a local Council or a Board of Guardians; because in so far as the seamen are concerned I think sometimes they are very useful.

The General President : Do not you think we could get someone else outside a paid Official of the Union? Take Captain Griffiths. He is not a paid Official of the Union; he is a member of the Board of Guardians at Cardiff, and he is a Town Councillor also, I believe. I am only mentioning this case to show that there are seafaring men who can be got to fill those positions without taking paid Officials of our Union away from their legitimate work. (Hear, hear.) I can tell you, Mr. Orton, that of all the cases I have known wherever any of our Officials have either gone to a Board of Guardians or to the local Council, it has been the ruin of nearly every one of them.

Take the case of Mr. McVey yesterday. What was it that troubled Mr. McVey? He is a councillor and a prospective candidate for Parliament; and when it came to a question of doing his duty he had his eye on the Union and his eye on his public work—as he called it—at our expense. He decided to throw in his lot with his public work. I have seen a good many of our Officials get on these bodies, and for every hour they gave to the Union they gave five or six hours to this public work—as they call it. The real interests of the men are neglected, and that is the reason why this resolution has been promoted.

A Delegate : I take it that this ruling does not apply to men who are doing work on local rotas at the Labour Exchanges.

The General President : Certainly not. If our Officials go to the Labour Exchange they go there to fight for the interests of our members.

The Delegate : And every man as well.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution ... ..	31
Against ... ..	0

The General President : The resolution is carried.

#### VOTE OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT.

The General President : The next resolution is simply a vote of thanks to the President, and I do not think we need waste any time on that.

Mr. Flett : I beg to move the resolution.

Mr. Street formally seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

#### MANCHESTER AND NEWPORT RESOLUTIONS.

The General President : We come now to the Manchester resolution—that is the same thing.

The General President : Then we have the Newport resolution :

“That we recommend the Executive Council to instruct our National Organisers at an early date to commence a strong organising campaign in the ports of the United Kingdom and Ireland.”

We have already done that. We have held meetings all over the country; we are holding them to-day, and we shall continue to do so.

The General President : Now No. 2 :

“That we recommend the Executive Council at an early date to put forward our Parliamentary candidates in any constituency where an election is about to take place and Labour has a reasonable chance to win.”

That is consequential on what might happen at the ballot. (Hear, hear.)

#### REDUCTION OF ENTRANCE FEE TO THE UNION.

The General President : Then resolution No. 3 :

“That we ask the Executive Council to consider the reduction of the entrance fee to the Union, and we suggest it be 50 per cent. all round.”

That is, to reduce the entrance fee from £2 to £1. If you do anything of the kind, in my opinion you will commit suicide. We reduced the entrance fee in Liverpool and Southampton last October; we did it because it was recommended that if we did so everybody would join the Union. It has had no such effect at all. (Hear, hear.) It has caused us a great deal of inconvenience, because all the Branches are charging £2, and the fellows who join for 5s. in Liverpool and Southampton, when they go to other ports they find great resentment amongst the men. The men naturally say, "Oh, I paid £2 to join; here is a fellow who paid 5s., and he is claiming to have a job ahead of me"; and there is great dissension. I am going to advise the Annual Meeting to fix a date—say, about October 1st—and to say that after that date the entrance fee will be £2 in every port. (Hear, hear.) That is what I advise on that. But have your say, any of you, if you want to.

Mr. Cathery : We cannot accept this. It is contrary to the Rules. The Rule says, "The Entrance Fee shall be £2."

The General President : Then it is out of order.

Mr. McGhee : Hear, hear.

#### FURTHER MONETARY GRANTS TO MEMBERS.

The General President : We come now to the Newcastle resolutions :

"That immediate steps be taken to ask the Finance Committee to make further monetary grants to financial members until such times as shipping is improved."

We have already done that. I got the Finance Committee to vote £2,000, and in addition to that a good deal of help has been given from other Funds.

Mr. Ash : Seeing that this comes from the Branch I represent, I would like to point out that some of the men on the Tyne and Tees boats—and I have been shipmates with a lot of the men affected—are good men attached to the Union. They have been in the boats for years and have never been in trouble with regard to contributions. They were brought out of some of the boats, and as soon as they were fetched out they were out some time, and then they got £2 10s.; I believe they got on the dole since that time although they struck. There are not many of them; and if you could see your way to assist them a little further until the company reinstates them, I am sure it would be appreciated. The company are reinstating these men as the others drop out, and if you would give them your consideration I am sure they would be very much obliged to you.

The General President : Your information and my information is entirely at variance.

Mr. Ash : How is that?

The General President : I will tell you. The Tyne and Tees Shipping Company men have been the worst lot of scabs that it has ever been my misfortune to run up against. The company say, " We want none but Union men " ; but in spite of that fact, when I come down to the manning of the boats there is not 5 per cent. of them paid-up members of the Union. Those men who were members of the Union we have given good support to. I want you to know that we have paid out in lock-out money over £11,000—that is, within the last six weeks. In addition to that we have cleared the books of a very large number of men who were in arrears. So do not tell us about the good qualities of the Tyne and Tees Shipping men, because they are not there.

Mr. Ash : I can pledge every man I have spoken to ; I have been shipmates with them ; the men standing around are *bona fide* men who have been in that firm for years.

The General President : And not paid.

Mr. Ash : They paid every single week to the Union without any trouble or difficulty at all. Some of them, I know, have not been that way.

The General President : I have had their books up here.

Mr. Cathery : Take the " Hadrian " ; five members were financial members out of the crew of that ship. Then take the " Bernicia " ; how many were financial members out of that boat ? I do not believe there were five financial members in that ship. When I was appealing to Mr. Mason to see his way to take the men back, I told him the position of these men and asked him whether it would not be worth while in the future to give our Newcastle Officials assistance to see that every man in their boats was a member of the Union. But take those two boats, I say No. With regard to the other boats, the Antwerp, the Amsterdam, and the Rotterdam boats, I do not know so much about them ; but with regard to the " Hadrian " and the " Bernicia " there were not more than five financial members in each boat.

Mr. Ash : I hope you do not think I am pleading for men who are not financial members. The men I am speaking about I can assure you are all right ; and if Mr. Clouston would make inquiries he could send you some definite information.

The General President : They might be some of the five Mr. Cathery has referred to.

Mr. Clouston : I was told at Newcastle that the backbone of the Newcastle Branch was composed of the Tyne and Tees men ; but if what Mr. Cathery says is true, I am afraid the backbone is very weak. But the Newcastle men do appeal earnestly for some further relief, and they passed that resolution for your consideration.

Mr. Burns : From my experience of the Tyne and Tees since 1911, they have had an awful job to get some of those men's money.

The General President : That is right; and you have been in them?

Mr. Burns : No, I have not been in them; I would not go in them.

The General President : Resolution No. 1 from Newcastle is as follows :—

“ That immediate steps be taken to ask the Finance Committee to make a further monetary grant to financial members until such times as shipping is improved.”

The Sunderland resolution says :—

“ That we, the members here assembled, endorse the policy adopted by Mr. Havelock Wilson and the Executive Council, on the action they took during the big Strike.”

That is all right.

#### RETIRING AGE FOR OFFICIALS.

The General President : Then No. 7 :—

“ Report from Finance Committee re retiring age for officials of the Union.”

You will remember at the last Executive Council meeting we decided to recommend to the Annual Meeting that all Officials should retire at a certain age. It was referred to the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee has considered it. The only difficulty that is in the road is the question of the superannuation, when it started. You see, the Superannuation Rule says 65. If you pension a man off at 60 he would not be able to get his superannuation until he was 65. We had a further meeting of the Finance Committee and we decided, I think I am right in saying—correct me if I am wrong, Captain Davis—that in order to comply with that Rule we should provide a retiring allowance, not from the general funds but from the Emergency Fund, until a man reached 65, and then he would come on the superannuation. One of the reasons why we did that was this : There were two men before us yesterday, Mr. Aldridge and Mr. Peter Kenny. I do not know what age they were; I could not tell you whether they were 60 or 100. I thought when I saw those men : How is it possible for you to render effective service to the Union?

Now, no one wants to throw an old servant on the scrap-heap because he is getting old. If that were so, Mr. Cathery and myself ought to be put on the scrap-heap at once, as far as age is concerned. But a man who is a Delegate, when he gets to 60, I defy any man, with few exceptions, to be able to give effective work as a Delegate. Take the tramping of docks; when a man gets to 60 you put him on to a four-mile course, and by the

time he gets round it there is not much good in him. That means that the Union loses money; because if a man's power is reduced by 25 per cent. or 30 per cent., the Union is losing 25 per cent. or 30 per cent. So it is essential in nearly every case, and I cannot see how you can make two rules; you must have a definite Rule; and what we thought in our wisdom was this: 60 for Delegates and 65 for the Secretary and District Secretary, because a Secretary can go on another five years longer than a Delegate, as he has got ample opportunities of sitting in the office, compared with a Delegate. Then we thought Head Office Officials at 70. Now, I maintain that 70 years of age is long enough for a man to be in my office. I want to tell you this: I am not retaining this work through choice. Far from it. (Hear, hear.) I would be pleased to retire to-morrow, because I have had enough of it. I have had 50 years of it. I do not want to go on myself personally until the coffin comes to carry me out. I would prefer to have a few country breezes before I pass away. So that I maintain that 70 is long enough.

Take my colleague, Mr. Cathery; he is 74, and he agrees with me he has had enough of it. And is it fair to the Organisation to have a lot of old men in the Central Office? I have thought for a long time that this Head Office was not getting what I call effective service. First, personally I am a cripple; a good deal of my most effective energy is gone; if I could get round the ports you will all agree I should make a good deal of difference in this Union. (Hear, hear.) Well, I cannot.

Mr. McGhee: You could, even at your present age.

The General President: Yes, I could, I am sure, even at my present age. I could, but I cannot. I can say the same with regard to Mr. Cathery. I could not have the conscience to say to Mr. Cathery to-day what I could have said to him ten years ago with perfect ease in my mind. If I said, "Ned, go up to the North Pole," I know what he would have said: "Well, I do not know where it is, but you have told me to go, I will get off to-night." (Hear, hear.) I cannot say that to Mr. Cathery now, because I know he is past that. So if you want an effective Organisation you have got to have younger men; and in fairness to the younger men coming along, you ought to give opportunities for them to step into the higher positions in the Union.

Mr. Cathery: Hear, hear.

The General President: That is my feeling. And when I say it, I again repeat I do not want any old servant to be scrapped because he is old. If it was left to my choice I would retire to-morrow; but there are certain things on the surface at the moment which I am vain enough to think require my attention; and perhaps a change in the government at the moment would not be the best thing for the cause. (Hear, hear.) But I have firmly and determinedly made up my mind that when I reach 70 my job is finished.



Mr. McGhee : Wait and see !

The General President : I say that in the interests of the Union. That is the only way, I think, you ought to look at it. And I hope you will decide on the lines I have indicated. The Superannuation Fund does not help us till 65 ; but we can from the Emergency Fund fill up the gap between 60 and 65. Therefore your recommendation is : That the previous resolution that was carried should be put into effect as early as possible.

Mr. McGhee : I think it ought to be made very clear to the Executive what they are doing in connection with this thing. At present the Rule—Rule 8—reads : “ Notwithstanding that Officials or employees may retire at the age of 65 years it shall not be compulsory that they retire at that age if the Finance Committee think they should remain in office after 65 years.” Now, we have Secretaries of Branches and we have Delegates in Branches, too, at the present moment over 65 ; and, indeed, I know that some of them are doing their work most capably and admirably, and, of course, we would not ask them to retire. But at the last meeting of the Executive it was suggested from Hull, and approved by the President, that some provision should be made for certain classes of Delegates in Branches who really were old at 60, too old for that class of work ; but in drafting this Rule, I did not feel that every Delegate at 60 years of age was incapable of working any longer, and I drafted the Rule in such a way as to amend No. 8.

I will read you two forms of it which have been suggested—first of all, by me, and then by the Finance Committee. This would be an addition to that, as some Officials may become unable to perform their duties as Branch Secretaries or Branch Delegates—as you know, there are some places where the Branch Secretary does the work of a Delegate ; one case is Cork, where the man who is the Secretary does all the Delegates’ work—at an earlier age than 65 it shall be in the power of the Finance Committee to retire such Officials at any time after they have reached the age of 60 years. Officials so retired shall be paid such retiring allowance as the Finance Committee, having regard in each case to the length and character of service of such Officials, shall fix. The allowances shall be paid out of the general fund of the Union until the Official has reached the age of 65 years, when he shall be paid out of the Superannuation Fund. The retired Official shall continue to pay his contribution as fixed in Clause 2 of the Superannuation Scheme until he reaches the age of 65 years.

That is entirely permissive, but there is a slight alteration : No Official at 65 would have the right to say “ I want the right to retire.” We can say to him, “ You are fit to do your work still, and you must go on until we think you are not fit, or until you are 65.” But it has been suggested that that should be amended in this way, which would make it imperative : That the Finance Committee recommend the retiring age for Officials of the Union be 60 years of age for Delegates. If we passed that,

every Delegate who is 60 years of age must retire. I submit respectfully to you here that, whilst we ought to have the power to retire him at 60, if we think he is not fit for the work, if we do think he is fit we should not give him a right to retire at 60.

Then it goes on: "65 years of age for Branch and District Secretaries, and 70 years for Head Office Officials." In the suggestion that came from Hull there was no intention to deal with anyone but Branch Secretaries and Branch Officials. "In the event of any Branch Official being retired under the age of 65 years, any allowance granted to him shall be defrayed from the Emergency Fund until such time as the Official reaches the Superannuation Scheme period, namely, 65 years of age." That is practically the adoption of the whole thing. The only difference between the two suggestions is—and I want you to be clear about this—that the man can claim the right under this suggestion to retire at 60; under the suggestion of Mr. Wilson we say that is superannuation, and that should depend entirely on us thinking he is not fit any longer to do his work. That was really the suggestion of Mr. Wilson himself at the last meeting. If you do not make it imperative, and I do not think you should—

The General President: I entirely disagree with you on that.

Mr. McGhee: Why?

The General President: I will tell you why. This Executive Council meets once a quarter; in the meantime all the Executive work devolves on me and the General Secretary.

Mr. McGhee: And the Finance Committee, yes.

The General President: The Finance Committee is a very useful, painstaking, valuable body of men—I will admit that—but you must not assume functions that do not belong to you.

Mr. McGhee: You forget that the Finance Committee consists of the three Head Office Officials as well as the Trustees.

The General President: The Finance Committee cannot retire Officials.

Mr. McGhee: If they are given the power they can.

The General President: But they have not got the power.

Mr. McGhee: I assure you in this scheme they have.

The General President: No. Anyhow, do not let us get into controversy about it. The Finance Committee is all right; I have no grudge against you at all. But what I want to point out to the Delegates is this. It is a most unpleasant duty for me to fulfil to dismiss any man from the Union.

Mr. McGhee: Hear, hear.

The General President : Whether it is for misconduct or whether it is on account of old age ; and I would rather the Rule be definitely laid down : 60 for the Delegates, 65 for the Secretaries, and 70 for the Head Office Officials. If I am allowed to do what I am doing now, perhaps I could go on for another five years. But I say that is not good enough.

Mr. McGhee : Why?

The General President : Because I am not giving full measure for the money paid.

Mr. McGhee : It depends whether you can give more measure than anyone else could.

The General President : I would do better if I could slip round.

Mr. McGhee : I know you would.

The General President : Do not put it upon Mr. Cathery and myself. Let it be an Executive resolution which will be adhered to. Then if anyone says anything to me I shall say, " Executive instructions." That is a far stronger position for a man to be in. The Finance Committee has already suggested in that document you have in your hand—on Sunday we had a meeting ; you were not there, I think.

Mr. McGhee : You have made it imperative. I have the resolution here, and it says : " The Finance Committee recommend the retiring age for Officials of the Union be 60 years of age for Delegates." If you make that imperative, 65 is imperative for them all now, you have considerably changed the whole financial aspect of the thing.

Captain Davis : You were not at the last Finance Committee. The last Finance Committee, while adhering to the Superannuation Scheme, put something forward which would meet the set of circumstances set up between the retiring age of 60 with regard to Delegates and 65, from the Emergency Fund. That is the position. It is the difference between 60 and 65. That scheme of yours was rejected.

The General President : The reason we did that was that we discovered we could not alter that Superannuation Rule for two years or three years.

Captain Davis : Until 1928.

The General President : So we put that in ; because it is impossible to alter or to amend the Superannuation Scheme at the present time. So in order that the Executive—

Mr. McGhee : Do I understand you to mean that this scheme if carried shall only run to 1928?

The General President : Yes,

Mr. McGhee: If you had said that at once I would have agreed to it immediately. I thought you were going to make it permanent.

The General President: No.

Mr. McGhee: Then there is no difficulty about that at all.

The General President: Now, Gentlemen, we have to recommend to the Annual Meeting to-morrow or the next day that the retiring ages be 60, 65, and 70. I want someone to move a resolution that, having heard the Finance Committee's report and recommendation as to the provision of retiring allowances, the age limits be fixed at 60, 65, and 70.

Mr. McGhee: I think the best thing to do is to read this resolution to the meeting and have it passed.

The General President: I think it will confuse the meeting.

Mr. McGhee: Listen to it and see whether it would. In my opinion it is very clear: "That the Finance Committee recommend"—supposing a member of the Executive got up and moved this—"that the retiring age for Officials of the Union be 60 years of age for Delegates, 65 years of age for Branch and District Secretaries, and 70 years of age for Head Office Officials. In the event of any Branch Official being retired under the age of 65 years"—which would mean a Delegate, of course—"any allowance granted to him should be defrayed from the Emergency Fund until such time as the Official reaches the Superannuation Scheme period, namely, 65 years of age." I would add, "That this obtain until 1928." I will move that myself.

Mr. Nobbs: Might I ask the Finance Committee, through you, Sir, whether an Official retiring at the age of 60 and receiving a grant through the Emergency Fund will be required to continue his Superannuation subscription until he is 65?

The General President: Yes, there is no mistake about that.

Mr. Mitchell: I beg to second the resolution.

The General President: Is there any amendment? Then I will put the resolution to the meeting.

Mr. Dench: On a point of information. Can you tell me what they are likely to receive between 60 and 65: whether it is 5s. a week, or 10s. a week, or what it is? A man might get 5s. or 10s. and have to go to sea again between 60 and 65.

The General President: That will depend on the state of the funds. If the funds go down they will be in the same position as anyone else; because you will bear in mind the Rule does not provide for retiring allowances for any Officials. It has been defrayed up to now from the Emergency Fund; therefore if the

Emergency Funds were wiped out they would have to wait and accept what the fund would allow. But at the present time I see no reason why the fund should not continue to function and provide the pensions that are required. But let it be well understood by everyone here that we are under no obligation to do that. We have done it for years, but there is no obligation on the Union at all. It is quite a voluntary act.

Mr. McGhee: Do not be misled even there, again. The Superannuation Scheme does provide, and that is compulsory. That is a different thing. But that is at 65.

Mr. Dench: I wanted to know about between 60 and 65.

The General President: It comes on to the Emergency Fund, and that is subject, of course, to the funds. If the Emergency Fund were bankrupt and the Union were bankrupt, that is out of it; you have to take the risk of that, the same as any Old Age pensioner and any member with regard to strike money. If you look at the Rule you will see the Rule says the money will be paid subject to the state of the funds. You will bear that in mind. Now, those in favour of the resolution hold up your hands.

On a show of hands there voted:

For the resolution	...	...	29
Against	...	...	0

The General President: The resolution is carried.

#### DELEGATES AND ATTENDANCE AT T.U. CONGRESS.

Mr. Cathery: The next item on the Agenda is No. 8; it deals with the question of Delegates elected at last meeting to attend the Trades Union Congress at Bournemouth, and their present position. The members who were elected at the last Executive meeting were: Messrs. Henson, Cotter, McVey, Spence, Clouston, Tarbitten and Le Touzel. What has transpired since that is that Mr. Henson has tendered his resignation as Assistant General Secretary to this Union; therefore I do not know whether it would be the view of this meeting that he should still be allowed to represent this Union at Bournemouth. Then there is the case of Mr. McVey. Yesterday you suspended him for two years from taking up an official position in the Union. Therefore, it is the question of those two gentlemen which has to be dealt with; whether you will appoint another two in their place, or whether you will let them stop as they are at the present time.

#### RETIREMENT OF MR. JAMES HENSON.

The General President: I think this is a fitting opportunity for me to explain why Mr. Henson retired. I think I ought to explain that. Now, during the General Strike, as I have repeatedly said, I was in a very bad state of health; and when it

came to May 1st and we were faced with a great crisis it did not make things better for me a bit; it rather made them worse. As you may judge, a man very ill and then faced with such a tremendous crisis as that—well, it made me much worse. Now, there were all kinds of rumours flying round; we were told by some that the Head Office was going to be burnt down, or pulled down, or some other outrageous thing or the other; we were going to be wiped out, and a good many other things.

Now, on the Monday I began to hear rumours of trouble about getting men on the ships. The owners reported that Officials of the Union were pulling the men out. There was truth in that, because it really happened in London. On the Monday morning the Strike Committee was formed; pickets were appointed, and Officials went out pulling the men out of the ships. By Tuesday morning I got word of a similar state of affairs in Liverpool. On the Wednesday morning I got a report of a similar state of affairs on the North-East Coast. Now, Mr. Henson during those three days had a conversation with Mr. Cathery. He told Mr. Cathery that in his opinion we ought to call the men out. That alarmed Mr. Cathery very much. Being the next in command, Mr. Cathery thought it was his duty to convey that information to me. Shortly after that, Mr. Henson came into my room, and I was waiting for him to say that we should pull the men out. He never said a word about it, which I thought was very extraordinary; if he could tell Mr. Cathery that was his opinion, why could not he have told it to me? Now, the following morning, I think it was the Wednesday, matters were getting very, very warm, and Mr. Henson came into my room. By then I had heard of what was going on in the Branches definitely. Mr. Henson said he had been talking on the 'phone to all the Branches. I said, "Well, what is the position?" He said, "Well, nothing has happened." That struck me as very peculiar. I was in a very irritable state of mind. I said, "Look here, Henson"—I was very forcible in my language, I may tell you that; very forcible indeed—"What game are you playing? What is the game? First of all you go to Mr. Cathery and tell him that we should pull all the men out. It is remarkably strange you never said that to me. And now you tell me you have been on the 'phone to the Branches; I have also been on the 'phone; I find out that the men are being pulled out, and you do not know anything about it. It looks to me, Mr. Henson, that some double-dyed game is going on. Now, if that is your game, be a man. If you think that you can run this Union better than me, for heaven's sake say it, and I will hand the government of the Union over to you now." He said, "Oh, I do not want anything like that," and so on, and so on. He got very much put out that I should have accused him of acting in an under-hand manner. He left my room. I did not see him any more; and the following morning he rang up my son to say he had resigned his position and was going back to Cardiff. Mr. Cathery reported that. I said, "All right, accept his resignation." There is only one way with me with any man who resigns—he resigns; he is finished.

Mr. Henson went off to Cardiff, or somewhere, and he wrote me later for an apology. I could not see that there was any room for an apology, not from me. I may have been very strong and forcible in my language; I admit that; but I thought this, that Mr. Henson, knowing the very bad state of health in which I was, should have had common sense enough to have gone out of my room, and then when he thought I was back to the normal he should have come back and said, "Look here, Wilson, that was a bad attack you made on me," and I would have been the first to say, "I am sorry." But he did not do that. I did not see that there was any room for an apology. I think the apology ought to have been on his side—he ought to have apologised for disturbing a man when he was so ill.

Now, that is all that transpired—nothing more, nothing less. I have seen Mr. Henson since and I have told him. I said to him, "Well, I admit I was somewhat hot-tempered, but I think the circumstances justified me in taking up that stand." Therefore, that was all that transpired. A resignation I will never refuse; I do not care from whom it comes, I never refuse a resignation. I will never persuade a man to stop in any appointment if he does not want to; because to do so, I think is child's work. When a man says he resigns, that is as much as to say he is tired of the work; and the sooner he is out of it the better. That is all that took place.

Of course, outsiders have endeavoured to make a good deal of capital out of it; but really there was nothing more than that in it; and there it is. Now, Mr. Henson has resigned and his position will be filled; because I never believe in giving anyone any second chances. I have said things to him privately that he understands, and I am not going to say any more about that; but if you want to know the facts you have got them all. But I do not think Mr. Henson resigning his position as Assistant General Secretary deprives him of any rights as a member. That is my view. (Hear, hear.) He has done nothing except resign. He was elected by the Executive Council to attend the Trades Union Congress, and I personally can see no good reason why he should not go. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. McGhee: That is, he was elected to go this time.

The General President: Yes, at the last Executive Council meeting; and he is to go this year. Now, with regard to Mr. McVey; he is in a different position altogether. Mr. McVey has been suspended from all office for a period of two years; therefore, we shall have to rescind the resolution which appointed him and appoint someone else in his place. That is what is before you now. Any questions any of you may like to ask with regard to Mr. Henson I am here to answer them.

Captain Griffiths: I have been waiting all through this Executive meeting to hear that. I am very pleased with the statement you have made, sir. Mr. Henson and I are very, very old friends; I believe every man on this Committee is a friend of Henson, from

the General President down. The statement of the General President that if he had retired from the room and studied matters a little—well, I do not suppose he would have resigned; because when you come to talk to a man who is as ill as the President was on that occasion, with the trouble he was in, you could not expect him to be perfectly innocent; because he was up to his neck in trouble. Personally, I am very sorry that Henson did resign; and the only thing I would like to ask is whether that resignation would have any effect in keeping him from coming back again into the position he was in—supposing he withdrew his resignation.

The General President : I have said that I said other things to Mr. Henson, which I do not want to repeat here, but as far as I am concerned it will affect me a lot.

Captain Griffiths : Seeing that is so, I shall not say any more about the matter. Mr. Henson has not asked me to speak on his behalf. I simply got up because he is a particular friend of mine.

The General President : I think there are men present in this room who will tell you this, that during that time I was the most irritable man that ever lived. I ordered Mr. Cathery out like a dog. I ordered others out. If they were annoying me on what I considered to be frivolous jobs I would brutally say, "Get out; do not bother me." You know what that is in my state of health.

Mr. Cathery : It is like "God bless you!" (Laughter.)

The General President : The question is : That Mr. Henson's resignation does not affect his rights as a member. I think we ought to put that on record.

Mr. Ley : It is possible Mr. Henson will not accept this. Had not we better nominate two men?

The General President : If you know Mr. Henson as I do you would not think that. I think you had better put that on record.

Mr. Ash : I shall have pleasure in moving that.

Mr. Jones formally seconded.

On question, motion unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Now with regard to Mr. McVey. I am going to put forward a suggestion. Our General Secretary will be retiring in a few months, and I think it would be a most gracious thing to appoint him to go to that Trades Union Congress. (Hear, hear.) That is point No. 1. Point No. 2 is that I will put my money on the old war-horse to put up a fight in that Congress as good as any man I know—I am referring to Ned Cathery; and I respectfully suggest that, as a compliment, Mr. Cathery should be nominated,



Captain Griffiths : I shall have much pleasure in moving that.  
Mr. Connolly formally seconded.

Mr. Jarman : In view of what has been said, I gladly withdraw my nomination.

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

### ELECTION OF DELEGATES, ETC.; LABOUR PARTY'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

Mr. Cathery : The next item on the Agenda is :

“ Notification of Labour Party's Annual Conference at Margate, 1926. Election of Delegates, nominations for Executive, Resolutions, etc.”

Last year I believe it was held at Liverpool, and our representatives were T. M. Walsh, W. Jones, Peter Wright, and Mr. McVey. I do not know what you intend to do this year.

Mr. W. Jones : Mr. Parkin was there instead of me.

Mr. Cathery : The Conference will be held on October 11th and the four following days.

The General President : We shall not have our ballot finished by then, I am afraid. But as we are paying our fees, and we shall not have the ballot finished to decide the issue, I would advise you to appoint four Delegates for the Labour Party Conference. I would also advise you to have fresh men. (Hear, hear.) Let us have some new blood. Will you now, please, hand up your nominations.

The following were nominated : Messrs. Ben Mollan, J. Cotter, Davies, Ash, Griffiths, Breckenridge, Cathery, Lang, Flett, Horton, Jarman, McGhee, C. Booth, Ley, Tearle, Le Touzel.

Messrs. Davies, Cathery, Horton, Jarman, McGhee, C. Booth, Tearle and Le Touzel withdrew.

On a show of hands there voted :

For Mr. Ash	...	...	19
For Mr. Cotter	...	...	15
For Captain Griffiths	...	...	15
For Mr. Mollan	...	...	14
For Mr. Peter Lang	...	...	13
For Mr. Ley	...	...	13
For Mr. Breckenridge	...	...	10
For Mr. Flett	...	...	10

The General President : Then Messrs. Ash, Cotter, Griffiths and Mollan are elected.

### LABOUR PARTY AND TREASURER.

The General President: The next thing is that the Labour Party will be electing a Treasurer. From what I know of the Labour Party finances I would not recommend anyone to have a go at it. You have the power to nominate someone for the position of Treasurer if you feel like it. I think Jack Ash would fill the bill. (Laughter.) Are there any other nominations for the position of Treasurer to the Labour Party? Then all those in favour of John Ash being nominated for the position of Treasurer to the Labour Party say "Aye."

The resolution was declared to be carried unanimously. (Laughter.)

### APPEAL OF TRADES UNION CONGRESS.

Mr. Cathery: The next item is, Report from the Trades Union Congress on the industrial situation, in which they are appealing for funds. It is mostly in connection with industrial disputes, after they have gone on to condemn the Government for what it has done, saying they are genuine working men, and things like that; then they make an appeal on behalf of the miners and their wives and children; all moneys to be sent to Eccleston Square.

Mr. Ley: I beg to move that it lay on the table.

Agreed.

### LETTER FROM THE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS' FEDERATION.

Mr. Cathery: The next matter is a letter from the International Transport Workers' Federation with reference to the Norwegian Seamen's Union.

The General President: They are not connected with the International Seafarers' Federation?

Mr. Cathery: I do not know.

The General President: Let them appeal to the Transport Workers to whom they belong.

Mr. Cathery: All right.

### I.T.W.F. RE FEES AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF CONTINENTAL UNIONS.

Mr. Cathery: Item No. 14 is, "Reply from the I.T.F. re entrance fees and contributions of Continental Unions." We have had some controversy with the International Transport Workers' Federation; but now that we have decided to recommend the Annual Meeting to withdraw I do not think we need discuss that. (Hear, hear.)

The General President: Then that is all.

### OFFICIALS AND SEA-GOING QUALIFICATION.

Mr. Allen: I should like to raise the question I brought up some time ago with regard to Officials holding positions who are not seamen, and to ask whether in future those who are elected should be seamen. There is a great deal of trouble being caused in that respect.

The General President: Will you tell me how many Officials there are in the Union now who are not seamen? I do not think there are any in the Branches. There is one man at the Head Office who is not a seaman, and that is Captain Tupper. Therefore, I do not think that question really now is worth raising. I hear rumours, any amount of them, about "This fellow is not a seaman, and the other fellow is not," but I do not pay very much attention to them.

Captain Davis: On that other point; we have not finished with it, Mr. Ash. Following on Mr. Allen's remarks, I do not feel myself particularly anxious to disturb any Officials who may at present be engaged in the Union. There may be some who are not seamen; I know there are some; but they have been appointed, and, no doubt, they have given their lot, and quite a number of their best years to this cause. It has been a subject which has been fully discussed at meetings all over the country, and I can assure you that it is the unanimous wish of the seamen that seamen in future should be appointed if any new appointments take place. (Hear, hear.) I respectfully submit that from now onwards when anyone is appointed to represent us in any capacity, he should be a seaman.

The General President: I would like to help Mr. Allen out a bit if I can. We have got one man who came to this Union as a boy of 13; he has never worked at anything else in his life, except as a Union official. In fact, I have two such cases in view. They came to the Union when they were boys; they worked as clerks in the office; and eventually they became Secretaries after 15 or 20 years' service. I do not think it would be kind or charitable to say to those fellows, after they have spent the whole of their lives with us, that they should be dismissed. (Hear, hear.)

I have another case in mind where at the most critical time in the history of the Union—1911—a man came forward and made good; he saved the situation in Cardiff, and he has been with us ever since. I see no reason why we should alter that. But I can advise you that in all future appointments for Delegates or Secretaries that the people appointed should be *bona fide* seamen. I think if you move that, Mr. Allen, you will find a good deal of support.

Mr. Allen: I will move that, and I will withdraw the first part.

Mr. McGhee : That has been endorsed by previous Executive and Annual Meetings. The very cases you have referred to were brought up and they were endorsed as special cases which were approved of.

The General President : Is there any harm in endorsing it again?

Mr. McGhee : I want to show you something that occurred. You will remember that, in 1912, Mr. Shinwell was a clerk in our office in Glasgow, and he applied to us to be a Secretary, and a number of Glasgow men supported him; but we pointed out at the time that the Rule was that he could not be so employed; and I do not think there is a Glasgow person who has been employed since then who was not a seaman, up to the present day. The two cases you have referred to were both specially dealt with by the Executive and by the Annual Meetings and endorsed and approved of, and no others.

The General President : I see no harm in moving the resolution.

Mr. Ley : I want to go a step further than Captain Davis. I want seamen of standing; I do not consider that one or two years' pottering about the sea makes a seaman. So we should give them a time limit, say, five years at the least.

Mr. Cathery : You cannot do that. You cannot do anything until you alter your Rules.

Mr. Martin : The question of the length of time for a prospective candidate was dealt with by the Executive some time ago. (Hear, hear.) It was then decided that they should appear before this Council with their credentials, and certain rules were laid down as to the life of the candidate before he would be allowed to be nominated.

The General President : I am quite easy on it. I see no harm in passing the resolution that has been suggested. Passing the resolution is nothing, Mr. McGhee; when it is passed it is passed; and it will not hurt anyone.

Mr. McGhee : Very well.

The General President : Shall I put the resolution : That all appointments in future for Delegates or Secretaries should be given to *bona fide* seamen. Then those in favour, please hold up your hands.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

#### HISTORY OF THE UNION.

Mr. Ash : Some time ago at a Congress we were at we suggested that the history of the Union should be written out to the advantage of the men who would come along after the men

who had carried on the work of the Union had passed away. We have no records to go by. Without saying a whole lot, I think the time is now opportune, when a lot of the older men are going out, to appoint a man to get the information and to write up that history.

Mr. Cathery : Did you never read " The Stormy Voyage," by the President?

Mr. Ash : Yes, I have read that, and that was all right. What I think ought to be done is a guide for the men in the different troubles to see the rocks and shoals so that they can avoid those rocks and shoals.

The General President : Mr. Ash, what you are now proposing was proposed two or three years ago; it was going to be the finest thing that there ever was in the world. For 18 months or more I struggled night and day to get the early part of the history of the Union written out. I thought everybody would buy it. As a matter of fact, I have discovered this, that there are a very large number of the Officials of the Union who have never read it yet.

Apart from that, we published a cheap edition at 1s. 6d. The first book was 10s. 6d., but that was too much. We got out a cheap edition at 1s. 6d.; some of our Officials have sold a very large number of copies, but the majority of them have not sold one copy. I do not know whether you have any idea what it is to prepare such a history; but I want to tell you, as one, that I do not want to try it on. I do not think it is worth powder and shot. That is my opinion. Because what is the good of spending money on printing a thing, all the trouble of writing it, and then when you have done it no one will read it? It is not worth it. Then, Gentlemen, that is all the business.

#### VOTE OF THANKS TO GENERAL PRESIDENT.

Captain Davis : I do not like to be getting up here too often, but I make no apology in rising at this juncture. We have sat here for the last three days doing work which has been most unpalatable. I am now going to move a vote of thanks to our General President for the manner in which he has conducted the proceedings. We all know full well that he is not as physically fit as we would like to have him; but I think he is entitled to this compliment because of the energy which he has displayed and the necessary courage also at such an important time. I have very great pleasure in moving a vote of thanks to our General President for the manner in which he has carried out the proceedings of this Executive Council. (Hear, hear.)

Captain Griffiths : I beg to second that. I think our General President has shown himself one of the greatest men in the country to-day by the way he has acted. No man on this Executive can say but that the General President's heart is as big as

a mountain. The General President's outlook on life is as wide as the ocean. And when we listen to him about forgiving his enemies for what they have said—well, a man who can forgive his enemies in that way is one of the greatest characters you can come across. I hope we shall see our General President at the head of that table for many long years to come. (Hear, hear.)

The vote of thanks to the General President was put to the meeting and carried by acclamation.

### VIEWS OF THE GUESTS.

Mr. Allen: Would it be in order to call upon our guests to give us a few words?

Mr. Parker: Mr. President and Gentlemen, it has been a great pleasure to have been here amongst you and hear for my own self how the business of the Union is conducted in aid of the seamen. I feel wholly convinced that if half or the whole of the seamen could have put their heads in this door while we have been sitting here and have seen the class of men working in their interests they would have been greatly surprised—as surprised as I myself have been. The average seaman, to my way of thinking, thinks that Mr. Havelock Wilson governs this Union with a few Delegates like those we have seen here in the last two days, and they do not get any inside knowledge of what is being done for them, and that is why they are not so confident of the Union as they should be. I thank you for honouring me in allowing me to come here and have an opportunity of hearing all this business, and I thank you on behalf of the seamen. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Cathery: We have Mr. Richards here, from the Australasian Stewards' Union. Would you like to say a few words to us, Mr. Richards.

Mr. Richards: Mr. President and Delegates present at this Conference,—It is not really necessary for me to take up any length of time in explaining the little things I have gained knowledge of since being present this morning. Unfortunately I was unable to be present on the first two days, but I managed to get here this morning, and I have spent the whole day here. I have learnt a number of things which perhaps may have slipped my memory or with which I have not had an opportunity of coming into contact.

My object in getting this invitation to come here was that I have always had great hopes, and still have great hopes, of bringing about an International Seamen's Union where we can meet at different times and discuss the problems which occur daily and hourly in the seamen's lives. There are such Organisations in different parts of the world which have been attempted, but they have not been altogether successful; and I think it is

quite possible, having the right men and putting them in the right place, that an organisation of that description could be of great benefit to the members of the sea to-day. Mr. Wilson has mentioned this afternoon the American Seamen's and other small Seamen's Organisations connected with the International Seafarers' Federation; but there are dozens and dozens of Seamen's Organisations which, if they could only be got together at least once a year—more, if allowed, or if the necessary occasion were to arise, when heaps of things could be done which are done in individual cases now—I mean they are done possibly in England, in Australia and in America, but they are not done by a collective body; and if these things could be brought up and discussed internationally, international laws could be made as far as our industrial world is concerned.

In Australia I have discussed this with men who are the responsible parties for controlling the two Seafaring Organisations, and they are and they have been for a number of years quite prepared to enter into negotiations with other Seamen's Organisations with the object of bringing about this affiliation. Before leaving Australia on this trip, which I have made for one precise purpose, I made arrangements with the President of the Seamen's Union in Australia and the President of my own Organisation, the Federated Marine Stewards, whereby I would, if possible, endeavour to get some information with regard to the feeling of certain Officials connected with seamen's affairs in this country, with the object of bringing about an International Seamen's Union.

For myself, I am a comparative recruit in the industrial movement. It is only during the last eight years that I have taken any interest in industrial affairs at all. During the last four and a half years I have been on the sea, and I have taken a keen interest in seamen's affairs. I have studied maritime law, and other things pertaining to seamen's lives. I have found it interesting, but they are hard to improve in a number of cases. I know how hard it is to improve the conditions of seamen to-day; and that is really why I have refused for a length of time any official position, because I did not feel that I was altogether capable, and I wanted to wait until such time as I could go in as an official fully qualified in endeavouring to bring about changes which would be beneficial to seamen at large.

I think if you will give it due consideration that an International Seamen's Union run on proper lines and in a constitutional manner, you will believe it is one of the finest things the seamen of the world will ever have towards the betterment of the organisation and conditions internationally. That would be a wonderful thing provided it could be brought about in a constitutional manner. I thank you, Mr. President and fellow Delegates. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Grange (America): Mr. President and members of the Executive Council,—I am not going to take up more than a few minutes of your time on this occasion, as I expect to have an

opportunity of addressing your full meeting later in the week. But I feel that duty leads me at this time to congratulate your President upon the manner in which he has conducted the business of this Organisation; and I feel also that the members of this Executive Council are equal to the task that is imposed upon them. I thank you. (Hear, hear.)

The General President: Now, Gentlemen, as a final word for the day: I thank you very much for the unanimous vote of thanks which you have tendered to me. You are evidently not built on the lines of, "Sack the lot" and "Sack Havelock." It is evident from the kindly sentiments expressed that you still think I can be of some service. (Hear, hear.)

I am very pleased I adopted the course of inviting one or two men to the Council who are neither Officials nor Executive Councillors. There is Mr. Parker, this young man here; I have told him that there is room in the seamen's movement for intelligent men. (Hear, hear.) There is great room in the seamen's movement for leaders in the future. I think it is a good thing to invite ordinary lay members to come here, because for over six years, what with the poison gas that has been discharged, it is really a surprise to find that there are any members of the Union left. Therefore, I am pleased to see Mr. Parker, and I hope he will continue to learn and to find out all about the Union—the good sides of it—and it has many—and also the bad sides, and discover what is the cause of the bad sides.

Then I am equally pleased to have Mr. Richards here. He is a member of the Australasian Stewards' Union. I know he came here with very strange views. He has been out in Australia for 13 years, and he has heard a good deal in that time, especially during last year, when the unofficial strike was on, and was most intense in Australia. He heard many views expressed that would lead him and lead any ordinary man to think that the National Union of Seamen in this country was about the greatest bum show there was on earth. Mr. Richards spent a whole evening with me, and I heard all he had to say, and he heard all I had to say; then I took another opportunity of showing him round the building, and I am sure there was no more surprised man in the world than Mr. Richards to discover that we were housed in a very pretentious building with a great staff to carry on our work.

Now, Mr. Richards is a young man, and he has been out in Australia, as I have said, for 13 years, and he has got a great idea of an International Seamen's Union. I would like to convey to Mr. Richards this one fact: There is no Union in the world that has done more to establish international relations for the seamen of the world than we have done. (Hear, hear.) We have spent thousands and thousands of pounds; not now, but for over 35 years. We have had branches established in the Mediterranean, at Gibraltar, at Malta, at Constantinople, and in what you might call the large outposts of the maritime world. We were the pioneers of the International Workers' movement, because it was our Union which first introduced Trade Unionism



into Germany. (Hear, hear.) We introduced it into Denmark, into Norway, into Sweden, into Holland, and into Belgium. So that of any Union in existence, of all of them, we of the Seamen's Union of Great Britain can say honestly we have done more than our share.

But I would like to tell Mr. Richards, who is a young man, that it sounds so lovely to talk of an International Seamen's Union; but when you come to put it into operation you discover that the difficulties are insuperable. That is due to many reasons. I have pointed out to Mr. Richards that he cannot measure this country by Australia. The total number of men on the Australian coast is only 6,000 men altogether; in this country, excluding the Officers, it is well up to 140,000. Not only that, but we have the Continent close to our shores, and we cannot have an all-British Union. We are certainly better off in that respect than we used to be. Fifteen years ago the percentage of Britishers on British ships was less than 50; to-day the percentage of Britishers on British ships is 96—the highest percentage of Britishers that has ever been employed. That is excluding, of course, the Lascars.

We have done a lot, as I have said, internationally. We have been in close touch with America; we have been helpful to America; we have been in close touch with New Zealand, and with Australia for years; but, unfortunately, views have prevailed in Australia that were too progressive to apply to this country. I know your Mr. Walsh in Australia; I have known him for years. He has an idea that we ought to have conditions in this country equal to Australia. Personally, I wish it was possible; but to me it is a dream. It cannot be done. If it could have been done, this Union would have accomplished that. It is not for the want of trying. We have tried hard and long, but we have never been able to do it, and I do not see any prospects of it being done in the immediate future. But I do not want to throw any cold water on any man's ambitions who wants to see a united seamen's front. At the present time there are a lot of people, and strange to relate in all countries, who want to make the seamen the doormat of the shoremen. We resent that, and we will fight that. My idea is that the seamen of the world ought to be united in some way or other in order to protect the seamen's interests from an international point of view. That, I think, will come in time. It is all a question of time—and it is a question of finance. But I am hoping yet to see a good connecting link throughout the world, and the very fact of us having present with us to-day men from America and men from Australia shows that we are prepared to work along that line, to extend the bond of friendship of the seamen's right throughout the world. (Hear, hear.)

Now with regard to myself. I have done my best to carry this meeting through with good humour. I do not think we have lost our tempers at any one time during the proceedings. We have had our very serious talks, we have had our jokes, but nevertheless we have done our work in a most effective manner.

I do not think any man can honestly complain and say that we have not handed out even-handed justice tempered with mercy. We have conducted our business, I think, on businesslike lines. I do not say we are the most perfect; and I thank the members of the Council for the very loyal manner in which they have backed me up.

Now, there is one thing that has been missed. During the crisis commencing on May 1st there was a band of Officials who stood loyally by the Constitution; and I think it is only fit that we should pay a tribute to those men. (Hear, hear.) First of all, there were the men who volunteered to step into the gap at Liverpool. It was not pleasant, because you had the ex-Officials coming round shouting, "Scab," "Taking another man's job," and so on. But those men stepped into the breach and carried on. Mr. Matt Tearle, Bill Jones, Captain Davis, Ben Mollan, Charlie Jarman, Breckenridge, Tarbitten, and a number of others from other ports, were good enough to volunteer to keep the flag of the National Union flying in Liverpool.

Then there were the other men who took up the local jobs. But apart from those I have to remember that in every port there were a number of men who loyally stood by the Constitution—(hear, hear)—and if it had not been for them certainly the Union would have been a thing of the past. I think the Executive members—I do not want the Officials to vote for this—should put on record our gratitude to those who were men enough to stand by the Constitution and Rules of the Union. I move that, and I will ask someone to second it.

Mr. Cathery: I rise for the purpose of seconding the resolution. When I come to consider the position in which we were placed and the anxiety and the worry, I will not say the President only in his Official capacity, but my dear old friend and colleague, when I practically for one solid week never left this office at night knowing whether I was going to see all the blinds down when I came the next morning—the worry and the trouble not only of the General Strike but of the internal disruption amongst the very people who were getting their bread and butter out of this Union—when I think of all that, I hardly know what to say.

If you were pouring out sympathy in large measure on to the President to-night you would not do him more justice than he deserves for what he did during the critical period through which we have passed. Heaven knows we thought that the unofficial strike business last year—and this has been going on for twelve months or more—was had enough; then we arrived at this crisis on May 1st, when every man who revolted knew what was the decision of this Executive Council. They knew it; they knew they were doing wrong; they knew that by their action they were trying to break up the Union. In all those difficulties, never taking into consideration the question of our President, who, I say now, was lying on his death-bed that week—the first week of the rebellion—I say those men who took up the cudgels and backed up the President of this Union—and I may say the Ex-

ecutive Officers and the Executive Council themselves—deserve the greatest praise that we can put upon them. If it came to a question of handing out Victoria Crosses, I feel confident that every one of those men would be entitled to the Cross.

I have risen for the purpose of seconding the resolution, and to thank those men from the bottom of my heart for the services they rendered to us in helping to relieve some of the anxiety from our minds during the tremendous struggle through which we have been passing since May 1st. I will now put the resolution. Will all those in favour of giving the best thanks of this Executive meeting to the Officials who stood by us during the crisis, please signify by holding up your hands.

On question, the resolution unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Gentlemen, the meeting is now closed.

*(The proceedings thereupon terminated.)*

# MINUTES

OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE

## **Thirty-Seventh Annual General Meeting**

HELD AT

**ST. GEORGE'S HALL, Westminster Bridge Road,  
London, S.E.1,**

ON

**THURSDAY, JULY 22nd, FRIDAY, JULY 23rd,  
and SATURDAY, JULY 24th, 1926.**

**J. HAVELOCK WILSON, Esq., C.H., C.B.E.**

**(General President),**

**IN THE CHAIR.**

## PRESENT.

*Head Office Officials :*

MR. E. CATHERY, C.B.E. (General Secretary).  
 MR. C. BELLEM (Registrar).  
 MR. G. GUNNING.  
 MR. W. J. DAVIES,  
 MR. F. FOLEY, } Trustees.  
 MR. R. MCGHEE,

*Bristol Channel District :*

		Ordinary Members.	Officials.
CARDIFF ... ..	...	Mr. J. Roche.	Mr. J. Henson, Jr.
BARRY ... ..	...	Mr. T. Jones.	Mr. T. Lewis.
NEWPORT ... ..	...	Mr. J. C. Marritt.	Mr. C. Jackson.
SWANSEA AND PORT TALBOT...	...	Mr. F. Whitty.	Mr. J. Dwyer.
BRISTOL AND AVONMOUTH ...	...		Mr. W. Bevan.

*Continent :*

ANTWERP ... ..	...	Mr. A. Kock.	Mr. C. Damm.
			Mr. H. Kraay.

*Home District :*

VICTORIA AND ALBERT DOCKS	...	Mr. P. Lang.	Mr. M. Driscoll.
		Mr. M. Kennedy.	Mr. M. Phillips.
TOWER HILL ... ..	...	Mr. R. Dodds.	
GREEN'S HOME AND LONDON CENTRAL ... ..	...		Mr. E. Kimpton.
HARWICH, LOWESTOFT, YAR- MOUTH, NEWHAVEN, AND FOLKESTONE AND DOVER...	...	Mr. G. Charrington.	Mr. T. Harper.
GRAYS, TILBURY, AND GRAVES- END ... ..	...	Mr. E. Bennett.	Mr. C. Nelson.

*Mersey District :*

BIRKENHEAD AND BARROW ...	...	Mr. J. Holsgrove.	
LIVERPOOL CENTRAL, AND DOUGLAS ... ..	...	Mr. S. Jenkins.	
BOOTLE AND FLEETWOOD ...	...	No Nomination.	
LIVERPOOL NORTH, SOUTH, AND HOLYHEAD ... ..	...	Mr. P. Rooney.	Mr. H. Decker. Mr. F. Riley.
MANCHESTER, GARSTON, AND PRESTON ... ..	...	Mr. C. Fennell.	Mr. J. H. Borlase.

*Humber District :*

HULL ... ..	...	Mr. C. F. Thompson.	Mr. C. McLaren.
GOOLE ... ..	...	Mr. W. Jeffrey.	Mr. W. J. Smith.
GRIMSBY ... ..	...	Mr. F. Hickinbottom.	

*South and South-West Coast :*

SOUTHAMPTON ... ..	...	Mr. H. Ley.	
PORTSMOUTH, FOWEY, WEY- MOUTH ... ..	...	Mr. G. Davis.	Mr. F. J. Powdrill.

*Ireland :*

BELFAST, DERRY, DUBLIN ...	...	Mr. M. Connelly.	Mr. M. Kiernan.
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*North-East Coast :*

SOUTH SHIELDS ... ..	...	Mr. R. Christie.	Mr. E. J. Williams.
MIDDLESBROUGH AND HARTLE- POOL ... ..	...	Mr. J. Burns.	
NEWCASTLE, BLYTH, DUNSTON, AND SUNDERLAND ... ..	...	Mr. J. McCann.	Mr. W. Graham. Mr. R. Wood.
NORTH SHIELDS ... ..	...	Mr. T. W. Thompson.	

*Scotland, East :*

	Ordinary Members.	Officials.
LEITH, GRANGEMOUTH, AND METHIL ... ..	Mr. W. Chalmers.	
DUNDEE, ABERDEEN, AND LER- WICK ... ..	Mr. J. Hilton.	Mr. J. M. Cardno.

*Scotland, West :*

GOVAN AND GREENOCK ...	Mr. A. Duffin,	
GLASGOW AND ARDROSSAN ...	Mr. T. Ball.	Mr. D. D. Irvine.

*Catering Department :*

BRISTOL CHANNEL ... ..		Mr. J. Good.
HOME ... ..	Mr. S. M. Horton.	Mr. S. G. Le Touzel.
MERSEY ... ..		Mr. B. Mollan.
SOUTH AND SOUTH-WEST COAST	Mr. A. Street.	Mr. C. Booth.
HUMBER ... ..		Mr. T. J. Nobbs.
NORTH-EAST COAST ... ..	Mr. C. Cotton.	
SCOTLAND ... ..		Mr. P. C. Cairns.
CONTINENT ... ..		Mr. W. L. Morris.
IRELAND ... ..		Mr. J. O'Connor.

*District Secretaries :*

BRISTOL CHANNEL ... ..	Mr. M. Tearle.
HOME DISTRICT ... ..	Mr. H. T. Bond.
MERSEY DISTRICT ... ..	Mr. C. Jarman.
HUMBER DISTRICT ... ..	Mr. J. H. Tarbitten.
SOUTH AND SOUTH-WEST COAST DISTRICT ... ..	Mr. W. R. Spence.
IRISH DISTRICT... ..	Mr. J. H. Bennett.
NORTH-EAST COAST DISTRICT ...	Mr. R. W. Clouston.
SCOTTISH DISTRICT ... ..	Mr. R. Breckenridge.
CONTINENTAL DISTRICT ... ..	Mr. C. Damm.

*Catering Department :*

Mr. J. Cotter (National Organiser).  
 Mr. W. Jones (District Secretary, Bristol Channel).  
 Mr. G. Woods (Leith).

*Fraternal Delegates :*

Mr. Andrew Furuseth (President of the International Seamen's Union of America).  
 Mr. P. Flynn (Vice-President of the International Seamen's Union of America, and Secretary of the Marine Firemen, Oilers and Water-tenders' Union of the Pacific, San Francisco).  
 Mr. E. Richards (Australasian Cooks' and Stewards' Union).  
 Mr. D. Grange (Cooks' and Stewards' Union of the Atlantic).

*The following Gentlemen were also in attendance :*

Mr. A. H. Findlay (Trades Union Congress).  
 Mr. Parker.

# Annual General Meeting.

## FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

THURSDAY, JULY 22ND, 1926.

The General President: Before we commence the business of the meeting, I am informed that Mr. Barnes, the late Official of Tidal Basin, is here. We suspended him from all membership, and I will ask him to retire.

Mr. Barnes: I have my credentials, and I leave it to the Standing Orders Committee.

The General President: You will retire, please.

Mr. Barnes: Thank you. Good morning, Gentlemen.

*(Mr. Barnes then retired.)*

### MEMBERS ENTITLED TO BE PRESENT.

The General President: Before we start with the Agenda, Mr. Cathery will read out the names of those who are entitled to be present.

Mr. E. Cathery (General Secretary): The General President is entitled to sit, and the General Secretary. I am sorry to say the General Treasurer, who is entitled to sit, is laid up ill, so that he cannot be with us. Then Mr. Gunning and Mr. Bellem are entitled to sit. Then Mr. Mat. Tearle, Mr. Harry Bond, Mr. Jarman, Mr. Tarbitten, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Clouston, Mr. Breckenridge, Mr. Henson, jnr., Mr. T. Lewis, Mr. T. Jones, Mr. George Jackson, Mr. J. C. Marritt, Mr. J. Dwyer, Mr. F. Whitty, Mr. W. Bevan, Mr. A. Kock, Mr. M. Driscoll, Mr. P. Lang, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. M. Phillips, Mr. R. Dodds, Mr. E. Kimpton, Mr. T. Harper, Mr. G. Charrington, Mr. C. Nelson, Mr. E. Bennett, Mr. J. Holsgrove, Mr. S. Jenkins, Mr. H. Decker, Mr. F. Riley, Mr. P. Rooney, Mr. J. H. Borlase, Mr. C. Fennell, Mr. C. F. Thompson, Mr. C. McLaren, Mr. W. Jeffery, Mr. W. J. Smith, Mr. F. Hickinbottom, Mr. H. Ley, Mr. F. J. Powdrill, Mr. G. Davis, Mr. M. Kiernan, Mr. M. Connolly, Mr. E. J. Williams, Mr. R. Christie, Mr. J. Burns, Mr. R. Wood, Mr. J. McCann, Mr. T. W. Thompson, Mr. W. Chalmers, Mr. J. M. Cardno, Mr. J. Hilton, Mr. A. Duffin, Mr. T. Ball, Mr. D. D. Irvine. Catering Department: Mr. J. Good, Mr. S. M. Horton, Mr. B. Mollan, Mr. C. Booth, Mr. A. Street, Mr. T. J. Nobbs, Mr. C. Cotton, Mr. P. C. Cairns, Mr. W. L. Morris and Mr. J. O'Connor. Those are all in order according to our register.

The General President: Then we have, as visitors, Mr. Andrew Furuseth, President of the International Seamen's Union

of America; Mr. Patrick Flynn, Vice-President of the International Seamen's Union of America and Secretary of the Marine Firemen, Oilers and Watertenders' Union of the Pacific; Mr. D. Grange, of the Cooks' and Stewards' Union of the Atlantic; Mr. Parker, an ordinary lay member, who is a young man, who has come to see how we conduct ourselves; and Mr. E. Richards, of the Australasian Seamen's Union. Then there is Mr. Findlay, of the T.U.C.

### REPORT OF THE GENERAL PRESIDENT.

The General President: Friends, you gave Mr. Cathery and myself a very warm ovation. Well, it is very pleasant to get a warm ovation after you have been discharged every day for six years. I do not believe there is a man in the world who has a greater record for being discharged than myself. I have been discharged at home, abroad, and everywhere; but the most remarkable thing is that those who have discharged me are non-Union men. Why they should do it, of course, I can understand. I have always laid down the principle that the men who are entitled to work are the Union men; that is, members of the Union; but the non-Union men evidently have got it into their heads that they ought to rule the Union. Well, I think the Delegates assembled here this morning will assert their right and say that those who pay shall run the Union—(hear, hear)—and not those who do not pay. After being discharged so often it is pleasant for me to know—and I am sure that will be shared by my colleague Cathery—that the men who pay our wages, or help to pay them, are not of that opinion.

Now what is the trouble in the world? As far as the workers are concerned, in my opinion, they are being led up the wrong road. When you meet Trade Union leaders they tell you they agree with you; but when they go on to a public platform they say something else. I think, myself, the time has come when that policy must be reversed. I hold that the one duty of a leader is to tell the truth. (Hear, hear.) It may be unpleasant to tell the truth. I have been telling the truth for three days before the Executive Council, and it has been very unpleasant to have to say what I have said during the last three days, but it was necessary. Now, there are a lot of people who will not display ordinary courage; they are always looking at the gallery and they are wondering what the gallery is going to do. I believe when they put a new piece on the stage it is generally the gallery that decides the issue, because if the gallery does not like it, so I am told, they pelt the actors with hard bricks, rotten eggs, cabbages, or anything else. I do not know whether that affects the actors or not, but it certainly has some effect on some of the men who presume to be leaders. They want to know what the gallery thinks and whether it is right or wrong. They play to the gallery. Now that only serves for a very short time. You had better have all the hard bricks, cabbages and rotten eggs and be done with it—you know the force and effect of it—rather than be living on a powder magazine believing that your thoughts are



in accord with the thoughts of the people, when, as a matter of fact, they are really not.

It was a very wonderful ovation which you accorded to Mr. Cathery and myself. I was wondering whether I was the same Havelock Wilson who is spoken of in certain quarters or whether I was not; because if we are to judge reports, some people have arrived at the conclusion that both old Cathery and myself ought to be pole-axed. (Laughter.) But here we come, and we find it is not so.

Now, we have had a three days' sitting of the Executive Council, and I have never seen an Executive Council so unanimous in their decisions as the Executive Council which has sat here for three days. Now, I know what the answer will be to that statement. They will say, "Oh, those are Wilson's satellites." (Laughter.) Everyone agrees that I am a satellite. Well, now, there is some truth about that, too. (Laughter.) I do not know much about astronomy, Mr. Furuseth, but I understand that a satellite—you astronomers will correct me if I am wrong—is a small planet which revolves around a larger one. Am I right, astronomers? (Cries of "Yes.") That is a rough-and-ready sailor's way of putting it. So that if being a satellite means that you are a small planet revolving around a large one, then, when all is said and done that is an exceedingly fine compliment, so that if anyone calls you as an Executive Councillor a satellite, say "Thank you, Sir, for your great compliment." They cannot quite call the Annual Meeting satellites. Here I am meeting to-day sailors, firemen, cooks and stewards; some of them for the first time in their lives have seen me to-day. That is true. (Hear, hear.) I venture to say that there are men in this room who have never seen me before. Then as far as the others are concerned, some of them have not seen me for years. They have reason to know, however, that I live. Those who are here to-day are the Annual Meeting, and I want to impress this point upon you: Nearly 70 per cent. of those attending our Annual General Meeting are ordinary lay members, men who are going to sea for a living. The rest are Officials of the Union, and the reason for that is easy to understand. We are a democratic institution—not a clean one, no, no. There is only one Union that claims to be a clean democratic Union, and that is the Marine Workers. (Laughter.) They are so clean that the first year they started it took £39,000 to pay out £3,000 in benefit, and they call it a clean democratic Union! So I cut out the "clean" and I call it a democratic Union.

You have assembled here and you have the most important work before you that has ever been done in the history of this Union, and, perhaps, in any other, for that matter. The most important point which you will have to deal with is: shall the Constitution and Rules of the Union be properly observed? Now, the Constitution is the aims and objects for which you stand, and if you have no Constitution you can have no Union. The Rules are to guide you with regard to the Constitution, and one of our Rules provides that no strike can be entered upon without

first of all taking a ballot vote of the members. (Hear, hear.) Now, that is an old standing principle with Trade Unions. It lived before I was born and it has gone on for nearly 50 years until within the last four or five years. Then we had some new people come on the scene—all democrats; every one of them democrats—who have so manoeuvred things to take away the privileges of an ordinary member of a Union and to wipe out that safeguard of the rights of the people to have a voice in their own destiny, and they have altered those Rules, giving the Executive Council of their Union the full power and right to call men out on strike without consulting them. Now, that is just about the worst thing that has ever happened, in my opinion, in the Trade Union movement. I know why it has been done. It has been done because some people have thought it was rather cumbersome when you wanted a strike to have to go to the trouble of consulting the members as to whether it was right or wrong. For that reason they have wiped out that constitutional power and put in its place the right of a few men to control the destinies of the others without consulting them. Well, on a true democratic principle I contend that that is altogether wrong—(hear, hear)—and the sooner the Trade Unions get back to where they were, the better it will be for all concerned. (Hear, hear.) Our Constitution is what I have described, and we have decided that on no consideration would we depart from that.

This year, as you know, we had the General Strike called, and some people expected that we would simply say "Disregard the Rules; down tools." Well, those who thought that made a great mistake. (Hear, hear.) We said, "No, we will stand by the Constitution." So on May 1st the General Strike was declared, and we took steps immediately—there was not a moment's delay; no one will accuse us of that—to consult our members. But some of our Officials were not satisfied to wait and see what the members had to say. They constituted themselves an Executive in themselves, and they thought they would take upon themselves the right to enter into a General Strike without doing the right and proper thing; that was, to consult the members of the Union. Now, I do not say there was any necessity for them to do that, and I will tell you why. You cannot compel a sailor, fireman, cook or steward to sign on a ship if he does not want to, can you? (Cries of "No.") Therefore, the proper, simple course to adopt was to say to a man, "Well, if you do not want to sign on we cannot compel you to do so; please yourself; but you are going to get no strike pay out of this Union or no backing out of this Union until we know by ballot what the majority of the members think is the right thing to do." (Hear, hear.) So that when men come along with a paltry excuse like this: "The members were worrying us to death about what they should do"—to me that is all camouflage. Tell the men the straight truth and the men will understand it.

Another very important reason comes in here, and it is as well you should understand it. Of late years many men have gone politically crazy. (Hear, hear.) They have got the idea into their heads that to be a Member of Parliament is the beginning

and end of all things, or they want to become a Town Councillor or a member of a Board of Guardians. They want to be Mr. Muggins, M.P., or Mr. Muggins, Town Councillor. Then they manufacture a lot of letters to put after their names, and the longer they can make it the better. I saw one man's card about a week ago and he had about five yards of letters on it. I was interested to find out what they meant; they meant nothing at all; they were just a lot of letters. Those men who are of that way of thinking subordinate their Trade Union principles to their political ambitions.

Now, if the political end of the job was paying their wages I would not object, but when their wages come from the Trade Union end and not the political end, then I say the Trade Union end has the first claim upon their services. (Hear, hear.) Those Officials took upon themselves a very serious responsibility. Since I suspended a number of them I have heard them talking about their wives and families. One man wrote to me and said, "I have a wife and ten children; cannot you give me my job back?" That is very pathetic, but what about the sailor or the fireman or the steward who is called out on strike and who has got ten children—is he to have no consideration? Have not his children to be fed as well as the others? So that that kind of "sob stuff" does not weigh with me. I had a man before me the other day, a steward 20 years in the same employ, called out by an Official. Now, that man has been three months out of work, and he may be another three years, because when he goes to apply for a job his papers are all right showing 20 years' service in the one firm, but naturally the new employer will ask, "Why did you leave?" Then he has got to tell the story that he came out on strike. Then the employer says, "I do not want you." Now, there are hundreds of cases like that, and when Officials are talking about their wives and families I want them to remember this from me, that the wives and families of the men called out are just as dear and important to them as the others. Those men adopted that course. I took upon myself, as the Rule provides, the responsibility of dismissing every one of them; a very tall job for a man to take in hand, I admit, but the Rules say it should be so. If I did not do that I should be neglecting my duty. I did it without any hesitation. I went to the Law Courts and I obtained an injunction, and I want to say that was done under conditions which were not very favourable to me, because I was lying at death's door, nearer death than life. Yet I did my duty, and I feel proud of the fact that I had strength to do it. (Applause.)

Now, you are the Annual Meeting and you will be called upon to pass judgment on my actions. The Executive Council have already done so, but you are the supreme governing body of the Union. You are greater than the Executive Council; you can reverse their decision if you like or you can uphold their decision, or you can modify their decision. It is all in your hands. All I ask is that you will carefully weigh up the whole of the circumstances and decide the case on its merits. As far as I personally am concerned, if you come to the conclusion that I was wrong,

very good; that is the end of my position, and I will not cry about it—not for one moment. If, on the other hand, you think I was right, well, I shall just carry on as before and do my duty to the best of my ability. Now, that is a very grave constitutional issue which you will be called upon to consider and decide.

There are other resolutions, too, of vital importance. There is the question of our attitude in politics. You will remember that some years ago we took a ballot as to whether we should join the Labour Party or not. The ballot was that we should join the Labour Party; but since then there has been a great deal of dissatisfaction growing up, and that is to be discovered in this way: the number of men who objected to pay the political levy, the number of men who have claimed exemption from the political levy; and if it goes on at the rate it has been going on for the last two years, there will be no one paying the political levy. But you have another indication of the feeling on that by what is expressed on board ship and in the Branches, and if you will look at your Agenda you will see that the majority of the Branches have decided to ask you, as the Annual General Meeting to cease our affiliation with the Labour Party. You cannot do that. Your function will be to do as we did before, and that is to refer the matter to a ballot vote of the members just to ascertain what is the feeling of the majority. If the majority are of the opinion that we should cease our affiliation, then it will stop; if, on the other hand, the majority decide we shall continue our affiliation, that will be done. That is a very important issue, and one well worth your consideration.

Then with regard to the International Transport Workers' Federation. The Seamen's Union, make no mistake about it, was the pioneer of the first International movement. I am saying that in the presence of an old friend of mine, Mr. Findlay, of the T.U.C. I will tell you why that was. The whole of our trade is international; we are different from any other body, and nearly 40 years ago when there were no Trade Unions as far as seamen were concerned either in Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium or Holland, the funds of this Union were used for the purpose of starting a Seamen's Union in each of those countries.

Mr. Damm : Hear, hear.

The General President : We started in Denmark.

Mr. Damm : In 1889.

The General President : Yes, in 1889, and we spread ourselves along the Continent. In some cases for a beginning those Unions were branches of our Union, but eventually they became units on their own. Then in 1894 this Union was the founder of the International Transport Workers' Union, so all the way through we have been the pioneers of the International Trade Union movement.

Now, after all those years I am bound to say that my view has very considerably altered from what it was 35 years ago. Thirty-

five years ago what we were seeking to advocate was pure Trade Unionism, with no other "ism" attached to it; but after we got well started and got under way for about four or five years, then came a lot of gentlemen who called themselves Socialists. Now, if they had been only one brand of Socialists it would not have been very confusing. But we had the Christian Socialists, the Catholic Socialists and about half-a-dozen other Socialists, so that really when you were dealing with those people you could not tell how or where they stood. (Laughter.) Well, it gradually grew worse during the last 20 years, and as far as we are concerned—I am speaking now for a good many of us—we are fed up with those people. We have got now to the reign of the Soviet Government of Russia, the Third International. There will be about 25 Internationals before we know where we are, because we have to reckon it up in this way. Now what was the first International? You have forgotten all about it. Now what is the Second International? Well, now, your memory is not very clear about that. Now you come to the Third International, and I suppose there will be a fourth coming by and by. When you have all these different things and you cannot distinguish what is what, you get confused; but apart from that our experience of late years on international subjects has been to pay, pay, pay, pay—(hear, hear)—all the time; and when you have paid all, you find some other gentlemen running the job who do not hesitate to abuse you if you do not happen to subscribe to their special ideas. There is a man at the head of the International Transport Workers' Federation called Mr. Edo Fimmen. Some people—I do not know why—have come to the conclusion that this man, Mr. Edo Fimmen, is a great man. Well, in size he is a rather hefty fellow; but I would not like to say that much about his intellect. He has not been a worker, as far as I know of; he was a Salvation Army Captain, and now he is the head of this great Transport Workers' Union, and his one ambition in life, as far as I can see, is to issue manifestos with his name at the bottom of them. Before the Miners' strike he asked Mr. A. J. Cook to inform the world at large that Mr. Edo Fimmen had all the men on the Continent in the palms of his hands and that he was going to stop food, coal, and stop everything. He said, "You tell me when, and down she goes." Well, I knew that was the biggest bluff that was ever presented to the astonished world, and I knew this, that he never had any instructions to do anything of the kind. His Committee never told him to do it, and poor old Cook rushes to the newspapers with a letter from Mr. Edo Fimmen, and the world was aghast the following morning when they read his manifesto. But I was quietly smiling to myself—what a bluff, and it was one bluff. Well, he has gone on worse than that, only his bluff has been called, and what has he done? He has done nothing. He has not stopped one ounce of coal being worked on the Continent or brought from the Continent or anything else. I am going to say this, that that sort of nonsense has got to stop either from Mr. Edo Fimmen or anyone else. It is not helping the Trade Union movement. Now I find that Mr. Edo Fimmen has managed to get himself appointed into a seamen's

job at the International Labour Office on what they call the Maritime Commission, started by seamen for seamen. Now, Mr. Edo Fimmen has very nicely worked the screw so that all the seamen are worked off that Commission and the landsmen have taken their place with the exception of one. We have been subscribing to this thing, but the Executive Council have come to the conclusion that it is a waste of money—(hear, hear)—to pay into a concern of that kind. It is for you to say whether you agree with the Executive Council or not.

Then there is another important point about Officials of the Union standing for political positions. The Executive Council have discussed this matter and they have come to the conclusion that if a man wants to be a politician, to make his living by it, we have no objection, but he is not going to draw his wages from the Union at the same time. He must decide either to work for the Union or for some political Association. If we pay his wages he has got to give his whole time to Union work, and from what I know I would say that if a man will devote his time honestly to his work he has got quite enough to do. I can find quite enough work to keep me going 14 and 15 hours a day without spending five minutes of my time on any other subject. (Hear, hear.) If that is the position with me, I take it, generally, it is the position all round.

I want you gentlemen not to be afraid; you have nothing to be afraid of in expressing your opinions. There is no intimidation practised here, and I do not think it would be any use for anyone to try that on seafaring men. You may have the fullest liberty to say what you think is right, but do not forget this: keep on the subject before you. The moment you try to discuss irrelevant subjects I shall be compelled to put you in order, but as long as you keep on the point that is before us, then you are all right—go ahead.

I want also to say that we are losing an old milestone. Mr. Cathery, my colleague, who has been with us so long, is retiring at this Annual General Meeting. That is to say, his resignation is before you, or will be, and he is retiring. In a way no one will regret that more than myself—(hear, hear)—because if ever there was a loyal colleague whom I have met, Mr. Edmund Cathery is the most loyal of all. (Applause.) I think he was specially built to suit my temperament. Sometimes I am a bit explosive. Well, with Edmund Cathery that does not amount to anything. Well, that is a very fine quality in a man; but more than that he has tried to understand my policy and I have tried to understand his, and between the pair of us we have not got along badly at all. And it is not a day's association; it is over 34 years, and that is a long time. I have not resigned to him and he has not resigned to me. We have never tried that policy on each other. Well, the time has come when he has got to take a rest, and when I tell you that Mr. Cathery has reached the honourable age of 74, he has not done so very badly. (Hear, hear.) But he shares my view that there must come a time when our energies become impaired, when we cannot give as much as

we would like. That is Mr. Cathery's view, and I share his view too. Personally I would not care if I was finished to-morrow, because I think I have had a good innings, and I think now a rest would not be at all bad. Well, I have got another eighteen months to go. I shall endeavour to keep the machine going until then, but no one will be more thankful than myself when the rest comes, because few of you can possibly realise what we have gone through during the last six years, surrounded by enemies of the Communist type and the Minority Movement brigade, but we have felt it was our duty to keep going in order to defeat those who would try to destroy something they had not created. Well, I shall be sorry when Mr. Cathery goes. It does not mean that he is going to quit this building altogether. Mr. Cathery says he will come down to see whether the building has slipped its anchor or not. (Laughter.)

Now, friends, I think I have said at this stage all that can be usefully said. I shall have a good deal more to say later in the way of explaining different points that arise from time to time. I conclude by thanking all of you for the very warm reception accorded Mr. Cathery and myself this morning, and also for the patience with which you have listened to my remarks in the way of report.

I thank you, gentlemen, very much. (Loud applause.)

#### THE AGENDA.

The General President: According to the Agenda there is the appointment of the Credentials Committee, the appointment of Tellers, the appointment of Standing Orders Committee and a Press Committee, and so on. I will tell you what I should like to do, if it meets with your approval. There is a resolution from the Liverpool South End Branch, and that, to my mind, raises the whole issue: Were we right or wrong in what we did? I am now studying the Press. The pressmen want to get away; they do not want to sit down here and stay all day if there is nothing of importance, but they do want to know exactly where we stand: Have we done right or have we done wrong? If you look at page 4 of the Agenda you will see the resolution from the Liverpool South End Branch. I think on that resolution the whole of the policy of the Union during the past three months can be raised, discussed and debated. That gives you a chance to raise the whole issue on myself, and on the policy pursued by the Executive Council. I know the Press are anxious, and the public at large, too, to know where we stand, and I recommend that you take that resolution as one of the first things to be settled, and we will regulate our programme according to the Agenda later. Will anyone move that we adopt that course?

Mr. E. Kimpton (Green's Home and London Central) formally moved.

Mr. F. J. Powdrill (Portsmouth, Fowey, Weymouth) formally seconded.

The General President : It has been proposed and seconded that for the convenience of the Press and others we take Liverpool No. 1 resolution as the basis for discussion on the policy and conduct of those who govern the Union.

On question, the motion agreed to.

### THE LIVERPOOL NO. 1 RESOLUTION.

Mr. Decker : Resolution No. 1 from the Liverpool South End Branch is as follows :—

“ That we, the members of the Liverpool (South) Branch, assembled this 22nd day of June, 1926, desire to express our sincere gratitude and full appreciation to our worthy and noble President for his sterling honesty, integrity, and determination in shouldering the heavy burden and responsibility of our Union under trying circumstances to himself. We wish to assure him of our unbounded support and our unflinching confidence in his sane and common-sense leadership. Further, we hope and trust that we may be permitted his advice and guidance in all matters affecting the welfare of the men of the sea for many years to come.”

It gives me great pleasure, Mr. President, in moving this resolution, which has been drafted by the financial members of the Liverpool South End Branch, who give it their full support. They stood loyally by the Union at a time of need, when things were so distressing, and it was their earnest desire that I should come along and speak on this resolution at the Annual General Meeting. I can assure you, Mr. President and fellow colleagues here to-day, that it is our desire and wish that Mr. Havelock Wilson may have a long life in order to guide us right through until we fetch our ship back again, as Mr. Cathery says, to its proper and right place. I have much pleasure in proposing this resolution.

Mr. J. H. Borlase (Manchester, Garston and Preston) : Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I have much pleasure in supporting the resolution moved by Mr. Decker. In doing so I want to say that so far as the seamen of this country are concerned they thank Mr. Havelock Wilson with unbounded gratitude for the stand he took up in their interest. No one thought of the issues with which the seamen were confronted. In 1912, when the London Dock Strike took place, the Rule at that particular moment was not taken into consideration. At that time there was a member of the Union who was a cessationist who was inspired to make the Trustees put money back into the funds which had been paid out to men who had been called out on strike for subsistence purposes. Although the President of the Union was lying on a sick bed, he realised the potentialities of the situation that if the members had been called out on strike without the Rules being observed we should in a fortnight have



50,000 members involved, and that would mean £50,000 would have been paid out. If £50,000 had been paid out in strike pay without a ballot being taken, any member could have got an injunction against the Union, and immediately have forced the Trustees to pay that £50,000 back into the funds. That would mean, as far as the Union was concerned, if we had to pay £100,000 back into the funds in a month's time, the complete break-up of the Union as far as the seamen were concerned. A very prominent shipowner came into our office a week after the strike had been in progress, and he said, "We were only waiting to see what action the Seamen's Union would take. If they had thrown their weight into the scale a number of shipowners who had been waiting and who object to the standard rates of pay would immediately have prevailed upon their Organisation, the Shipping Federation, Ltd., to do away with the standard rates of pay." He said we would have been out in the highways and byways at twelve o'clock at night looking for crews, and he said *we* should have got the men.

That is the position with which the President was confronted, and he had to consider that position. Every Branch was communicated with. Although the postal facilities were not great, the Head Office people worked overtime on the Sunday and the Saturday to get the circulars out into the Branches. The members were informed in the circular that a four days' ballot would be taken, and whatever the members decided by the ballot vote that that would be taken into consideration, and if a strike had been declared strike pay would have been paid. But a number of people who were prevailed upon by the politicians made up their minds that as far as the members of this Union were concerned they were going to stampede them into action. These people desired to anticipate the result of the ballot vote; they did not have faith in the rank and file; they did not have faith in their members, because if they had had faith in their members they would have been prepared to await the decision of the appeal to Cæsar. (Hear, hear.) The President of the Union took up this stand, which, as he said in his address, is a principle which has been in operation for the last 75 years, that no man should be called out on strike until he gets a ballot-paper in his own kitchen for him to make up his own mind without being intimidated as to what action he is going to resort to. (Applause.) As far as our Union is concerned, I think the system of balloting compares very favourably with any other Union in the country. No ballot is taken in the Branches; every man gets a ballot-paper at his own address. No Official is present, and he puts the ballot-paper into an envelope and it is sent back to Headquarters. I want to say that when the ballot was counted a J.P. was in attendance—an independent person—to see that as far as the members of the Union were concerned they were taking a straight ballot. (Hear, hear.)

As far as these Officials were concerned they did, in my opinion, a very cowardly thing. They got a number of minor Officials to sign a round robin; they all had to sign their names, and the unintelligent people are the people who were not as active and

had not the ability of those at the head of affairs. They committed men to an issue—a cowardly thing, in my opinion; and before the men understood what they were committed to. (Hear, hear.) As far as we are concerned, when they came to me I telephoned them and told them all about it. I said we will take action when Head Office tells us to do so, and not until then. (Applause.) I want to say that as far as the seamen's conditions are concerned at the present time that the wages we are receiving are the best in the world outside America.

The General President: And Australia.

Mr. Borlase: Yes. The rate of exchange as far as America is concerned operates against a man there. Although the men say they have been misled, and this, that and the other thing, and that the proletariat should have the right to dictate, we are receiving in the weekly boats 100 per cent. over pre-war and we are receiving in the monthly boats about a 90 per cent. gain. We have been able to hang on to our wages more than any other Union. As my friends from Cardiff know, the shipowners there have had 2,000 names of men who were willing to accept a lesser rate of pay if they could get employment. We had all these dangers to contend with. The only man who could see the issue in a proper way was the General President, and he protected the interests of the men at sea. I venture to suggest, with regard to 98 per cent. of the ordinary rank and file members, as far as Havelock Wilson is concerned, he has led them on the right path. (Applause.) I do not wish to take up the whole of the time, and I desire to second this resolution. (Applause.)

The General President: I should like to take the matter in this way, that one Delegate should speak for the resolution and one against it, and so on.

Mr. B. Mollan (Catering Department): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I was going to remark to the Annual General Meeting that the Executive Council unanimously adopted and with acclamation endorsed the whole of the General President's actions during the General Strike.

The General President: Forget all about that; we are discussing a resolution from the ordinary rank and file members. I advise you to forget the Executive Council just for the moment.

Mr. J. Holsgrove (Birkenhead and Barrow): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I have a few words to say on the General President's position with regard to constitutionalism. Although I am a firm believer in it, I stand by the man, no matter who he is, who acts up to it. I must say I take offence at the words that the General President used. He said he is out for constitutionalism. Why did he not display it four years ago with regard to that false step at Liverpool over the funds of the Union, when Adams and others were dismissed? In the papers it said there had been a serious defalcation. It does not matter whether it

was a shilling or a pound. It is a serious want of constitutionalism to turn round and dismiss Adams and others; there was no talk of the Executive; there was no talk of the Annual General Meeting, or anyone else—and he took them back again—the same men.

The General President : When you have put all your questions I shall have the greatest possible delight in answering them.

Mr. Holsgrove : Thank you.

Mr. G. Gunning (Head Office) : On a point of order. Is our friend speaking for or against the resolution?

The General President : I think he is quite in order. He appears to be challenging the resolution upon whether the Chairman has acted constitutionally or otherwise; you are quite in order, Mr. Holsgrove; go ahead.

Mr. Holsgrove : Thank you. This is the Annual General Meeting, which is supreme in everything. The General President is just the same as every one of us; he is subservient in everything to the Annual General Meeting. At that time he never bothered his head. In the Law Courts, where he admitted his neglect, he said he never troubled himself about the fact. I must point out in face of this resolution that this is a serious case of neglect, and one he ought to have acted on on principle. I do not think I have got anything more on that point, Mr. President, and I should like your answer?

The General President : I will quite forgive our friend, because he does not know anything about it. His principal charge is unconstitutionalism—that certain things occurred in Liverpool and I discharged a clerk called Adams, and then I reinstated him. I want to tell you, Mr. Holsgrove, that you do not know anything about it, but for your benefit I will endeavour to explain it. Nearly five years ago I was very dissatisfied with the state of affairs on the Mersey, due, in my opinion, to Mr. McVey, the District Secretary, a friend of yours.

Mr. Holsgrove : He is no friend of mine.

The General President : I thought you were here with a kind of brief for him.

Mr. Holsgrove : I wish you and the whole assembly here to know that I do not hold a brief for any man.

The General President : Very well, Holsgrove, I will take your word for it. That is all the better. Mr. McVey, as I have said, was the responsible party. My attention was called by the Auditor to the fact that the Liverpool accounts were not in a satisfactory condition. He was the only man who could tell me that. As soon as I heard it I myself personally investigated the matter. I also instructed the Solicitors to act, and you will

understand, Mr. Holsgrove, that when you go into a Court of Law you cannot say there, "I believe that fellow is a thief." That will not do. You must prove to the Court of Law's satisfaction that he is a thief, and if you cannot do that you cannot get a conviction. Do you agree with that?

Mr. Holsgrove : Yes, I do.

The General President : I caused an investigation to be made. I spent a considerable sum of money in that investigation, and after all my trouble I could get no evidence which would justify me in bringing the charge. But I was very dissatisfied nevertheless, and I ordered the dismissal of all the clerks in the Liverpool Central Office—every one, I discharged them all. Mr. McVey came to me, and this is what he pleaded, that this man Adams was only a junior clerk and had nothing to do with the accounts at all; that he had no responsibility, and Mr. McVey begged that he should be reinstated. On that, I agreed to do so. Do you say there is anything wrong in that?

Mr. Holsgrove : I say, with all due respect to the Chair and to this assembly here, that there was a wrong; constitutionally there was a wrong.

The General President : The position of affairs was very unsatisfactory, but I could get no evidence which would justify the lawyers in going into a Court of Law. Therefore, being unable to do that, the lawyers advised me that the evidence was not sufficient, and I was compelled to let the matter drop. I dismissed all the clerks with the exception of this young man, who, on the plea of Mr. McVey, being a youth and not responsible for the accounts, I allowed him to remain. That is all there is to that. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Kimpton : I beg to support this resolution, and for this reason. As you know, the majority of our members are at sea, and, in my opinion, if our President and our Executive Council had taken any other action than they did they would have been treacherous to the men who were at sea. (Hear, hear.) We know in our particular Branches that the trouble we get does not come from the *bona fide* seamen.

The General President : Hear, hear.

Mr. Kimpton : The trouble does not come from the men who as soon as they come home pay up, but it is the beachcombers who cause the trouble, who hang around the shipping office and wait on the lad of a sailor. You men know that is correct. We must not sacrifice our principles or our Rules for the sake of that class of man. (Hear, hear.) Our first duty every time—and the President will look out for it—is to look after the welfare of the men who are always going down to the sea in ships. Since this Strike many men who have come home have been into the office, and personally, without any endeavours on my part at all, have expressed their appreciation of the President and

the Executive Council of this Union for the action which they took in seeing that a ballot was taken of the members. I believe myself that it was the right policy. I have had 16 years' experience now as an Official of this Union, and I have watched it grow, and I have watched the work of our General President, and I have watched the work of his loyal Officials who have helped to build this Organisation up to its present standard. I strongly advise you, Gentlemen, let no outsider, whoever he may be, rule the destinies of the seamen, but leave it to the President and the Executive Council.

Mr. Tearle (Cardiff): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I am very pleased to associate myself with this resolution this morning, coming from the South End Branch of Liverpool. It says that we desire to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to our worthy President. This resolution, coming from the South End of Liverpool, to my mind expresses the gratitude not only of the members of the South End of Liverpool Branch but of every Trade Union there is in the British Empire. I would go so far as to say that the resolution in itself expressed the gratitude of the T.U.C. They are all pleased at the attitude which the Sailors' and Firemen's Union took up under the guidance of their President and their Executive Council. I ask this question: What else could you do under the circumstances? The Executive Council had, a fortnight previous to the General Strike, assembled in this very room, and laid it down most distinctly that there should be no departure from the Rules and Regulations that were made at the Annual General Meeting. Why should any section of the Officials take it upon themselves to go out of their way to call the seamen out against the instructions of the Executive Council? Our friend, Mr. Kimpton, has made use of the remark, "What about the men that are at sea?" (Hear, hear.) That is a very important point. What about the men who are at sea? When they went away on their voyages they left the Union intact on the understanding that the Rules and Regulations of the Union would be carried out.

The General President: Hear, hear.

Mr. Tearle: Not only the Union, but their wives and families. The destinies of their wives and families were in our charge. The funds of the Union belonged to these 50,000 men who were travelling the seas; it was left in our care and we were responsible for it. What would have been the answer if we had followed the dictates of the Officials who took the action they did? What would have been our position to-day? We should have been destroyed as a Union; we should have had no Constitution left; we should have had no Union left; we should have had no agreements left. To-day our Union stands intact; our agreements stand intact, and we have done nothing but carry out the Rules and Regulations which govern our Union.

The General President: That is right.

Mr. Tearle: There has been a great cry up and down the country about the wives and children of a certain section of the workers. No one says anything about the wives and children of the sailors, firemen, cooks and stewards. It is the miners' wives and children, and no one else. I want to say to this Conference, without the fear of contradiction, had the leaders of the miners adopted the same common-sense policy that we took in our Organisation this General Strike would not have been brought about. This tragedy in the Trade Union movement would not have been brought about. But what is the position? People say we have no right to say anything. Many people say we have no right to say anything about the Miners' Strike. I say we have every right; it is a national question; this is a national tragedy. The men of the sea I hope will cut themselves adrift from the politicians and from the protagonists in the Trade Union movement.

Captain Davis (Swansea): Mr. President and fellow Seamen, it gives me very great pleasure to support the resolution, and I cannot help recognising the latter portion, namely:—

“ Further, we hope and trust that we may be permitted his advice and guidance in all matters affecting the men of the sea for many years to come.”

We wish to assure our General President of our unbounded support and our unfailing confidence in his sane and common-sense leadership. That also applies, of course, to the Executive Council. I cannot help, Mr. President, but attach the greatest possible importance to this gathering, because we hear quite a lot about the importance of different industries; we see the papers choc-a-block full of the activities of certain people, but I am going to claim with confidence that we represent the greatest industry in this country. (Hear, hear.) I feel proud to think in conjunction with all of you that we have played our part in the days that have gone in building up this Union, and that we have done something at least of which we have a right to be proud. Now, what about our men and the honour we have in representing them? When Mr. Baldwin granted that subsidy there was only about a two and a half weeks' food supply in this country. I have said it before, and I say it this morning, that it was up to those men whom you have the honour to represent here this morning to see that this food was brought into this country, so that the inhabitants should be kept alive. I am just saying that, friends, to satisfy us all that we are representing a most important body of men. Furthermore, Mr. President, we are here this morning to thank you and the Executive Council for safeguarding the best interests of those men during the most trying times in the history of this country. Never mind the Great War; civil war is worse than that.

The General President: Hear, hear.

Captain Davis: I submit by cool, calm judgment, and strict adherence to the Rules, with courage and tenacity which it

requires, the seamen of this country are indebted to those who took that stand on that auspicious occasion. It was unique. Let me tell you why I stand here to support that action. You remember when the Strike was called on that memorable Saturday. You had all your men travelling the ocean, as Mr. Tearle has said, leaving the custody of their affairs in your hands. For many years you have built up this movement, but you do subscribe your money; you do subscribe your time and you do suffer handicap after handicap so that this Union should be perfected and act as a bulwark in safeguarding the best interests of our men. On that memorable occasion, friends, I do not think it is a matter for discussion, it was in the balance as to whether our men, the men of the sea, were to have that bulwark safeguarded or whether they were to be scattered without a Union and without an Association and without any common understanding amongst themselves; and if it was not a great duty that devolved upon the General President to carry out faithfully and well the functions of the Executive Council and the Rules, then I am a fit subject for a lunatic asylum.

Prior to the General Strike the Executive Council sat and they decided that a certain course and policy should be adopted. Unfortunately, there were certain men who sat here who ratified it and said it was the only policy we could adopt; but unfortunately those men were the first people who defeated their own resolution and the common understanding which had been come to on that occasion. The Strike took place. I will tell you one reason, friends, this morning why I thought that the Executive Council's finding was right, and the reason why I was not prepared, as one who sat here in conjunction with the President and the Executive Council, to hand over the funds of those good men and their future destiny, because I could see that so long as the miners fought the mineowners I did not care, but when they were talking about bringing the British Government to its knees I thought, what is going to become of our men? (Hear, hear.) You cannot fight the British Government, whether it be Ramsay MacDonald's Government, Baldwin's Government, or Lloyd George's Government. It is the voice of the democracy of this country. (Hear, hear.) I was not going to ask my sailor friends to be a party to throwing away all that they held dear—their homes, and their wives and families—in such a futile attempt.

We have a Union, and I say, friends, that it would have been criminal for the President to have done otherwise than he did. Let me say this morning to Mr. Findlay that I have no time to breathe any spirit of hatred and jealousy which is being disseminated amongst us, and which has been brought about by wild and desperate statements by wild and desperate men. I want to replace it by a friendly understanding. What I am concerned about are the interests of the men of the sea. They would have been ostracised from society, cut off from their families. It was all dependent upon Mr. Havelock Wilson and the Executive Council. What a charge, what a duty. I feel this morning, as one who took my part, that we have done the right thing. All

I have got to say finally is this, that it takes no ability to break down; it takes no ability to criticise; I am not here to criticise; but it takes something to construct, and I feel sure that we all must admit, friends, that our General President and the Executive Council took the right course. Let me say, finally, Mr. President, as a loyal member of the Union and not a member of the Minority Movement, but one of the toilers of the sea from my earliest days, that I hope the Trade Union movement is not a barren tree. Unfortunately, it is beset by a jungle of adverse growths. I do hope this morning, brother seamen, that you will say with one voice that the interests of those men that you have the honour to represent have been safeguarded in a sane and common-sense way, which will redound to your credit and to the best interests of those men who are entitled to all they can get. (Applause.)

Mr. R. Dodds (Tower Hill): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I wish to speak in support of the resolution from the Liverpool South End Branch in thanking our General President for the stand he took up at the time of the General Strike. I was one of the unfortunate persons who had to walk out. When we arrived here in London a man to whom we looked for guidance walked down to our ship and he said, "Come out; there is a strike." Now what were we to know? There was no Press; there was no one to tell us. You know what the average sailor is. We ran like a lot of rabbits. I am very glad of the action that the President took and for the firm stand he made, and I am sure that all the members of the Tower Hill Branch—not the beachcombers—endorse what I say. (Applause.)

Mr. James Roche (Cardiff): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I wish to endorse what Mr. Tearle has said, but there are a few points which, perhaps, Mr. Tearle has forgotten, seeing that he was District Secretary for the Bristol Channel at the time. I happened to be at home from sea. Previous to the Strike I had done my utmost to get a job, because I had a slight idea of what it was going to terminate in, but I could not possibly get away and I had to stay at home. Through remaining at home I came in contact with quite a lot of the seamen in the Bristol Channel. As the Head Office know, the number of financial members in our Branch is enormous in comparison with other Branches. Those men who I saw in the Cardiff Branch wish me to tender their gratefulness and gratitude to our worthy President, Mr. Havelock Wilson, for the admirable attitude he adopted during the Strike. (Applause.) Not only on behalf of the members of my Branch but for myself, I wish to associate myself with the resolution. (Applause.)

Mr. S. Jenkins (Liverpool): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, it gives me great pleasure to speak in support of this resolution, especially coming as it does from the trouble quarter, Liverpool. I feel that no one more than myself, as an ordinary member, was more conversant with the activities previous to the Strike, during the Strike, and shortly after the Strike. I must say it was a very trying time which the General President passed through, and the Executive Council.



The way they shouldered the burden and the way they shouldered the responsibility was wonderful. I feel sure that in spite of all the intellectuals in the Trade Union movement there was not another more fitted or proved himself more worthy of the position.

As regards the General Strike, I happened to be employed on a West Ocean liner. I was also in touch with many men on other ships in Montreal, and the general feeling of the men was that the whole organisation of the General Strike in the first place was entirely wrong, because no man could claim to be a democrat and yet approve of the action of five or six men having the power to say that two and a half million Trade Unionists should come out on strike at a given time. If that is not a wrong thing then surely nothing is wrong. If the Trade Union movement was sincere, and with all due respect to Mr. Findlay—if the T.U.C. were sincere, if they were right and if they were honest in their intentions—why did not they, as anyone else would have done in their position, ballot the members of the Trade Union movement as soon as the subsidy was given to the miners, knowing that once the subsidy was withdrawn on May 1st, whether they liked it or not, the whole of the Trade Union movement would either have to finance the miners or give them moral assistance? They did not do it, and our men saw it from that point of view. They also saw it from another point of view. How, in the name of everything that is good, can you hope to win a strike when more men are unemployed than are employed? To-day we have a supply of men exceeding the demand by two or three times.

The General President : There are 1,600,000 men out of work.

Mr. Jenkins : I mean the seafaring industry. How, in the name of everything that is good can you hope sectionally and nationally to win a strike in face of those facts? What is the use of men appealing to the detriment of the seamen to fight when they have not got a dog's chance of winning? I suggest to you that the time for a strike in any industry, seafaring or otherwise, is when the conditions are more favourable than they are to-day. If we take the unofficial strike of last year, what did it end with? We did not get an increase of £5 a month, or anything like that. The only thing our men got was poverty, suffering and misery. The suffering fell upon their wives and children—those who are least able to bear it. The men who were making the bid in the name of sincerity and honesty, what was it for? Only the lust for power and the lust for authority. What did they care for the interests of the seamen so long as they achieved their object?

Coming now to the General Strike, we canvassed the opinion of the men on board the ships, and Mr. Spence will bear me out, and Mr. Booth also. They were most emphatic in saying, "We will stay on board." We said to them, "If you want to go out, get out; we are not going to stop you; every man is a free agent." We supported the General President. I shall never forget the day when we got the message across the aerials that the General President had declined to call us out on strike because

the ballot was against it, and I shall never forget the gratitude and the feeling of those men as they expressed to me, in the ship's fore-castle and in the leading hands' room, when they thanked Mr. Wilson for having prevented them from being forced into unemployment; because, after all, when men have been unemployed for two years I care not how strong the Trade Union members may be, a hungry stomach is going to grab at anything. That is what the other Trade Union movements failed to take into consideration—the human nature and the human element in men.

It gives me great pleasure to speak in support of this resolution, coming as it does from Liverpool, because Liverpool has been a stormy centre during the last six years. (Applause.)

Mr. F. J. Powdrill (Portsmouth, Fowey, Weymouth): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I want to say that Mr. Spence, myself, and all the Officials canvassed all those men on ships, and in no one case was there a man who had anything like a book at all who wanted to come out on strike; they would have refused to have come out if they had been ordered to come out. In every case they were only too pleased to know that they were advised to stop and carry on their duties. I believe it would have been the greatest folly to have attempted to call those men out, because they would not have come out. What would have been the position then? We should have been absolutely silly to have tried it. I am sure to-day those men are only too thankful for the action which was adopted. (Applause.)

Mr. C. Jarman (District Secretary, Mersey District): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I could say quite a lot, but to save the time of the Conference I will sum it up in as few words as possible. I think it would be better if I gave you my experience in New York. In New York I was able to get in contact with men from every branch of the Union and in every part of the world. Mr. Grange, of the American Seamen's Union, and myself, immediately we received the news that a strike was called and we heard of the action taken by our Executive Council, we took what is known there as a straw vote, because we could not take a proper vote. We just called meetings of crews in the fore-castles, in the glory-holes and the kitchens. Ninety-nine per cent. of the men were of the opinion that they did not want to strike, and that if we called them out they would not come out. In some instances they told us that they had petitioned the Companies to allow them to remain on board the ships, and they asked the shipowners to pay the crews off in Cherbourg rather than chance coming to Southampton, so that they would not have the chance of being called out on strike.

I do not think we need say anything more, because that will bring home to the Conference the general feeling of the men in the ships who did not want a strike. (Applause.)

Captain Tupper (Executive Council): Mr. President and Delegates, I speak as a member of your Executive Council for

the past 17 years. The policy of this Union has been kept, I hope, intact by the Executive Councils we have had. Relating to the last strike, we found, from the men who came here to this building, that although they were drawn out unofficially they were looking for the blood of the men who drew them out. They did not wish to come out. I have never yet heard of a sailor or fireman, cook or steward during this crisis who voluntarily came out on strike; only by intimidation did they come out. I do appeal, as one of the Executive Council, that the ordinary members of this Union will support the Executive Council in keeping to the Rules and Regulations, because once our Rules are broken our Constitution has gone, and we are at the mercy of any enemy who may attack us. We want to go on under the advice of our President, who guides the Executive Council. He said that the Executive Council were satellites. We are not taking it like that, because every one of us has his own free and open opinion on that Executive Council. (Hear, hear.) When we remember that we have a free and open opinion and can voice our opinions upon that Executive Council you will see that we are not under the thumb of the General President, as his enemies would like you to believe.

As long as you support the Executive Council and the General President you can rest assured that the whole Union, which has sailed along so well in the past, will sail on in the future; and when our dear old friend the General President has to leave us, may the Union be left in the hands of those who will follow his policy, the same policy as he adopted in this last Strike.

The General President: It seems to me you are all running on the same lines. Pressmen have to get their copy written up as early as possible after mid-day. I should like to have something different now. Now, we have with us Mr. Andrew Furuseth, the President of the International Seamen's Union of America. He is an outsider, and I think it would be a good thing to have an outsider's point of view just to see what he thinks about it. Then after we have heard Mr. Furuseth I would recommend that we take the vote.

Mr. Andrew Furuseth (President of the International Seamen's Union of America), who was received with applause, said: Mr. President and members of the National Seamen's Union, when I got the information through the Press that the Strike was on, I said, "Now what, in the name of Heaven, is going to happen in England? What are the seamen going to do?" I looked at your Constitution and I found that the Constitution provided for one specific thing. Now, in my opinion, Constitutions are written for the purpose of protecting the absent. (Hear, hear.) Seamen are a migratory people, and the seamen have to depend upon their Constitution. Now, the Constitution is a dead thing unless you have someone who puts life and spirit into it. You must live according to it, or you must die. (Hear, hear.) The thing that you have promised yourselves is the thing that you cannot violate; if you want to violate it you must wait until you have an opportunity of changing it. No one who is the

President, or no one who is on the Executive Council, has any right to do that. (Hear, hear.) They are placed on the watch-towers for the purpose of looking after the interests of those who are not there. Those men who get caught in the wild enthusiasm of the moment are not the kind of men that you can depend upon. You must live according to your laws. If you do not like the law which says that you must take a ballot before you go on strike, then, now is the time to change it—(hear, hear)—and not out on the streets. You have got the power here, as I understand, under your Constitution, to change that if you want to change it. If you want to put your destiny in the hands of a few men, go on and do it—if you are unwise enough to do it. Up to the present you have had the wisdom to abide by the Constitution and the wisdom to abide by the rulings laid down by the Constitution; and, as a seaman interested in seamen, and as a man interested in the maintenance of sea power, I congratulate you Officials, and I especially congratulate your President, for having the backbone to do that which he did do, and which if he had not done it he would have deserved not only your contempt, but mine, and I tell you frankly that, as far as I am concerned, he would have got it. (Applause.)

The General President: Is it your pleasure that I now take the vote?

Cries of "Yes."

The General President: It has been agreed that I now take the vote. You know the terms of the resolution. You have it before you, you have read it, and you have heard it supported.

On question, the resolution carried with one dissident.

The General President: I think my friend Holsgrove will perhaps permit me to go this far. He has not opposed the resolution as far as carrying out the Constitution is concerned. The resolution is carried unanimously, with the reservation that Mr. Holsgrove thinks I am not a good Constitutionalist. All right; thank you. I am going to ask that you will pay a little consideration to the Executive Council and myself. We have been at it for three days, working from ten o'clock in the morning until half-past seven and eight o'clock at night. It has been a very strenuous work. I am sure the members of the Executive Council have felt the strain of it. I am going to suggest that we adjourn now and meet at nine o'clock to-morrow morning. Sir Edward Nichol has been kind enough to provide an entertainment and a garden party out at his estate, and, therefore, we will adjourn about one o'clock to-morrow. We have sent out letters of invitation to gentlemen who might be bringing their wives with them. Sir Edward Nichol extends the invitation to your wives as well as yourselves; so that if your wives are in town bring them along. The Conference is now adjourned until nine o'clock to-morrow morning.

*(The Conference was then adjourned until Friday, July 23rd.)*

**SECOND DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.**

FRIDAY, JULY 23RD, 1926.

**INVITATION TO DELEGATES. .**

The General President : First of all there is the Garden Party. I again ask if there are any of you present who have not had an invitation, to let Mr. Gunning know.

**APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE TO EXAMINE CONTRIBUTION BOOKS AND CREDENTIALS OF DELEGATES AND TO REPORT.**

• The General President : Now the first item on the Agenda is to appoint a Credentials Committee. I want to tell you that every Delegate has been checked off with the Head Office records, and I am informed that they are all in order; but I would recommend that Mr. Bellem and another Delegate be appointed as the Credentials Committee, so that if any question arises we can have it checked.

The following were nominated : Mr. Bellem and Mr. Henson, junr.

It having been moved that nominations be now closed, on question, the motion was agreed to.

The General President : There are only two Delegates nominated. Those two Delegates will act as the Credentials Committee.

**APPOINTMENT OF TELLERS.**

The General President : I think four Tellers will be sufficient.

The following Delegates were nominated : Mr. Decker, Mr. Jones, Mr. Kimpton and Mr. Clouston.

It having been moved that nominations be now closed,

The General President : Is it agreed that those Delegates be appointed Tellers?

On question, the motion was agreed to.

**APPOINTMENT OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.**

The General President : Now the Standing Orders Committee is to go through the resolutions. If you will look at your Agendas you will see a dozen or more resolutions practically the same. What I would advise you to do is to appoint your Standing Orders Committee, let them retire, and go through the resolutions, and bring those which are similar all into one; so that instead of wading through the different resolutions we shall have one comprehensive resolution.

The following Delegates were nominated: Mr. C. Damm, Mr. Breckenridge, Mr. Tearle, Mr. Tarbitten and Mr. J. Cotter.

The General President: Is it agreed that those Delegates should act as the Standing Orders Committee?

On question, the motion was agreed to.

#### APPOINTMENT OF PRESS COMMITTEE.

The General President: I would suggest that the Press Committee consist of Mr. Cathery and myself. (Hear, hear.)

On question, the motion was agreed to.

#### GENERAL PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL ADDRESS.

The General President: I thought I delivered my Annual Address yesterday. (Hear, hear.) I do not see any good whatever in wasting your time in saying the same thing over again, so I hope you will take my address yesterday as being the Presidential Address. Do you agree?

On question, this motion was agreed to.

#### ANNUAL BALANCE-SHEET AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT TO DATE, PRESENTED BY THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

Mr. E. Cathery (General Secretary): I think you all have a balance-sheet before you. That will greatly ease me from making any elaborate speech on the matter. Our balance-sheet is so itemised out that I think it is very clear. However, I have made a Report, which it is my duty to place before you. My Report is as follows:—

“ I have again to submit to you my Annual Report and Balance-sheet for the year 1925. The items of income and expenditure are shown under their separate headings. Notwithstanding the depressed state of the shipping industry, etc., which is responsible for a falling off of remittances from Branches of over £13,000, the Union practically held its own, and the reduction in the capital value of the Union is only £670 17s. 5d. on the year, leaving it at the substantial figure of £309,477 1s. 6d. Details are printed on the second page of the Balance-sheet.

“ Benefits paid direct from Head Office to members during the year amounted to £20,763 13s. 8d :—

	£	s.	d.
Dispute Pay and Assistance to Dependants	8708	4	3
703 Accident Benefit Claims	3404	14	0
233 Funeral Allowances	2328	7	1
104 Shipwreck Benefits	487	10	6
490 Members' Old Age Allowances	5669	10	0
Disablement and Illness	165	7	10
	<u>£20,763</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>8</u>

" In addition, members received various benefits through Branches totalling £1,518 0s. 4d. Legal assistance was rendered to members at an expense of £3,084 1s. 7d. Grant to Samaritan Fund, £1,289 10s. 3d., was made which enabled us with the grant from King George's Fund for Sailors to give assistance to members in distress and their dependants.

" I regret to report that 24 members in receipt of Old Age Benefit died during the year; but others qualified during the year and there was an addition of 80, thus leaving net 56 more members on at the end of the year than at the beginning. This is a much-appreciated benefit.

" I have to report with deep regret the following deaths amongst our colleagues since the last Annual General Meeting :—

Mr. W. T. A. Stockbridge, Head Office.  
 Mr. John Lyon, Catering Department, Hull.  
 Mr. Holden, Secretary, Douglas Branch.  
 Mr. T. Chambers, General Treasurer.  
 Mr. C. George, Secretary, Manchester Branch.  
 Mr. J. Cheminant, Secretary, Birkenhead Branch.  
 Mr. S. Citrine, Secretary, Liverpool Central Branch.

" We all sincerely mourn their loss.

" New members enrolled during the year are :—

17,229	Sailors and Firemen's Section (including 1,181 transfers).
7,903	Catering Department (including 3,057 transfers).
<u>25,132</u>	Grand total,

or an average of 2,094 per month, or 483 per week.

" During the year 17 Finance Committee meetings and four Executive Council meetings have been held.

" In connection with the National Maritime Board 96 meetings were held. This included seven meetings of the Sailors' and Firemen's Panel and five meetings of the Standing Sub-Committee. Fifty cases were dealt with at these meetings.

" The 21 District Maritime Boards held altogether 74 meetings, dealing with 285 cases. The grand total of cases thus dealt with was 335. In addition, numerous cases were settled by the Port Consultants in the different districts."

The General President: Would you explain that "cases" means the crews of ships?

Mr. Cathery: Yes, that is things such as ashes, overtime, food, and all grievances in connection with seamen's work on board ship.

" About 150,000 men for ships' crews passed through the Joint Supply Offices of the National Maritime Board during

the year. Since the National Maritime Board was constituted over six years ago, approximately 10,000 cases, have been dealt with.

"The Head Office Legal Department has dealt with 212 Compensation Cases and 17 other claims :—

Compensation recovered was (re death)	...	£1,405
Lump sum settlements	... ..	2,673
Other cases	... ..	295
Making a total of	... ..	<u>£4,373</u>

"Weekly payments were also obtained in 22 cases.

"The Balance-sheet being made up to December 31st, 1925, is published under our former name. The certificate of the Registrar of Friendly Societies has now been received confirming our new title, namely, 'The National Union of Seamen.'

"In closing my Report, which I have kept as brief as possible, I thank my brother officials and members for their loyal support. I also have to thank the staff, and all who co-operated with us during the year."

"Long live the National Union of Seamen!"

I do not think I need make any comments or any addition to what I have said.

The General President: Further details of Mr. Cathery's Annual Report will be found in the Balance-sheet and Statements of Accounts, which I think all of you have. Will anyone move the adoption of the General Secretary's Annual Report and Balance-sheet?

Mr. Powdrill formally moved the adoption of the General Secretary's Annual Report and Balance-sheet.

Mr. Roche formally seconded.

Mr. Holsgrove: I want to refer to the summarisation of accounts of the Catering Department. You will see the Political Fund is £94 12s. Then on the next page it is £190 6s.; then turning over, excluding the Catering Department, it is £368 4s.; then if you turn over again it is £799 3s.; that makes a total of £1,452 15s.

A Delegate: On a point of information. What reference is Mr. Holsgrove quoting from?

The General President: The Delegate wants to know where you get those figures from.

(Mr. Holsgrove then showed the Balance-sheet to the Delegates.)



Another Delegate : On a point of order. I do not think it is fair if this meeting has to look at all these accounts. It is going to waste time.

The General President : That is what we are here for.

Mr. Holsgrove : Thank you.

The General President : If Mr. Holsgrove can throw any light on the accounts he is welcome to do so.

Mr. Holsgrove : The figures are £94 12s. ; £190 16s.—

Mr. Cathery : The £94 12s. is carried forward. That brings you down to £190 16s.

Mr. Holsgrove : You carry it forward.

Mr. Cathery : Yes, as we go along.

The General President : Do you know what "carried forward" means? When you add up on one sheet and you have not completed it you carry the amount forward from that sheet to the next sheet to add it up. They are not separate items. These accounts have been audited.

Mr. Holsgrove : I have asked the General Secretary to kindly tell me how the figures there do not tally with the total.

The General President : Because you have mistaken the figures yourself. You thought those were all separate items when they are not. As I told you, when you add them up and you have more than one sheet you add the total on the one sheet and then you carry that forward to the next sheet so that you can get the total. Your idea is that those are different items. Do you understand that?

Mr. Holsgrove : Yes, I have got your point. I am wrong and I can only beg your pardon. I am deeply grateful for your kindness, but if I was right nothing would shift me—nothing.

The General President : That is right. You will understand that those accounts are made up by chartered accountants. They are not made up by any members or officials. Personally, myself, I never touch them. Is there any other item anyone wants an explanation about?

Mr. G. Jackson (Newport) : With regard to the matter of the Political Fund on the last page of the Annual Statement. I see that the Labour Party fee is £262 0s. 6d., and the balance in hand over the year's expenditure is £719 10s. 6d. The question I want to ask is this : Does that £262 0s. 6d. discharge all our financial liabilities to the National Labour Party?

The General President : Up to that date. That is September 31st, 1925.

Mr. Jackson : I am asking Mr. Cathery if we have met our whole financial liability to the National Labour Party by paying that fee last year of £262 Os. 6d. ?

Mr. Cathery : Up to last year. We are indebted to them now.

The General President : That is the current fee.

Mr. Jackson : Yes. That is all I wanted to know.

The General President : Are there any other questions ?

A Delegate : I move that the question be now put.

The General President : Have you no observations to make on the accounts? One or two questions have been asked, and when I come to ask whether there are any observations there is no one who has anything to say. That strikes me as extraordinary. I should have thought that our friend there who is so red-hot on figures would have had a word or two to say either in the way of congratulations or condemnations. Those congratulations or condemnations have not come forward, so I am going to pass a comment on it myself.

First of all, I am going to be congratulatory. If ever there was a Union entitled to any congratulation for its financial position, I humbly submit it is the National Union of Seamen. I defy the whole world to put on the table at the present moment—the Trade Union world, I mean—a Report up to December 31st last year so satisfactory as this. But, mark you, although that Report is excellent up to December 31st, if I was to provide the figures up to this present moment they would not be quite as satisfactory, because since December up to date we have gone through a tremendous crisis, and our Union to some extent has been affected like all other Unions, but, fortunately, not to the same extent. But it will surprise some of you to know this. Every afternoon at 4 p.m. I have placed on my desk a little card which tells me the state of the banking account and expenses for that week or day right up to the very hour. The last card was presented to me last evening. I find that during the course of this year we have just gone £40,000 to the bad. So you see, some of you critics, you do not get to know all you might know. We have gone back this year £40,000, due to the fact, first of all, of loss of income; and the Officials who are present in this room ought to know that better than anyone else, because every week they receive a financial statement that is to be pinned up in every Branch. That is not only for the Secretary's information. We send it for every member of the Union, to be pinned up in the Branch so that he can see the total income for that week, the total amount of money that is spent and what is to the good. Now, is there another Trade Union in the world which does that?

Several Delegates : No.

The General President : I should like to know the name of it, if there is. The American Unions go pretty close to that. In every district in the United States there is furnished a weekly statement similar to ours showing the total income and total expenditure. They do not go quite as far into detail as we do, but they go very close to it, and I say that in the presence of the American Delegates. If any of you had read those financial statements you would see that since the commencement of the Miners' Strike the income of the Union has dropped £1,300 a week. When your income drops £1,300 a week, that is a big sum. If you look at the expenditure side, I am sorry to say that in some instances the expenditure side has increased rather than diminished. Well, that could not very well be avoided. Then we have paid out nearly £20,000 in lock-out pay, and an additional expense is added to that by payment to the wives and families of distressed seamen. So that up to now we are £40,000 down. I do not want to alarm any of you, because when you compare £40,000 down with statements made by other Unions—take the Railwaymen for a start—they are £1,250,000 down this year, and then their revenue has dropped more than 50 per cent. Take the National Transport Workers' Union. They have wiped out all their capital account of £500,000, and their revenue has dropped 70 per cent. So that when you weigh one up against the other you could say in the way of congratulation—and I hope my friend, Mr. Holsgrove, will get up after I have finished and move that a hearty vote of thanks be accorded to the General Secretary and the managers of the Union for the most excellent manner in which they piloted this job through. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Holsgrove : I have heard enough. I want to tell you this. I have learnt something now that I was ignorant of.

The General President : Hear, hear.

Mr. Holsgrove : But I really believed heart and soul that I was right. That is the reason why I am here in this position. I offer my heartfelt apology to you all.

A Delegate : It is accepted.

Mr. Holsgrove : I do in all truth and sincerity. There is no fooling about it. If I had been right nothing would have shifted me. But I am wrong, and I hope you will accept my apology.

The General President : I accept it in the best spirit. (Applause.) So we get a hearty vote of thanks in the middle of my address. (Laughter.) I have not finished yet. I told you that we were £40,000 down since the first week in the year, but I am going to tell you that in spite of all troubles and difficulties, during the last month the income of the Union has improved wonderfully—(hear, hear)—to the extent of over £500 a week. That is some going, you know, when you can improve your position by £500 a week in a month. That shows good signs of vitality; but I am

going to tell my friend Mr. Holsgrove a little more. I will venture to prophesy now—and he can make a note of it, if he likes—that between now and the end of the year we will have wiped £25,000 of the deficit off. Because I can see that the moment the Miners' Strike is finished the income which now stands at £2,400 a week will be getting well on to £3,800 a month after the Miners' Strike is finished. (Hear, hear.) Those figures, I think, ought to please Mr. Holsgrove.

You know, there are a lot of people going round trying to misunderstand and misrepresent things. Take some of the ex-officials. This seems to me to be somewhat remarkable. A man will go on drawing his wages out of this Union for ten or 15 years; you never hear a word from him; he religiously draws his wages every week; but the moment that he is discharged or relieved of his office he suddenly discovers that this is the most fraudulent imposture of a Union that ever existed. (Laughter.) I would give one answer to these fellows only: "Well, if you did not discover in 15 years that the Union was a fraud and a humbug—if you could not find out in 15 years and let the public and the members know, you ought to shut your mouth for ever." That is the way to put it. It is bad form, I think, when a man loses his job, or leaves it, to go round and try to poison the minds of men by saying that everything in the Organisation is wrong. If he had 15 years to put it right he is no kind of a man if he did not do it. (Hear, hear.) That is my view of those men. I am going to say that although I should like to see the Balance-sheet better I remember the time when I used to say, "Well, I should be the happiest man in the world if I could see the income up to £50,000 a year." I used to say that. Well, it got up to £50,000 a year. Then I discovered I was not satisfied. (Laughter.) I said, "Well, it ought to be £100,000 a year, and then it would be beautiful." Well, we got up to £100,000 a year. Then I said, "What a great misfortune it was not £150,000 a year." (Laughter.) There was a lawyer who came to me the other week in Liverpool with regard to these cases, and he said, "I have got that £129; shall I take it with me to Manchester and send you on a cheque?" I said, "No, I will take it now." (Laughter.) Because I had an idea that if he got that money and sent a cheque to me there would not be £129, there would only be about £79, so I collared the lot, as the saying is. I have told our Officials never to refuse money; when the money is offered, take it. As I said to the lawyer, "Well, you have offered me that money; you might be dead to-morrow morning, and I should have a task to get it; no, I will have it now."

I take a lot of satisfying on income, and I will tell you why. It is simply common sense. You never can stand still in this world. You have got to go ahead; if you do not go ahead you are going to go astern. That is why I have always been trying in Liverpool. When I went down I said, "Well, the income is £80 this week. Let us make it £200 next week." Well, we made it £200. The next week I said, "Well, let us make it £300." We made it £300. The next week I said, "Let us make it £400." We made it £400. That is progress; that is going ahead, and I hope to live long enough—and it will not be very long before it comes

about—to see Liverpool doing £1,000 a week. (Hear, hear.) The one aim and object of a Secretary is to keep his eye on the barometer. Do not be satisfied when you get up to 90 lbs. pressure. Put on another ten or 20 so as to be prepared for emergencies. That is my observation on the Balance-sheet, and I, for one, do not apologise to anyone for Mr. Cathery's presentation of the Balance-sheet. I am prepared to stand by and justify every item which it contains. (Applause.) The resolution I have is that Mr. Cathery's Annual Report, Balance-sheet and Statement of Accounts be accepted, with congratulations from our friends.

Mr. Jackson : I wish to draw the attention of my fellow Delegates to the amount that was remitted to the General Fund last year, £79,058 8s. 9½d., and to the total wealth of the Union outside the Approved Society's accounts being £309,477 1s. 6d. In doing that, I want to reiterate a remark that was made 30 years ago by our worthy President at the Maritime Hall, when he said, "For heaven's sake work hard and send £200 a week to the Union from the Branches, and I will save the ship."

Mr. Cathery : I can remember the time when I heard our President say, when we used to meet in Leman Street, where we held our weekly and financial meetings, "If only we could get £50 a week to Head Office I should be a happy man." I could show you a weekly statement that I have up in my Head Offices where the remittances to the Head Offices were £5. We had £5 to pay all benefits, the staff of the office, and everything in connection with the Union. We received £5 from the whole of the Branches to the Union. Therefore it only bears out what Mr. Jackson has said and the General President has said. We are progressing. To use a nautical phrase, we have had a little bit of a head wind, but she will come round all right. (Applause.)

The General President : After Mr. Cathery has had the joyful pleasure of sailing the ship, I will put the resolution. (Laughter.)

On question, the resolution was unanimously agreed to.

#### REPORT OF GENERAL TREASURER ON THE BUSINESS OF THE UNION AS AN APPROVED SOCIETY.

The General President : The next item on the Agenda is the Report of the General Treasurer on the business of the Union as an Approved Society. Now, that has already been before the Executive Council, but in accordance with the Rules it has to be submitted to you. This is the Twelfth Report of the General Treasurer on the work of the Union as an Approved Society. Will you please follow it as Mr. Bowden reads it.

Mr. L. Bowden : May I just point out that where the word "I" occurs it means the General Treasurer and not the reader.

"My first duty is to report the death of the late General Treasurer of the Union, the late Mr. T. Chambers, C.B.E.,

J.P., which occurred on January 3rd, 1926. As most of the Delegates will know, Mr. Chambers was appointed the Insurance Officer of the Union from the commencement of the Health Insurance Act, and it is deeply regretted that he did not live long enough to see the magnificent result of the Second Valuation, which will be reported to you later on in this Report.

“As you are aware, I was elected by the suffrage of the members to the office of General Treasurer, but I am to point out that the Rules do not provide for the duties of Insurance Officer.

“In the case of the late Mr. Chambers, he was appointed Insurance Officer at the Annual General Meeting, held at the Town Hall, Poplar, on September 23rd to 26th, 1912.

“The Finance Committee, at their meeting on June 1st, 1926, passed the following resolution:—

“‘That the General Treasurer, Mr. J. B. Wilson, be appointed Insurance Officer of the Union, and that this resolution be brought forward for confirmation by the next Annual General Meeting.’”

The General President: We have to confirm that. I regret to say that the General Treasurer, Mr. J. B. Wilson, is very seriously indisposed; he has had a very bad attack of kidney trouble, and he has been in bed for the last two or three weeks. That is the Mr. J. B. Wilson referred to, and it will be necessary for you to pass a resolution simply approving of what has been done by the Financial Committee in appointing him Insurance Officer of the Union.

Mr. Kimpton: I should like to accept Mr. J. B. Wilson as the Insurance Officer.

The General President: Mr. Kimpton moves that the Report up to that paragraph be adopted.

Mr. Powdrill formally seconded.

The General President: Are there any comments on that?

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

Mr. Bowden:

“I have now pleasure in submitting my Report and review of the work of the Union as an Approved Society. Since the figures were prepared for the Report of last year, up to June 30th, 1926, we have received 1,758 applications for membership, an average of 34 per week as against 50 for 1925 and 58 for 1924. The total applications now reach the figure of 81,224. Of course, many applications never become effective, but this is not so common now as it was in the early days of National Health Insurance. Our effective membership at the last count was 33,919.

" I am strongly of opinion that we should get very many more members. There are a considerable number of youths and young men entering the Mercantile Marine every year. I do urge every Official of the Union to consistently persuade seamen to avail themselves of the advantages of their own Approved Society, and every member of the Union should become a recruiting agent amongst his comrades.

" Our Approved Society can challenge any Approved Society in the country accepting seamen to their membership, as to the rates of benefit, the extent of additional benefits, solid financial position, and, above all, prompt and sympathetic handling of all claims. It is directed by men who understand the seaman and his special needs, and every member and official may be proud of the powerful Organisation they have built up, but which would be even a greater force for good if more attention was paid to increasing the membership amongst seamen.

" The insured membership ought to be equal to the Trade Union membership, and obviously every seaman should be a member of his Trade Union.

" Youths under 18 should be concentrated upon, as they pay no Transfer Fee, and by transferring they only postpone their title to Additional Benefits by a short space of time.

" A total of 601 notifications of death have been received since the last Report. For administrative and financial reasons prompt notification of death is essential, but it is still found that relatives of deceased members do not notify the Society of the death of a member. It is expected that our work in this respect will be relieved by the operation of the Widows, Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act.

" I give below an analysis of the cases reported :—

Reported last year.					Now Reported.
139	Killed in Action	...	...	...	—
48	Drowned and Wrecked	...	...	...	68
10	Accidents	...	...	...	15
1	Murdered	...	...	...	—
2	Suicide	...	...	...	1
342	No Special information	...	...	...	517
<u>542</u>	Total	...	...	...	<u>601</u>

" The accounts have been audited up to the period ending December 31st, 1924. The cash summary and Auditor's certificate are appended. The original documents are on the table for inspection."

The General President : Before I ask for a mover and seconder I should like to say a word or two in explanation. You will note that the total number enrolled was 81,224. That is since the commencement of the Act up to date. Then the General Treasurer

reports that our effective membership at the last count was 33,919. Now, anyone reading that without an explanation would come to the wrong conclusion that the Insurance Society is going back, because you see they have joined 81,000 and now they admit they have only got 33,000. Now, the explanation is this: Seafaring life is very different from any other in the world. It has been estimated that every five years the larger portion of the Mercantile Marine changes, not so much with the officers as with the deck hands, the engine-room hands and the stewards' department. It simply means this: Take the stewards' department, for instance. A good number of young men have heard a good many fairy tales about the sea, and then they think that all they would have to do when they got aboard a ship as a steward is to sit in a deck chair from early in the morning until bed-time and then off to bed. Those young fellows are fired with the imagination of seeing the world, and so they take up a steward's job. When they get to the job they discover they are turned out at four o'clock in the morning very often and that they have to work until midnight, and after they have done two shifts of that, that is enough for them. That more or less prevails in all departments. So that although you may have 20,000 men in a year going into the sea service, it is quite possible and probable that at the end of the year 15,000 may quit. So that we have joined 81,000 men, and the total membership stands at 33,000. The reason of it is the explanation that I have given you. It is all the time changing. When a man leaves the sea he probably goes into a land Insurance Society, and so the membership is going and coming all the time.

There is another item which might be easily misconstrued, and it is this. You will see in this Report that the audit is up to the year 1924; that is, two years ago. Some evil-minded person might say the accounts must be in a peculiar state; why, it is two years ago since they were audited. How do we know how matters stand now? I want to tell you that as far as the auditing is concerned we have nothing to do with that. That is done by a Government Department, and not by us. Every quarter Government Officials come into this office to audit the accounts. Now, the Insurance Act covers millions of people, and since the commencement of the Act up to date the Government have never been able to keep up to date with the auditing of the accounts. There is a gap of two years. I am speaking in the presence of a representative of the Government. I am not casting any reflection on the Government at all, but I do hope we shall see the day when the accounts will be brought more up to date. But that is no fault of ours. I do not in any way cast any reflection on the Government. My only object in explaining this is so that no misunderstanding will take place. That is all. Will anyone move the adoption of the Report up to this stage?

Mr. G. Gunning formally moved.

Mr. R. Dodds (Tower Hill) formally seconded.

On question, the motion was agreed to.



Mr. Bowden : Then the figures are set out as follows :—

## A.S. 128.

I.—CASH SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
• DECEMBER 31st, 1924.

RECEIPTS.		£	s.	d.
From National Health Insurance Fund	...	37,625	0	0
Benefit Repayments	... ..	351	4	2
Administration Receipts ( <i>see</i> Part IV)	...	35	13	4
Other Receipts, Suspense Account	... ..	11	9	0
<b>Total Receipts</b>	... ..	<b>38,023</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
Balance at December 31st, 1923	... ..	2,054	2	4
<b>Total</b>	... ..	<b>£40,077</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>

PAYMENTS.		£	s.	d.
Benefits	... ..	30,419	6	9
Administration Expenses ( <i>see</i> Part IV)	...	7,655	9	2
Other Payments, Suspense Account	... ..	9	13	0
Ex. C. K.	... ..	7	17	6
<b>Total Payments</b>	... ..	<b>38,092</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>
Balance at December 31st, 1924	... ..	1,985	2	5
<b>Total</b>	... ..	<b>£40,077</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>

II—ADDITIONAL BENEFITS—NET CASH PAYMENTS.

No.	£	s.	d.
2	894	15	9
11	16	19	9
15	460	18	5
16	70	10	6
17	72	0	9

III—Nil.

IV—ADMINISTRATION ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR  
ENDED DECEMBER 31st, 1924.

	£	s.	d.
Payment under agreement to Parent Society	7,655	9	2
Improper Benefit Expenditure carried hereto	7	18	2
Cost of searching records of deceased Soldiers	26	11	0
Liabilities at December 31st, 1924	2,595	18	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>£10,285</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>

	£	s.	d.
Benefits overpayments previously carried to Administration Account and now recovered	0	16	6
Sale of Pamphlets ... ..	0	0	10
Transfer Fees ... ..	34	16	0
<hr/>			
Total Cash Receipts ... ..	35	13	4
Liabilities at December 31st, 1923 ... ..	2,771	10	5
Amount appropriated for Administration:—			
(a) From Benefit Fund Account ... ..	7,396	13	5
(b) From Additional Benefit Accounts ... ..	81	16	9
Credited by Ministry for Postage and Refunds	0	3	0
<hr/>			
Total ... ..	£10,285	16	11

V—MEMBERSHIP PARTICULARS—MEAN MEMBERSHIP FOR THE YEAR.

	Class B.	Resident in N. Ireland.	Others.
Men ... ..	306	914	31,960
"Free Year" exits in 1924:—Men 291.			

VI—ANALYSIS OF BENEFIT REPAYMENTS CREDITED TO BENEFIT SUSPENSE ACCOUNT.

Disablement Men ... .. 6s. 11d.

VII—BENEFIT FUND ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st, 1924.

	£	s.	d.
Sums payable to Medical Benefit and Administration (Less rebate for members) ... ..	10,419	6	4
Benefits (Net)—			
Sickness—Men ... ..	14,673	4	7
Disablement—Men ... ..	9,185	18	9
Maternity—Men ... ..	4,471	14	0
Subscriptions to Hospitals, etc. ... ..	222	7	0
Transfers to Additional Benefit Accounts—			
No. 2 A/c. ... ..	200	0	0
No. 11 A/c. ... ..	300	0	0
No. 15 A/c. ... ..	600	0	0
No. 16 A/c. ... ..	140	0	0
No. 17 A/c. ... ..	50	0	0
Recharged to Benefit Fund from Benefit Suspense Account 1922 Sickness Benefit ... ..	0	11	8
Transfer Values, etc., debited ... ..	47,219	3	6
Amount appropriated for Administration ... ..	7,396	13	5
Adjustment of recoupment from Central Fund of sums debited under Sec. I (1) (a) and (b) N.H.I. Act, 1922 ... ..	54	4	3
Cost of Medical Certification N. Ireland ... ..	5	18	9
Balance carried forward ... ..	503,141	16	9½
<hr/>			
Total ... ..	£598,080	19	0½

	£	s.	d.
Balance brought forward ... ..	383,579	1	6½
Contributions Income (Net)—			
Navy, Army and Air Force members ...	257	1	1
Other members—Men ... ..	38,842	3	2
State Grant on Benefits deemed to have been paid ... ..	2,936	3	2
State Grant on Benefits and Adminis- tration ... ..	8,376	7	7
Reserve and Transfer Values credited ...	127,908	15	11
Interest ... ..	22,019	11	7
Grant in respect of Arrears of Contributions	1,212	5	0
Cons. of deceased soldiers—amount credited in respect of Contingencies Fund to 31/12/18 ... ..		21	19 9
Transfer from Contingencies Fund—			
(a) Towards deficiency on valuation ...		nil	
(b) Balance as at date of valuation ...	12,596	16	2
Adjustment of sums payable under Sec. I (1) (a) and (b) N.H.I. Act, 1922 ... ..	209	2	1
Transfer from Additional Benefit No. 11 (Allowances in respect of Arrears) ...	121	12	0
Total ... ..	<u>£598,080</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>0½</u>

NOTE.—In this account the entries under certain headings (being credits and debits to the Society in the Accounts of the N.H.I. Fund as advised by the Central Department) include (a) provisional amounts for the year of account, and (b) adjustments of provisional amounts in the Accounts for previous years; and financial effect has not been given to all changes in membership occurring up to the end of the year.

#### VIII—BALANCE-SHEET AT DECEMBER 31st, 1924.

	£	s.	d.
Contingencies Fund ... ..	2,994	8	6
Benefit Fund ... ..	503,141	16	9½
Administration liabilities outstanding ...	2,595	18	7
Additional Benefit Account Credit Balances—			
No. 2 A/c. ... ..	560	19	6
No. 11 A/c. ... ..	237	16	7
No. 15 A/c. ... ..	470	0	5
No. 16 A/c. ... ..	139	16	10
No. 17 A/c. ... ..	15	18	0
Other Credit Balances—			
Miscellaneous Receipt A/c. ... ..	12	12	10
Suspense Account ... ..	25	9	3
Total ... ..	<u>£510,194</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>3½</u>

	£	s.	d.
N.H.I. Fund Current Account ... ..	31,529	16	1½
„ Reserve Values Account ... ..	276,119	11	0
„ Investment Account ... ..	107,936	0	0
Investments (at cost) ... ..	92,624	7	9
Cash in hand, Current Account ... ..	1,985	2	5
<b>Total ... ..</b>	<b>£510,194</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>3½</b>

N.B.—See note appended to Benefit Fund Account.

### AUDIT CERTIFICATE.

I have examined the Books and Accounts of this Society in accordance with the Scheme of Audit approved by the Treasury, and I hereby certify that the Accounts for the year ended December 31st, 1924, and the Statements hereon numbered I to VIII are correct according to the information and explanations given to me, subject to my Special Report (Failure to Account), dated June 4th, 1924.

(Signed) E. LL. HUMPHREYS,

*Government Auditor.*

*Date, June 18th, 1926.*

The General President : Will anyone move the adoption of the Report up to this stage?

This was formally moved and seconded, and, on question, the motion agreed to.

Mr. Bowden :

“Owing to the great demand for Dental and Optical Benefit, we have had to provide additional money for these benefits by transfer of certain sums from the accounts of other additional benefits to the Dental Benefit and Optical Benefit accounts.

“Under the Additional Benefits Scheme, the resolutions of the Finance Committee and the Executive Council dealing with the transfer of the sums referred to have to be reported to the Annual General Meeting. The following resolution of the Finance Committee, held on March 10th, 1926, is now reported :—

“‘That in order to meet estimated expenditure on Dental Treatment and Optical Treatment during the first half of 1926, and in accordance with the terms of Paragraph 6 (3) of Form A.B. 5, the sum of £150 of the balance on account of Additional Benefit No. 11 and the sum of £100 of the balance on account of Additional Benefit No. 15, making a total in all of £250, be transferred to Additional Benefit No. 2, and that £50 of the balance on account of Additional Benefit No. 11, and the sum of £70 of the balance on account of Additional Benefit No. 16, making a total in all of £120, be transferred to Additional Benefit No. 17, and that this resolution be brought forward for review by the next Annual General Meeting.’”

The General President: I should like to call your attention to this, that up to the end of 1924 the total capital which the Insurance Society has to its credit is £510,000. (Hear, hear.) That is nothing to do with the Union at all; that entirely belongs to the Insurance Society. As a Union we have that, but I mean it is not the Union's funds. Understand, that is purely Insurance money. Now, will anyone move the adoption of the Report up to this stage

Mr. H. Ley (Southampton) formally moved, the motion being seconded, and on question agreed to.

Mr. Bowden:

"The demand for Additional (Treatment, etc.) Benefits continues to increase.

"I append a table showing the value of these benefits paid to June 12th, 1926:—

	£	s.	d.
No. 11 Part Payment of Arrears, etc. ...	574	15	4
No. 15 Payments to Hospitals ...	1645	0	0
No. 15a Fares to Convalescent Homes, etc. ...	411	1	3
No. 16 Appliances (Trusses, Artificial Legs, etc.) ...	404	7	1
No. 17 Optical (Spectacles) ...	394	7	5
No. 2 Dental (Artificial Teeth and Dental Treatment) ...	2504	3	5
Total ...	£5933	14	6

"The number of men on Disablement Benefit continues to increase. In June last year 447 of our members were in receipt of Disablement Benefit, and in June of this year the figure had increased to 572."

The General President: Just a comment on that. You meet a lot of men on ships who say we are paying all the time and never get anything out. I suppose you have heard that?

Several Delegates: Yes.

The General President: It is all pay, pay, and nothing coming back. Now, let us have a look at this part payment of arrears. On account of those men who have fallen in arrears and who were likely to lose their benefit of Insurance, £574 has been paid out. Then, if you look again on page 6 you will find payments to hospitals; that is to say, to hospitals where seamen received treatment. We have paid out £1,645 on that account. Then, fares to convalescent homes; that is, men who have been sent to our convalescent homes and were unable to pay their fares; they have had £411 1s. 3d. Then, appliances, trusses and artificial legs, £404 7s. 1d. Then, optical treatment. You can get your eye-sight attended to now if you are a member. That cost £394 7s. 5d. Then, dental (artificial teeth and dental treatment) cost £2,504 odd, making a total of over £5,000 on that score. Someone has had the benefit of that. "We have never had anything out," says the crowd! In ten years for sickness benefit we have paid

out £80,879; disablement benefit, £24,000 odd; maternity, £50,137; so that it shows that seamen are very prolific in populating the world. (Laughter.) Donations to hospitals, £2,806; additional benefits by cash, £3,341; additional benefits by transfer, £515; and the total from the time we started up to 1925 is £243,714. How can they honestly say there is no return on that; and those are Government figures?

Mr. R. McGhee (Trustee): How long after an application is made for maternity benefit, or how long after a person is certified to be ill and entitled to sickness benefit, is it before he receives it? Have you any idea of the time?

Mr. Bowden: Maternity benefits, if in order, are paid within six hours of them being received at Head Office. If they come in at nine o'clock in the morning they are out again by post-time in the evening. If a member brings in an application and it is all in order, he gets paid over the counter. The sickness benefits are paid every week, and there cannot be a delay of longer than five days from the receipt of a claim which is in order, because we pay up to the Wednesday of each week; so that if it comes in on the Thursday it cannot possibly wait longer than the following Wednesday at the outside.

Mr. McGhee: May I say that I put that question so that the Delegates here might understand that, because I have been investigating a very large and important industrial Society and I know of sick persons who are under the doctor, and after eight weeks they have not received their money.

The General President: That does not apply to us.

Mr. McGhee: No, I only wanted to show the difference between the Organisations.

Mr. Bowden:

"I append the usual table showing the nature of the incapacity in each case:—

Nature of Incapacity.	On Funds at date of last Report.	De-clared off.	At-tained age 70.	De-ceased.	Still on Funds.	New Claims on Funds 6/6/26	Total on Funds 6/6/26
Phthisis ...	21	—	—	5	16	9	25
Tuberculosis ...	48	4	—	13	31	16	47
Bronchitis,							
Influenza, etc.	65	12	4	7	42	46	88
Rheumatism, Sciatica,							
Lumbago, etc.	63	9	3	3	48	37	85
Heart Disease ...	49	2	3	6	38	26	64
Nervous Disease ...	51	6	—	4	41	28	69
Functional Disorders ...	67	10	4	5	48	43	91
Insanity ...	20	1	—	—	19	6	25
Locomotor Ataxy ...	16	1	—	1	14	3	17
Venereal ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cancer ...	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
Eye Diseases ...	19	4	—	—	15	11	26
Skin Diseases ...	7	—	—	—	7	2	9
Accidents...	20	5	—	—	15	11	26
<b>Total</b> ...	<b>447</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>572</b>

Table showing benefits paid from January 13th, 1913, to December 31st, 1925 :—

	10 Years ended 31/12/22			Year ended 31/12/23			Year ended 31/12/24			Year ended 31/12/25			TOTAL.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Sickness ...	87,879	5	4	15,043	12	6	14,673	4	7	15,724	13	10	133,320	16	3
Disablement ...	24,343	15	5	8,754	18	7	9,185	18	9	10,308	8	7	52,593	1	4
Maternity...	36,498	8	0	4,764	8	0	4,471	14	0	4,403	2	0	50,137	12	0
Donations to Hospitals	2,075	10	0	291	0	0	222	7	0	217	7	0	2,806	4	0
Additional Benefits by Cash	114	17	1	906	5	0	1,515	5	2	1,804	17	7	4,341	4	10
Additional Benefits by Transfer	153	18	0	116	15	0	121	12	0	123	2	0	515	7	0
	£131,065	13	10	29,876	19	1	30,190	1	6	32,581	11	0	243,714	5	5

\* Subject to audit.

"As will be seen from the Balance-sheet, we are still accumulating substantial reserves. At the end of June, 1926, the investments in securities chosen by the Society were :—

£12,777	6	2	of 5 per cent. War Loan ...	cost	£12,056	9	6
79,376	17	11	.. 4 .. .. Funding Loan...	..	59,645	19	1
10,954	18	3	.. 3½ .. .. Conversion Loan	..	8,342	13	10
38,068	15	1	.. 3 .. .. Local Loan ...	..	25,214	2	7
3,144	0	10	.. 3½ .. .. India Stock ...	..	2,146	14	3
£144,321	18	3	Nominal Value	..	£107,405	19	3

"The Report of the Royal Commission on National Health Insurance has now been issued. The particular recommendations that affect seamen are contained in paragraphs 102 to 107 of the Report, and are as follows :—

#### MERCANTILE MARINE.

"(102) That the card system of collection of contributions of foreign-going seamen of the Mercantile Marine should be abandoned, and a schedule system instituted."

The General President : I should like to ask you in adopting the Report down to this stage to add this resolution :—

"This Annual General Meeting of the National Union of Seamen is impressed with the loss of contributions belonging to foreign-going Mercantile Marine members, due to the operation of the card system, and requests the Ministry of Health to institute the schedule system, as recommended by the Royal Commission, at the earliest possible date.

"That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Minister of Health."

Will anyone move that resolution?

Mr. Jackson formally moved.

Mr. Decker formally seconded.

The General President : I should like to give an explanation of that. You know that on foreign-going ships all seamen get

what they call the insurance card, and I am sorry to say that a number of seafaring men are really careless with regard to their own interests. We often come across men who have a few cards tucked away in the bottom of their bags, and when they turn out those cards they sometimes cover a period up to seven, eight and nine years. They have never surrendered a card for eight or nine years. They are paying all the time, and through keeping them in the bottom of their boxes if they require benefit at any time during that nine years they could not get it because they have not surrendered their cards. We have found in practice a great difficulty in getting the cards, and so it is now proposed by this resolution and by the Government Commission, that the cards on the foreign-going ships be all dispensed with entirely and the schedule will come in in future. If that is carried out the name of the man and all the other particulars and the Society that he belongs to will be on that schedule. It is rather startling to know that over £10,000 a year has gone astray.

Mr. McGhee : Over £30,000.

The General President : I am a modest man. (Laughter.) If I make any mistakes I like to make them on the side of moderation. What Mr. McGhee has said is quite true. Some of the experts put this loss down at £30,000, £40,000 or £50,000. I cannot tell whether that is true or not, but if it is £10,000 in money belonging to men of the sea which is going astray it wants looking at, and, therefore, we hope with the new schedule to get that £10,000—anyway, I will say it is £10,000—but if it is only £10,000 we can get back I shall be thankful indeed that I am working for my wages, anyhow. This resolution has been proposed and seconded.

On question, the motion unanimously agreed to.

Mr. Bowden :

“(103) That while it would be of great advantage that all foreign-going seamen should be included in one or two Approved Societies only, it is not desirable that there should be statutory provision to this effect. (Paragraph 550.)

“(104) That the special arrangements under Section 63 (5) for providing medical benefit to members of the Seamen's National Insurance Society be discontinued, and that members of the Society should, in future, receive their medical benefit under the normal arrangements. (Paragraph 552.)

“(105) That all persons who have served in the British Mercantile Marine, whether members of Approved Societies or not, should be eligible for pensions from the Lascar Fund. (Paragraph 555.)

“(106) That Section 64 (5) of the Act should be amended so as to provide that the cost of administering the Lascar Fund should be borne by the Fund itself. (Paragraph 557.)



" (107) That the State Grant on pensions or other benefits payable out of the Lascar Fund should be withdrawn. (Paragraph 558.)

" Mr. L. Bowden attended as the Delegate of the Union at the Annual Meeting of the National Association of Trade Union Approved Societies, and moved the following resolution, which was carried unanimously :—

" ' This Conference is impressed with the loss of contributions belonging to foreign-going Mercantile Marine members, due to the operation of the card system, and requests the Ministry of Health to institute the schedule system, as recommended by the Royal Commission, at the earliest possible date.'

" Mr. Bowden was elected to the Executive Council of that body, securing the place vacated by the death of Mr. Chambers.

" Negotiations have been proceeding between the Committee of Management of the Seamen's National Insurance Society and the Finance Committee of the Union with a view to exploring the ground as to the possibility of a fusion between the two Approved Societies.

" If fusion is finally approved, legislation appears to be necessary to carry same into effect, and there appears no possibility of any further National Health legislation for some considerable time.

" A special meeting of the Committee of Management of the Seamen's National Insurance Society and of the Finance Committee of the Union was held on Tuesday, February 23rd, 1926, and the following resolution, for submission to the next Annual General Meeting of the Union, was adopted :—

" ' That, in the interests of the seamen of the country, it is desirable that the Seamen's National Insurance Society and the National Union of Seamen (National Health Insurance Approved Section) shall unite and become one Approved Society.

" ' That all necessary action be taken to provide the Constitution of a new Society on the lines of the present Constitution of the Seamen's National Insurance Society, with a reduction in the number of Board of Trade representatives.

" ' That all existing members of both Societies be transferred to the new Society.

" ' That all funds and securities standing to the credit of the two Societies on the books of the National Health Insurance Fund be transferred to the credit of the new Society.

" ' That it be a condition of this resolution that the system of collection of foreign-going seamen's contributions by means of cards be substituted by a system of schedules.' "

### THE QUESTION OF FUSION.

The General President:—I think a further explanation is required here. I have told you about the schedule system. The most important point I think which we have reached now is that negotiations have been proceeding between the Committee of Management of the Seamen's National Insurance Society and the Finance Committee and the Executive Council of the Union with a view of exploring the ground as to the possibility of union between the two Societies. We only meet once a year, and I think, as Mr. Holsgrove said this morning, we ought not to rush through financial matters without having a fair explanation, so that an ordinary member, if challenged on these matters, can get up and defend the cause and the faith and tell his colleagues what is what. Everyone does not get a chance of coming here, so I am going to explain to you what all this means. Some of you do not know that there are two Societies. There is the National Health Insurance Society, which is practically under the control of the Board of Trade; then there is our Approved Society, which is under the control of the National Union of Seamen. Now, there are many reasons why—good reasons, I think—it should be possible to bring those two Societies into one. We manage our own affairs; the other is a sort of joint control. There is the Board of Trade; there are the shipowners and the seamen's representatives. So we even have a finger in the pie of the other show as well as our own, but for a long time a feeling has been abroad that money might be saved if we could fuse the two into one. Personally I think it would be a good thing; but whilst I think that, I am not prepared in any way to surrender the interests of our members with the object of fusion unless it can be a benefit to us. (Hear, hear.)

Well, we have adequately discussed the matter, and the first question to consider is what benefit, if any, would arise. Well, I will tell you one thing which would happen. At the present moment there is a good deal of piracy going on between the two Societies; we try to steal their members and they try to steal ours. You will never get a good feeling while there are two Societies trying to steal each other's members. Now, if fusion could prevent that it would be a very good thing. We have had a lot of Conferences about it. I have had the privilege of arguing the thing out with Sir Norman Hill, who is the man on the other side. I have been all the time wanting to know where we come in, so a week ago we had what I call a final wind-up of the argument. Sir Norman Hill has this idea, that we should amalgamate or fuse; the Seamen's Union should collect all the money, that is from the Government, and that we should pay out all the benefits. Now that sounds all right, because we know when the money is coming in it does not remain in the hands of Sir Norman Hill or anyone else; it is in the Treasury; so I do not object to Sir Norman Hill or anyone else having the trouble of getting the money in; they can have that with pleasure; but I do want some hand in the spending of it. (Hear, hear.) I want to see that we are getting the full worth of our money. But when we got to close grips, as we did the other day, with Sir Norman Hill, we found that he was not prepared to go that far. He said, "Yes, we will

get the money in, but when it comes to the spending of it it can only apply to the members of your Society." That means with regard to the 70,000 men, they will pay the benefits out and we shall have no say in it. Now, honestly and candidly, I cannot see that that is fair and equitable. If we are going to give them the privilege of getting all the money in, we ought to have a voice in the spending of it. Because, remember this, if we amalgamate we are putting under their control £510,000 which belong to us. That is enough to make every man attentive and exclaim, "Well, that yarn is good for the marines, but for heaven's sake don't hand it out to the seafaring men." Well, the Executive Council at their meeting this week passed a resolution that we intimate to the Seamen's National that the terms offered are not satisfactory—(hear, hear)—and that unless we can get the control of the paying out of all the benefits with the exception of the officers—we do not want to pay their benefits; that only amounts to about £300—but we want the control of paying out all the money to the seafaring men, we will not agree to it. Now, that is how matters stand, and the Executive Council passed this resolution :—

"That the terms offered are not satisfactory, but that we approach the S.N.I.S. to ascertain if it is possible to get better terms; failing that, negotiations cease."

Now, who will move that resolution?

Mr. P. Rooney (Liverpool) formally moved.

Mr. W. R. Spence (South and South-West Coast) formally seconded.

The General President : The matter is now open for discussion. You must now take an opportunity of expressing your views. We are often told that no one does anything here except Havelock Wilson; Havelock Wilson is the beginning and end of the whole job. In my view, all I do is to offer a little intelligent advice and nothing more. I want now to hear from you what you think about it.

Mr. T. Harper (Folkestone and Dover) : May I ask whether the Board of Trade will come in in the event of this fusion taking place? You say the Board of Trade have a controlling voice in the other Society?

The General President : Yes.

Mr. T. Harper : In the event of this fusion taking place, will the Board of Trade still have a controlling voice?

The General President : They will have a large control.

Mr. Harper : We do not want them to have that.

The General President : Under the Act it is the Board of Trade which appoints the Committee of Management. The Board of Trade do not interfere with us now, but if we want to amalgamate or fuse, the Board of Trade will really be the body to appoint the Committee of Management.

Mr. Kimpton : I take it from your expression this morning that you are in favour, and the Executive Council of the Union are in favour, of this amalgamation providing that we have the paying out of benefits. I consider that is a very fine safeguarding point on behalf of our Union, because it does seem to me that if we lose control of our members in paying out benefits to them it may eventually have a big effect on this Union. (Hear, hear.)

The General President : We should not lose the control of paying out the members, but there are 50,000 men who are not in our Society and whom we would not get under the scheme of amalgamation which has been proposed by Sir Norman Hill.

Mr. Kimpton : In the circumstances, as it has been discussed very fully by our Executive Council, I should like to support what has been said from the Chair this morning, because I think it will be of interest.

The General President : From the Executive Council.

Mr. Kimpton : Yes, and the expression from yourself.

The General President : I am only saying what they said.

Mr. Kimpton : Quite : I should like to support the resolution of the Executive Council.

Mr. Jackson : Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I desire to support the resolution. I might draw the attention of the Delegates present who may not be aware of the fact of this, that in the S.N.I.S. we had two representatives on the Committee of Management when it first came into active operation. They practically had a watching brief, and when they found out that the Board of Trade favoured the S.N.I.S. as against our Organisation in various ways—they issued pamphlets through the Board of Trade for them to join the one and only Society which flew the signal, "We are coming to your help." We found with regard to the S.N.I.S. that there were some 40 shipowners with a strong controlling voice who are classified as honorary members. We have had to meet the opposition, and the very strong opposition up till lately, of the A.M.W.U., who, of course, did everything they possibly could to wreck the Approved Section of our Organisation. We used to have a paid official on the S.N.I.S. who did nothing else but tramp round the various docks recruiting for the S.N.I.S., and these agents of the S.N.I.S., whilst they were on this duty, for which they were paid, at the same time were also paid agents of the A.M.W.U., and receiving 10 per cent. commission for all the cash taken. We got largely rid of the

A.M.W.U. There is only a small portion out now, the B.S.U. Of course, their lease of life is very short at the present moment. Referring to the fact of the great loss that we have sustained through not taking a sincere interest in this great measure for the amelioration of their conditions, a considerable number of men come into the Union Office with pockets full of these cards, and it is a job sometimes to get them to thoroughly understand what an asset these insurance cards are to them. Lately I notice that the bulky pockets that used to be are not now present, and men are beginning to take a more lively interest in the matter of the Insurance Section. Therefore, in my opinion, it seems so very peculiar that we are losing members. That is a distressing matter. I think we should make a supreme effort to impress the young men with the necessity of coming in in their young days, so that they may not find themselves on the rocks. I think that would be very good business. I have much pleasure in supporting the resolution.

Mr. Borlase: Mr. President and fellow Delegates, at the present moment at all the ports the S.N.I.S. have an office to accept cards from all the men and we have an office. Owing to our men having to come to us with the cards, it keeps us in touch with them. When he comes in we say, "What about your Union book?"; but if the Seamen's National Society are going to retain an office in every port for the acceptance of cards, and if our men have to go into those offices to put their cards in, it means that we shall lose touch with our men. I think if we do amalgamate we should deal with our claims as we do at present.

The General President: You will retain that, but there are 50,000 men who do not belong to us, and they do not want us to interfere with them.

Mr. Borlase: I think as far as our seamen members are concerned we should deal with all the business. If they are going to have a separate office it will mean that these men will get out of touch with us.

The General President: You all seem to be of one way of thinking, and I would advise that we do not keep on repeating the same thing.

Mr. R. W. Clouston (North-East Coast District): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, the whole matter resolves itself into this with regard to this proposed fusion, that on the terms of the National Seamen's Society they would be responsible both for the getting in of the money and of insuring seamen and the responsibility for paying out the benefits to their own members if we would agree to hand over our assets to the Sailors' National, and all we should be allowed to do would be to pay out the benefits to the men. Well, I do not think that is a *quid pro quo*. With regard to Mr. Borlase's argument about the cards, if the schedule is adopted then that means of getting in touch with our foreign-going sailors would be eliminated, and the only men whom we

should deal with would be the men in the home trade. I have much pleasure in supporting the resolution.

The General President: Shall I put it to the vote? (Cries of "Yes.")

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

The General President: Just a word of propaganda for ourselves. I find it is not a good thing to hide your light under a bushel when you have a good opportunity of displaying it. I dare say you have heard a number of men say that Wilson and his men get princely salaries; "Why do not they have the same wages as a sailor or fireman?" Have you thought, when you are reading the reports, of the amount of work that is entailed on the men who are getting the princely salaries, as they are called? Do you think that I or any other man could come and sit in this chair and deal with all these matters of figures and complicated questions without any thought? Do you think it is possible? If you do, then I invite you to try it. You have got to concentrate your thoughts and your energies on these matters not in the hours of the day, but very often in the hours of the night. (Hear, hear.) When you hear men talking about our princely salaries, will you kindly remind them of the princely work that has got to be done for them? (Hear, hear.) More than that, will you tell them we are not a Society dealing with a few hundreds of pence a year; we are a Society dealing with hundreds and thousands of pounds a year, and when you have men dealing with such sums you want to take care that they are men well able to deal with the position—(hear, hear)—and know what they are talking about. (Hear, hear.) Just put that round from me and tell them that Wilson said it.

Mr. Bowden:

"Since the last Report the Widows, Orphans and Old Age Contributory Pensions Act, 1925, has become law. The Health and Pensions contributions of members will cease at the age of 65, and cash benefits will also cease to be payable at that age. This provision takes effect as from January, 1928.

"The Act has also adjusted the rate of Health Insurance contributions, same being slightly reduced.

"I now come to the most pleasing and important portion of the Report—that is, the Second Valuation Report.

"I will now read the Report of Mr. J. Buchanan, Valuer appointed by the Treasury under Section 36 of the National Insurance Act, 1911, dated May 14th, 1926:—

"National Insurance (Health) Acts, 1911-1922. Report on the Valuation of the Assets and Liabilities of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union of Great Britain and Ireland, Approved Society No. 128, as at December 31st, 1923.

“1. In accordance with the provisions of Section 36 of the National Insurance Act, 1911, a valuation has been made of the assets and liabilities of the above Society, arising under Part I of the Act, and existing at December 31st, 1923. The information submitted to me for the purpose of the valuation has been prepared from returns compiled by the Society and passed by the Government Auditor.

“2. The number of members on the valuation date, all of whom were men, was 32,895. It will be seen from the Balance-sheet attached that the Benefit Fund amounted on the same date to £491,735 18s. 1½d.; this amount is brought as credit in the Valuation Balance-sheet given below.

“3. The basis of the valuation is prescribed, under Section 36 (2) of the Act of 1911, by the National Health Insurance (Valuation) Regulations, 1924. Under these Regulations the values of the future benefits and contributions are ascertained on the basis adopted in the calculation of the reserve values credited to Approved Societies under Section 55 of the Act of 1911, the future interest earnings on the accumulated funds (including reserve values) being assumed to be at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum.

“4. The following is the

VALUATION BALANCE-SHEET AS AT DECEMBER 31ST, 1923.

LIABILITIES.	£	ASSETS.	£
Present value of Future Benefits	1,489,211	Present value of Future Contribu- tions for Benefits...	776,145
		Present value of Future State Grants to Benefits*	330,936
		Benefit Fund as per Balance-sheet ...	491,736
		Appreciation in the value of Securities held by or on behalf of the Society ...	9,054
		Present value of State Grant arising under Section 1 (3) of the Act of 1922 ...	1,207
Surplus ... ..	119,867		
	<u>£1,609,078</u>		<u>£1,609,078</u>

\* Including cost of administration.

“5. The valuation thus shows a surplus of £119,867. The sum carried forward from the previous valuation, includ-

ing the balance of the Contingencies Fund added on January 1st, 1919, amounted to £40,943, made up as follows:—

	£
Surplus at previous valuation ... ..	49,173
Less amount applied to additional benefits ...	22,849
	<hr/>
Leaving surplus carried forward ... ..	26,324
Contingencies Fund added January 1st, 1919 ...	14,619
	<hr/>
Total carried forward ... ..	<u>£40,943</u>

“ After adjusting this amount to dispose of certain provisional entries in the Society’s register and accounts which were cleared up after the War, the actual growth of surplus between January 1st, 1919, and December 31st, 1923, is estimated to be well under £70,000. This increase of surplus is the result of various factors. The cost of sickness and disablement benefits has been much below the provision made in the valuation basis. The remunerative investment of the funds, both by the National Debt Commissioners and by the Society, has produced a substantial amount of interest in excess of the sum required to satisfy the valuation conditions, with which should be included the interest which the surplus has itself earned. Other profits, of a relatively minor character, have accrued from miscellaneous sources. Among these may be mentioned the appreciation in value of the Society’s investments, and the profits resulting from the release of a portion of the sum set aside at last valuation for additional benefits owing to the reduction during the period under review in the number entitled to such benefits. These profits, however, have substantially been offset by the loss due to the fact that the receipts from contributions have fallen considerably short of the amount anticipated according to the valuation basis. Further, the Society has had to meet the small extra liability for medical benefit imposed temporarily by the Act of 1922.

“ 6. Having regard to all relevant considerations, including the recent experience of the Society, the protection afforded by the Contingencies Fund and the high rates of interest yielded by the investments, I am of opinion that the surplus of £119,867 shown by the valuation is disposable, and I certify accordingly. I am informed by the Minister of Health that schemes for the distribution of additional benefits out of surplus are to be limited, as on the occasion of the last valuation, to a period of five years, and that expenditure out of the surplus during that period should be regulated with due regard to the continued well-being of the Society thereafter. The Minister has requested me to advise, with these considerations in view, what portion of the surplus may properly be dealt with under a scheme, and I recommend accordingly that the scheme should be based on an estimated distribution of £72,000, leaving £47,867 to be carried forward to the next valuation.—J. BUCHANAN, Valuer appointed by



the Treasury under Section 36 of the National Insurance Act, 1911. Government Actuary's Department, Whitehall, London, S.W.1, May 14th, 1926.'

## APPENDIX.

*Information as to Additional Benefits.*

"The additional benefits to be included in any scheme under Section 37 of the Act of 1911 must be selected from the list of additional benefits contained in Part II of the Fourth Schedule to the Act and in such regulations as may be made pursuant to Section 15 of the Act of 1920.

"The amount to be dealt with under the new scheme is £72,000. This amount does not include any balances which may be standing to the credit of the Additional Benefits Accounts of July 3rd, 1926. The new scheme should make due provision for the expenditure of such balances.

"To afford assistance in preparing a scheme the following table has been prepared, based upon the condition that the additional benefits provided by the scheme are to be payable for a period of five years from July 4th, 1926, with the proviso that in the case of an entrant after January 1st, 1923, the right to additional benefits will not begin until the date appropriate to the year in which he became a member.\*

ADDITIONAL CASH BENEFITS.			Surplus required to provide the Benefits in Columns (1) (2) and (3).	Available surplus remaining after providing these Benefits.	30 per cent of the amount in column (5) being the gross sum (including interest and the State Grant) available yearly for Benefits other than cash Benefits.
Sickness Benefit per week (from the fourth day of sickness). (One-half of these amounts for Class K members.)	Disablement Benefit per week.	Maternity Benefit.			
(1) s. d.	(2) s. d.	(3) s. d.	(4) £	(5) £	(6) £
1 0	0 6	2 0	9,000	63,000	18,900
2 0	1 0	4 0	18,000	54,000	16,200
3 0	1 6	6 0	27,000	45,000	13,500
4 0	2 0	8 0	36,000	36,000	10 800
5 0	2 6	10 0	45,000	27,000	8,100

"The sums shown in the above table do not include any balances standing to the credit of the Additional Benefits Accounts on July 3rd, 1926.

* Year in which membership began.	Additional benefits accrue in
1923 (after January 1st) ... ..	July, 1927.
1924 ... ..	January, 1929.
1925 ... ..	January, 1930.
1926 ... ..	January, 1931."

The General President: Now I want someone to move that the Valuation Report has been received and noted on the Minutes?

Mr. Powdrill formally moved:

Mr. Borlase formally seconded.

The General President: Has anyone any observations to make on that? I must say you are a peculiar lot of men. Do not you see anything in that? I do. I want to know where all this money is going to. We are accumulating huge sums of money, and I am just afraid some day or other some Government may appropriate a very considerable amount of money for some other purpose than it has been intended for.

Now, the Government have kindly said in that Report, as I read it, that they are allowing £78,000 odd for additional benefits. That is very good as far as it goes, but they are going to put £47,000 to the capital that has now been accumulated. They are going to take £47,000 and put it to the capital. I got startled when Mr. Bowden was reading out about the millions. What is going to become of those millions? I think I ought to draw your attention to this, seeing that the amount of capital has accumulated to such an extent that the whole of the surplus should have gone for additional benefits to the men. (Hear, hear.) They admit, according to the figures here, that we are worth £510,000 now, and they are going to further increase that capital. What I am afraid is that some day or other—you remember, what Winston Churchill has done with the Road Fund; the money was paid to keep the roads in order, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer appropriated a very considerable slice of it—well, I think some time or other—I do not know whether we could do it now or not—we might point out to the powers that be that it would be better to devote a large amount of the surplus to paying out increased benefits to our members. (Hear, hear.) That is the point you want to watch, my boys; it is all right to listen to a nice lot of figures. They sound fine. But I want to see that the members are getting the worth of their money. Take the management expenses of the Society. What do we get to-day; we get 4s. 11d., do we not?

Mr. Bowden: It is 4s. 5d.

The General President: 4s. 5d. is all they allow for management expenses. In my opinion, that is not sufficient. Look at the help that our Union gives to the Approved Society. We have to pay for that, and I think the Government might well give us, say, 5s. a member instead of 4s. 5d. They might increase the benefits by, say, £47,000—we will make it £10,000 to reserve and the rest to the members. That is the point which strikes me. I want you to think that over, my friends, and see whether you are getting a fair and equitable deal or not. I am advised that it would be quite in order to have a resolution calling the attention of the Government to the fact that the amount they have allocated for different benefits is not sufficient, and that we should endeavour to get a larger portion of that.

Mr. Bowden :

"The Valuation showed the results per member to be as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Worth per head ... ..	14	19	0
Surplus per head ... ..	3	12	10
Surplus per head carried forward ... ..	1	9	0
Surplus per head disposable ... ..	2	3	10

"At the First Valuation the corresponding figures were :

	£	s.	d.
Worth per head ... ..	8	16	8
Surplus per head ... ..	1	8	7
Surplus per head carried forward ... ..	0	16	0
Surplus per head disposable ... ..	0	12	7

"The progress is remarkable in the five years that have elapsed.

"Form A.B.1, which was completed and approved by the Finance Committee at their meeting on June 1st, 1926, is reprinted below.

## NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE..

### SECOND (1923) VALUATION.

"Application to the Minister of Health for provisional sanction to proposals for a Scheme of Additional Benefits under Section 75 of the National Health Insurance Act, 1924.

"Name of Society, National Sailors' and Firemen's Union Approved Society No. 128.

"At a meeting of the Committee of Management of the above Society, held on June 1st, 1926, it was resolved that, as the present Scheme expires on July 3rd, 1926, application be made to the Minister of Health for provisional sanction to the following list of additional benefits to be included in a new Scheme of Additional Benefits, to come into force on July 4th, 1926; and that these proposals be submitted to a General Meeting of the Society for adoption.

I am to ask the meeting to adopt these proposals."

The General President : These are the resolutions :—

"That there be transferred to the Benefit Fund for the purposes of the new Scheme any balance on the accounts in respect of non-cash benefits remaining at the expiration of the existing scheme."

"That the heads of the Scheme of Additional Benefits prepared by the Finance Committee and provisionally sanctioned by the Ministry of Health be adopted."

List of Additional Benefits in existing Scheme.	List of Additional Benefits proposed in new Scheme.	Annual sum (including proportion of balance) proposed to be allocated to each non-cash Benefit.																												
<p>[State clearly the Benefits by giving the number of each.]</p> <p>Present cash increases above normal rates :—</p> <p>No. 3. (Sickness)... .. 2s. 0d.  " (Dis.) Class K... .. Nil.  " (Dis.)... .. 1s. 0d.  No. 6. (Maternity) ... .. 4s. 0d.</p> <p>Non-cash Benefits :—</p> <p>No. 2 ... .. £200 per annum  " 11 ... .. £300 "  " 15 ... .. £600 "  " 16 ... .. £140 "  " 17 ... .. £50 "</p> <p>Above for A.S. 128.</p> <p>In respect of members of Societies which have transferred engagements to the A.S. 128 the rates are as follows :—</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>A.S. 362—No. 3(s)</td> <td>No. 3(d)</td> <td>No. 6(m)</td> <td rowspan="2">} No</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2s.</td> <td>1s.</td> <td>4s.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A.S. 2236—No. 3(s)</td> <td>No. 3(d)</td> <td>No. 6(m)</td> <td rowspan="2">} Non-cash</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4s.</td> <td>2s.</td> <td>8s.</td> </tr> </table> <p>Bfts.</p>	A.S. 362—No. 3(s)	No. 3(d)	No. 6(m)	} No	2s.	1s.	4s.	A.S. 2236—No. 3(s)	No. 3(d)	No. 6(m)	} Non-cash	4s.	2s.	8s.	<p>Proposed cash increases above normal rates :—</p> <p>No. 3. (S) ... .. 5s. 0d.  " (S) Class K... .. Nil.  " (D) ... .. 2s. 6d.  No. 6. (M) ... .. 10s. 0d.</p> <p>Non-cash Benefits :—  (Do not include No. 19 here. See below.)</p> <p>Nos. 2, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17 ...</p> <p>Annual amount available out of surplus ... .. £8,100  (Col. 6 of Appendix to Report.)</p> <p>Annual amount estimated to be available out of balances (B. overleaf) ... .. Nil.</p> <hr/> <p>Total annual amount available... £8,100</p>	<p>Non-cash Benefits :—</p> <p>Where No. 2 (Dental) or No. 19 (partial remission of arrears) is proposed to be included, special attention should be given to paras. 12 and 7 of Circular A.S. 253.</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Annual Sum allocated.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>No. 2 ... ..</td> <td>£3,750</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" 11 ... ..</td> <td>£300</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" 14 ... ..</td> <td>£500</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" 15 ... ..</td> <td>£600</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" 16 ... ..</td> <td>£150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>" 17 ... ..</td> <td>£800</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <hr/> <p>Total ... .. £8,100</p>		Annual Sum allocated.	No. 2 ... ..	£3,750	" 11 ... ..	£300	" 14 ... ..	£500	" 15 ... ..	£600	" 16 ... ..	£150	" 17 ... ..	£800
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" That the Executive Council be empowered to complete the Scheme, to adopt any modifications required by the Minister, and to do all things necessary to bring it into operation, as on and from July 4th, 1926, or such other date as the Minister may determine. And with regard to Additional Benefit No. 11 (Payments to members who are in want or distress, including the remission of arrears whenever the arrears may have become due), the memorandum of draft scheme be attached to Form A.B.2 and forwarded to the Ministry."

" That this Annual General Meeting is of opinion that the amount allocated under the National Health Insurance Regulations for administration for foreign-going seamen is insufficient and same should be raised to at least five shillings per member per annum. That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Minister of Health."

" That this Annual General Meeting is of opinion that a larger proportion of the surplus disclosed at the valuation should be available for Additional Benefits."

" That a copy of this resolution be sent to the Minister of Health."

Will anyone move those resolutions?

Mr. Ley formally moved.

Mr. W. J. Smith formally seconded.

The General President: Is there any objection to those?

On question, the motions were unanimously agreed to.

Mr. Bowden:

" I would just point out that, included in the Valuation figures is the sum of £9,054, being the appreciation in the value of securities held on behalf of the Society.

" This is an appreciation in the capital value of securities of nearly 10 per cent. on cost price, and I need not comment on the acumen that the Finance Committee has shown in the selection of these investments.

" Many incidental matters might have been introduced into this Report, but same has been kept as brief as possible.

" The many letters of thanks we receive and the absence of any justifiable complaints, together with the magnificent figures above quoted, show the beneficent work being accomplished on behalf of the seamen. This work is still in its early stages, and the full effect of the non-cash Additional Benefits will not be felt for another generation. Further success will be ours if all the men who go down to the sea in ships will band themselves together into their own Union, and their own Approved Society.

" Best thanks are due to my colleagues in the Branches and at Head Office. The staff has worked loyally and well, and I would especially mention Mr. L. Bowden, upon whom the brunt of the work at Head Office has fallen since the commencement of the last illness of Mr. Chambers. and since his death."

The General President : Now will someone move the adoption of the Report as a whole?

Mr. Clouston : I have much pleasure in moving the adoption of the Report as a whole. In doing so, I should like to say this. I do believe that the Treasury Officials regard these vast surpluses which are being accumulated by the Societies as a nest egg to be realised in the future. I am personally not in favour of the Approved Societies accumulating surpluses, being of the opinion that it would be far better to reduce the rates of contributions to the members, or distributing the profits in increased benefits. I have great pleasure in moving the resolution.

Captain Griffiths (Executive Council) : I have much pleasure in seconding that resolution. I think it is an excellent Report, no matter which way you look at it, and when you come to see the benefits which the men of the sea are getting out of this Approved Society, I wonder how many of those going to sea to-day know the first thing at all about it?

A Delegate : Thousands.

The General President : We publish them in the "Seaman," from time to time. Tell the men to read the "Seaman."

Captain Griffiths : I listened to the figures in the Report. Less than 2,000 members join this Approved Society every year, and I think I am right in saying that about 10,000 or more members join the Union. I wonder why it is that so many join the Union and do not join the Approved Society.

The General President : Because one lot are new starters and the others are old hands.

Captain Griffiths : I should like to make the suggestion, that leaflets should be printed giving the figures that we have in this Report and that those leaflets should be given out to the men of the sea as they come in. If that was done I think we should get a lot more new members in the future than we have done in the past.

The General President : We have just printed 40,000 pamphlets. (Hear. hear.)

Mr. Rooney : I should like to ask Mr. McGhee a question. In 1912, when he came to Liverpool about the Insurance Act—it was on a Sunday morning—he told the men definitely and plainly that

in ten or twelve years they would be getting a pension of from 25s. to 30s. a week. That is practically 13 years ago now, and the men are not getting a pension like that.

The General President: I have an answer to that. There is over £500,000 in the Pension Fund and there are 3,000 men getting 10s. a week now. We are considering means whereby we can increase that to £1 a week and later to 30s. a week. We are going along in that direction.

Mr. Gunning: I move that the question be now put.

The General President: It has been moved that the adoption of the whole of the Report be now put.

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

The General President: I will now put it that the Report as a whole be adopted as it has not been amended in any question.

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

#### OUTING TO SHEPPERTON PARK.

The General President: I want to look after the arrangements and the welfare and comfort of the Delegates going down to Shepperton Park. We have adhered to our work and we have done it efficiently. (Hear, hear.) I am going to suggest now that we adjourn, and can meet to-morrow morning and finish the whole business.

#### ELECTION OF TRUSTEES, AND ELECTION OF FOUR HONORARY MEMBERS FOR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

The General President: I am afraid we have not quite finished, because I am told that we must elect the Trustees to-day. I am advised that the Trustees and Honorary Members of the Executive Council must be elected to-day.

A Delegate: I move that they be re-elected *en bloc*.

This was formally seconded.

Mr. Cathery: As there are a lot of fresh men here, I will read out the names of the old Trustees. There is Mr. Richard McGhee, Captain Davis and Mr. Frank Foley. They were all with us last year.

The General President: Then the Honorary Members of the Executive Council.

Mr. Cathery: They are Captain E. Tupper, nominated by Grays, Tilbury, Manchester, Lowestoft, Plymouth and North

Shields; Captain J. Griffiths, nominated by Cardiff, Lowestoft, Plymouth, and North Shields; Mr. W. Sprow, nominated by Lowestoft, Plymouth, Middlesbrough, North Shields, Glasgow and Greenock; and Mr. J. H. Doxford, nominated by Lowestoft, Plymouth and North Shields. No more nominations have come in, and, therefore, as we require only four Honorary Members, there is no need for anyone else to be nominated.

The General President : You have heard the names of the old Trustees and Honorary Members of the Executive Council read out, and it has been proposed and seconded that we re-elect them *en bloc*. I will take the re-election of the Trustees first. Is it agreed that those gentlemen be re-elected Trustees?

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

The General President : Now the Honorary Members of the Executive Council. Is there any opposition to them?

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

*(The meeting was then adjourned until Saturday, July 24th, 1926, at 9.30.)*



## THIRD DAY'S PROCEEDINGS.

SATURDAY, JULY 24TH, 1926.

### CONGRATULATORY CABLEGRAMS FROM AMERICA.

The General President : Good morning, everyone. I have received two cablegrams from America which I should like to read. The first is from Mr. Olander, Secretary of the International Seamen's Union of America :—

“ Fraternal greetings from organised seamen of America to Annual Meeting British Seamen, may success attend your struggle towards freedom and happiness for the men of the sea.”

(Applause.) The next cablegram is from Mr. Peyor of Boston :—

“ Greetings and felicitations for successful Annual Meeting, kindly assure officers and members sincere appreciation of financial assistance, we are willing to reciprocate, hope it will never be necessary. Good luck.”

(Applause.) I should like someone to move that we accept those greetings in the spirit in which they are sent, and that they be recorded on the Minutes.

Mr. C. Jarman (Mersey District) : I have much pleasure in proposing that those cablegrams be recorded on the Minutes.

Mr. F. J. Powdrill (Portsmouth) formally seconded.

The General President : I do not think we can take up time by making speeches. I am sure we all appreciate the kindness of our American brethren in remembering that we are sitting in Conference to-day endeavouring to make things better for the men of the sea. (Hear, hear.) Whatever may be said on that point, it will be supplemented later by Mr. Andrew Furuseth, Mr. Paddy Flynn and Mr. Grange. I will now put it to the vote.

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ON THE EXPULSION OF OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS.

The General President : The next matter we have to deal with is the Report of the Executive Council on the expulsion of officials and members. That Report must be put before the Annual Meeting otherwise there will be no endorsement of it ; that is, the findings of the Executive Council held on July 19th, 20th and 21st, 1926, have to be confirmed at this Annual General Meeting.

The first man we dealt with was J. Davidson, Executive member from the Humber. I should like to have the letter read from this man. It was a most insulting letter to the Union, to the members of the Executive Council, to myself, and everyone else. He wrote this letter in cold blood, describing us in the most filthy

language as the biggest lot of "crooks" that ever lived. I brought it before the Executive Council because I considered a man who could write such a letter was not a fit and proper person to attend any Executive Council meeting. The finding is that Davidson, in consequence of his conduct, be suspended from membership for a period of three months, he having been found not to be a fit and proper person to take any further part in the business of this Union, and dismissed from the Executive Council. His case was fully investigated. Mr. Davidson himself was present, and that was the finding of the Executive Council. I should like someone to move and second that the findings of the Executive Council be approved.

Mr. Jarman formally moved.

Mr. J. Burns (Middlesbrough and Hartlepool) formally seconded.

The General President: Is there any amendment to that? I will read his letter. It is best that I should read the letter so that there may be no doubts in your mind. It is dated May 3rd and says:—

"Dear Sir,—I have just read your Circular No. 25-26, and read with amazement that you 'strictly adhere to the Constitution and Rules of the Union,' and have come to the conclusion that you only do so when it suits your purpose; then, further on, 'from some quarters severely criticised'; well, you deserve it, as in my opinion taking a ballot in the manner you have done is both unconstitutional and dishonest, and, further, is not a result, as a better method could have been adopted while the E.C. was in session, and I think would have been a different result, but I repeat again that would not have suited your purpose. In view of the fact that the E.C. was dismissed without having a final debate after the T.U.C. decision, I applaud whatever was done by those officials who did what you are constantly doing, that is ignoring the E.C., also Constitution.

"Now, in conclusion, I have to smile when I read that you have declined to call a special E.C. meeting on account of expense, especially when hundreds of pounds are being spent here in Hull to imprison a man who broadcasted a circular which is full of truth; in fact, give me the means of balloting the Humber district as regards yourself and methods and let the result go to the Assize Courts; you would get quite a shock.

"I am a bit surprised to see an official in the witness-box who has had his accounts 'when his balance was on the wrong side' made good by late H. section officials. It is funny how men get into wrong box. I wish the E.C. had met before this Hull case finishes, as I feel like giving evidence for either side, but which would be the voice of the Hull seamen; it would make your case a little less promising. I am pleased you sent Ockleton away from Hull after promoting him for

the bogus resolution he took from London to Hull and back again to suit your purpose; he has been howled down by 600 men on two occasions in Hull, but as he has attained what he set out for, the men he was so keen to assist by being elected on the E.C. can now go to Hull. Well, that's another stink out of the nostrils of the Hull men.

"I could write on for ever about matters which you think you are smart about, but once I get a little more time at home, and that won't be long, I shall call meetings here and put some facts before the members, especially the H. Section, which will be an eye-opener for a few. Anyway, more about that later. Kindly give my regards to those officials who have offended your majesty, and believe me to be, yours sincerely,  
—Signed, J. DAVIDSON, E.C. Humber District.

"P.S.—Please let me know how many flunkeys you intend taking to Geneva and what the cost may be. I should like to see the difference between your joy-ride and an E.C. Meeting.  
—J. D."

That is the letter on which he was expelled. It has been moved and seconded that the Executive Council's action be sustained. Is there any amendment?

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

The General President: Then the next men dealt with were A. Hagen and W. R. Barnes. The Executive Council suspended them from membership of the Union for a period of three months. Those two men were Officials. About six weeks ago they resigned their positions and, ever since, they have been endeavouring to intimidate other Officials to resign. They have made slanderous statements with regard to the Union, and on those grounds they were summoned to attend a meeting of the Executive Council to explain matters. They attended; they could give no proper explanation, and, as a result, the Executive Council suspended them from membership for three months. Will someone move that the finding of the Executive Council be approved?

Mr. C. Cotton (Catering Department, North-East Coast) formally moved.

Mr. E. J. Williams (South Shields) formally seconded.

The General President: Does anyone think that the Executive Council's action should not be sustained? The men got a fair trial. Then I will put it to the vote.

On question, the motion was unanimously agreed to.

The General President: Now we come to the Officials. We had a very long trial, and it is admitted by Mr. Findlay, of the T.U.C., who was present, that he never saw any body of men get a fairer trial than the Officials who had been offenders against the Constitution and the Rules. (Hear, hear.) Now, we had to make a distinction in dealing with those Officials, and I am going

to explain why. They all made the same mistake in breaking the Rules of the Constitution; they were all guilty of that, but some of them, especially the London Officials, when they found they had made a mistake, tendered a very handsome apology to the Executive Council and said this: "We have made a mistake; we are sorry for it; we are not going to exercise our right of appealing to the Executive Council. We are going to leave ourselves entirely in the hands of the Executive Council, and whatever judgment the Executive Council may pass on us we are prepared to loyally abide by." (Hear, hear.) That was a manly, straightforward thing to do. (Hear, hear.) But in the case of the Liverpool Officials they not only made the mistake but persisted in making the mistake of appealing to the T.U.C. to take up their case. They were meeting daily in our Liverpool premises, which are rented by the Liverpool Council; they were making it most objectionable for the Officials whom I appointed to carry on their work, and right up to the meeting of the Executive Council their conduct was obnoxious in every way.

With regard to the North-East Coast Officials, it was the same with regard to Mr. T. M. Walsh, the District Secretary of the North-East Coast. I want to say this for him, that from the time I suspended him from taking any further part in the business of the Union he loyally carried that out; he never had meetings that I know of, and he never put any obstacles in the way; but in the case of Rogers, the Secretary of the Newcastle Branch, he persistently and wilfully put obstacles in the way; he called unauthorised meetings and made it very difficult for Captain Davis and others who went down to explain the situation to the men. They got crowds of fellows to attend the office. Then when he came before the Executive Council he was most insulting in his conduct—(hear, hear)—and the Executive Council recognised that he, not being a seaman, and as he had got a job more through charity than anything else in 1911, we were not going to stand that sort of thing from him.

Then D. W. Johnson in the same way. He was the Delegate at the Newcastle Branch, and he aided and abetted Rogers in his opposition.

Then J. Murray, Secretary of the South Shields Branch. From the time that I suspended him he did nothing whatever. He remained quiet, and apologised for any mistake he had made, and the general feeling of the Executive Council was that Murray had been an innocent victim of others.

Then we had another man named Osmer, who has been in opposition to the Union ever since he lost a paid Delegate's job. Last year he endeavoured to found a rival Union in Cardiff. He is a most insolent blackguard, and persists in being obnoxious. He thinks if he persists in being obnoxious we will appoint him as an Official of the Union. He never made a greater mistake in his life.

Then we come to the Mersey. With regard to Mr. McVey, the evidence was overwhelming to prove that he not only broke the Rules, but he tried to get other Districts and Branches to do the same. That was discovered by getting from the Post Office

the trunk calls that had been put in, and there was the clearest evidence in the world that wherever he thought there was the likelihood of bringing about a cessation, he was on the telephone spending as much as 10s. each on trunk calls for that purpose. He told a deliberate lie about it, too. I pinned Rogers down on those calls, and he admitted the money had been spent in conversation with Mr. McVey over the telephone as to the situation and what was the best course to adopt. When I put that to McVey he completely denied it, and said he had never had any conversation with Rogers.

When we come to Mr. A. White, the Secretary of the Liverpool Central Branch, not only had he been guilty of a wilful breach of the Rules, but he had been guilty of allowing other people to be dishonest. Whether he was cognisant of it or not I am not in a position to say; but it did happen that there was a young man named Adams in the Liverpool Central Office, and I discovered that he had robbed the Union—robbed is the best way of putting it—of £129. Now, it was Mr. White's duty to look after that; he never told me anything; I had to find out for myself. I had to bring this young man Adams and White before the Court. Adams had already paid the money in, but, nevertheless, the Magistrates fined him £10 for attempting to withhold the money. White made a very bad figure in the box, and the Magistrate severely censured him. Then there was a further case against him that when the suspension notices were given out he went to the bank on that particular morning and drew out £82. No explanation had been given, and we were compelled to withdraw the case for this reason: We took out a summons for withholding that amount, but the Magistrates were of opinion that he ought to have been charged with fraud. I was advised by the legal men that it would be difficult to obtain a conviction for fraud—and, of course, you have to go by their advice, and in that way he got off. The case was not dismissed, and further proceedings may be taken if Mr. White is the means of causing any further trouble.

Then we come to Kenny, P. Murphy, Aldridge, Candlish, Jenkins, Cosgrove, Lloyd, Jowett, Warburton, Beckett, O'Connor, Murray, Basson, Galvin, Green, M. Murphy, Parkin, Connolly, and Allen. Those Officials were all guilty of breaches of the Rules and they were dealt with. They were dealt with in this way: "That the above Officials be dismissed as Officials of the Union and to be allowed four weeks' wages during the period of suspension." Now, we thought we would be merciful with those men because they were not ringleaders.

In the case of McVey, the sentence of the Executive Council was that he be dismissed from the service of the Union, and be not allowed to hold any official position in the Union for a period of two years. Further, that he be paid four weeks' wages in lieu of notice.

In the case of White, the Secretary of the Liverpool Central Branch, the sentence of the Executive Council was that he be dismissed from the service of the Union and be not allowed to hold any official position in the Union for a period of seven years, and

that he be paid no wages for the period of suspension. The reason why we did that was on account of the defalcations in the Branch. Now, I expressed to the Executive Council at the time that I thought seven years was too severe a sentence, because when you read it in the newspapers in cold blood it sounds as if you are giving a man seven years' penal servitude. Of course, really it is only that he shall hold no office for seven years. I would rather that the Executive Council had made it two years instead of seven; because, after all said and done, when the two years are up that does not say that he is going to obtain an appointment, because that is a matter for the Executive Council as to whether he will ever get an appointment or not again. But for newspaper purposes I think that seven years was too severe, and if there is to be any alteration at all in that sentence I would recommend two years instead of seven. Of course, it is entirely for you. You are now practically the Court of Appeal. They have been through the lower Court and now you are the higher Court. I would advise you that when you are put in that position you ought to remember the responsibility which is on your shoulders. It is generally said that working people are not fit to rule. I do not subscribe to that. (Hear, hear.) I think working people are fit to rule provided that intelligent guidance is given to them as to what is right and what is wrong. There is no harm, I think, in showing, whilst being firm on the Rules to determine to maintain your Constitution, that you can be merciful. I would ask you to consider in White's case that instead of the sentence being seven years it should be made two years, especially as there is no guarantee for him that after two years is up he will be re-instated.

I think I have gone over all the cases, and now is your chance, as the Court of Appeal, to tell us whether we have acted justly or unjustly. In my opinion, the only point for consideration should be the case of White, where we have made the suspension seven years instead of two.

The resolution that the Executive Committee's Report be adopted has been moved and seconded, and now you are entitled to pass judgment upon it. It is open for any Delegate to discuss this matter.

Mr. S. Jenkins (Liverpool): Mr. President and fellow members, there is one thing I honestly do regret, and that is this: It has never been a practice of mine or a habit of mine to attack a man in his absence. I am referring now to the Mersey ex-Officials. But anything I say in their absence they cannot blame me for, because four weeks ago I gave them ample opportunity when I was in Liverpool of defending their case, and for my part I was prepared, willing and ready to defend the National Union in suspending them. To my mind the only fault I find with the Executive Council's decision is this, that it has come six years too late—(hear, hear)—or really six years overdue. You cannot really understand this matter of the Mersey Officials unless you go back a matter of six years and then gradually you can build up not a story based on fiction, but a story based on fact. You will see that right from 1921 the whole

of this thing has been coming until it came to a head a matter of six or seven weeks ago. (Hear, hear.) I am referring now to the activities of that re-named body known as the Vigilance Committee, in Liverpool. At that time there was a body of men sincere and full of good intentions. I am not throwing bouquets at myself when I say I was one of them. Why was I one of them? Because I was convinced that something was wrong in the Mersey; I was convinced that brawn and muscle was never a qualification for the representation of seamen. I was convinced also that what we wanted in the Mersey was a sprinkling of youth with experience and an intelligent leadership. All right. Mr. McVey boosted us up at that time and actually led us to believe he was with us; he told us very nice stories about the dominating power in London, and everything we said London got the blame; at least, McVey told us London was to blame. He even went further than that and told me, and I defy contradiction—I am not a man for making statements unless I can prove them—“Jenkins, if you are prepared to go round the country I am willing and ready to levy every official in the Mersey district to set up an agitation against the National Executive.”

Several Delegates : Shame !

Mr. Jenkins : That was what McVey said to me. But McVey's moral courage only went to this extent : Do not say I am behind it. If a man has not got the conviction or the moral courage to get up on a platform and say what he honestly believes to be right, then to my mind he is not a fit man to represent me or to try and govern any body of seamen. (Hear, hear.) All right. Time went on, and the Vigilance Committee got to be a power, unfortunately so much so that Mr. Wilson was ready and willing to meet a deputation. I came up to London on that deputation. I came with an agenda. I submitted that agenda to the Central Office in Canning Place, and the whole of it was absolutely scrapped and a schedule was worked out with a matter of about 35 points. I think I am right in that.

The General President : That is right.

Mr. Jenkins : I submitted the agenda on the Thursday evening. On the Friday morning I found I had got a different agenda. I did not know that until I got to London, because I had been in the habit of moving in an atmosphere where if a man says “Yes” he means “Yes.” You can imagine my surprise when I got to London and found a totally different agenda. Who drew it up? Mr. McVey. Who supported him in it? Mr. White, who was then at Birkenhead. Who was it that was really the brains behind the whole thing? McVey, of Liverpool. We got to London, and I may say that I got the biggest trouncing of my life from Mr. Wilson. At that time I saw things were working very differently to what I anticipated. Mr. Wilson advised me that I was on the wrong road. At the time I did not agree with him. I returned to Liverpool, and as soon as McVey saw that we wanted him out and that we had learnt a totally different story in London he tried to cook the Vigilance Committee. I have

always insisted on the representation of seamen by seamen, and the time came when instead of having seamen on that Vigilance Committee we had Communist leaders in the person of Braddock, Breslau and other people. After a short time I was convinced beyond all doubt. Mind you, it is no business of mine what a man's political opinion is; he is entitled to have an opinion of his own; but it is every business of mine when he tries to push his political beliefs down my throat, and it is every business of mine when a man tries to use me as a political weapon to further his own political cause. When I learnt that the Vigilance Committee, which was then being started by McVey, was to excite men to throw in their Union books I felt it was my bounden duty to stand by the National Union, even though at that time I did not entirely agree with every finding of the Executive Council. Accordingly I stood by the Union. McVey had had a hand in creating the Vigilance Committee. Did Mr. McVey stand by the Union? I am not talking because I am in London; I am prepared to say the same thing before McVey in Liverpool. (Hear, hear.) Did he stand by the Union? No. When Captain Tupper and myself tried to defend the position of the seamen we got bricks thrown at our heads. We realised at the time that whilst we were defending the Vigilance Committee's policy of construction our efforts were proving most destructive, and whilst we were defending the solidification of the Organisation we were aiming at disorganisation. As a Trade Unionist I felt at the time I could no longer ally myself with that Committee.

Since that time McVey has been drawing money as District Secretary, and I say this—and I say it strongly—that he was drawing it under false pretences. McVey has not devoted one minute of his time to the interests of the seamen from that time until his suspension. His whole time has been occupied by devoting his time to matters of a political character. It is all right for men to dabble in politics, but if you are a District Secretary getting £5, £6, or £7 a week I suggest it is your bounden duty to consider the men who are paying you that money. There is ample time to go into politics. McVey has been more or less backed up in that policy by White, and the consequence is that for a period during the last six years he has been undoubtedly planning, scheming and plotting to try and make a bold bid for the leadership of the sea. There are no two ways of looking at it. Anyone who knows McVey and knows the Transport Workers' Federation knows of the flirtation in Liverpool that has been going on. Recently you have heard of a seamen's section of the Transport Workers; and I say again without fear of contradiction that the marine section had been getting backed up by McVey. The Transport Workers have not been paying McVey; the seamen have been paying McVey. All right.

Then we come to the time of the big Strike. Those who were at home—I was not home at the time—know that the country was faced with a big question. I am not concerned for the moment with the Miners' case. I am going to tell you further that McVey was not concerned with the Miners' case. I doubt whether McVey or White really understand the Miners' case, but in the big Strike he saw the glorious opportunity of riding over



the backs of the Transport Workers, and honestly it is my firm belief that he was of the opinion, like many more Trade Union leaders, that the Strike was going to be a huge success; the workers were going to be brought into a state of paradise and that McVey was going to emerge as the leader of the seamen. But things worked out so vastly different. What did we find? McVey has come down to the Executive Council and thrown himself on their mercy, with, as far as I know, no defence worthy of a District Secretary.

The General President : Mr. McVey did not throw himself on the mercy of the Executive Council ; he fought right up to the last ditch for what he had done ; and he said this, that if the same circumstances happened again he would do the same thing.

Mr. Jenkins : Then I withdraw that remark. . But it only makes the case 100 per cent. worse, to my mind. He comes down here and he tells you that if the same thing happens again he would be bound to follow the same course that he pursued six or seven weeks ago. If any man wants to get cheap applause he has only to go on the platform and ask men to come out on strike. He will get it. If you want to get bricks thrown at you you have only to talk common sense. McVey has only himself to blame ; whatever circumstances were surrounding him were entirely of his own making. (Hear, hear.)

Again, when it came to the day of the big Strike and he found that the policy of this Organisation was obnoxious and he did not agree with it, has not it been a sudden awakening after a matter of ten or 15 years as an Official—it is rather a long time to come to the conclusion—that he does not agree with the policy of the Union to take a ballot vote? Why did not he adopt the manly course ; and the manly course would have been for him to come down here and explain his position to the Executive Council and say on this big question : " I disagree with you ; I am going to resign." One could have admired him for taking that course.

The General President : Hear, hear.

Mr. Jenkins : But he did not ; he did the cowardly thing. To my mind it takes a lot of moral courage to do the right thing, and if a man is capable of doing the things which McVey did, then to my mind he is not fit to govern or represent any body of seamen. (Hear, hear.) To my mind, Mr. Wilson, if you will bear with me, there has been suggested an alternative to Mr. McVey's suspension. I am referring now to the talk that is going on in ships ; to my mind it is silly talk, but because it comes from seamen you have to deal with it. I am referring to the Transport Workers' Federation now. It has been said that if McVey is thrown out of this Organisation he is going to form a seamen's section of the Transport Workers' Union. All right. If I am not mistaken, to do a thing like that is against Trade Unionism ; it is against all Trade Union principles for one Organisation to poach on another. It convinces me that the sincerity and honesty of McVey, and those who support him, is so great that he is pre-

pared to do anything so long as he gets a weekly salary. I say this afternoon that this has come six years too late, and the seamen in Liverpool to-day are saying, and in Montreal and Antwerp, "Now they are out, keep them out," and the penalties you have inflicted upon them are nothing compared with the suffering and misery which has been inflicted on the seamen and the dependants of the seamen in Liverpool. Now the seamen in Liverpool have got a glorious opportunity of seeing that seamen represent seamen.

Another point is this, that in doing that you will help to solidify the position of the Organisation in Liverpool, and, having done that you will have accomplished what the seamen have been fighting for. That is the bounden duty of you all. I have heard Mr. Wilson say that seven years is too long. I am not a hard-hearted man, but what is it, after all said and done? He can go away to sea. What is that compared with the poor woman who has taken the last bundle to the pawnshop? What is seven years' deprivation of office compared with the poverty, the misery and the suffering that these men have inflicted upon the seamen and their dependants? It is nothing, and I say that it gives me the greatest pleasure to let the Executive Council's decision stand as it is, and by doing that you are performing a great service to the men of the Mersey. (Applause.)

Mr. Rooney : Mr. President and fellow Delegates, with regard to Mr. McVey's conduct I think we ought to increase his expulsion to seven years, the same as Mr. White's.

Mr. Holsgrove : I second that, too.

Mr. Rooney : I consider that Mr. McVey should get seven years the same as Mr. White, and keep it to seven years, and, when the seven years is finished, add another seven years on to it. (Laughter.)

Mr. Holsgrove : I have great pleasure in seconding the previous speaker's speech. I have learnt a lot since I came down to London. I learnt something this morning that money could not pay me for. You could not pay Mr. Jenkins for the words he has uttered. It is the truth. The Mersey has been looking for a long time for the proper man. It has been breaking my heart. I could not do anything. I tell you again that I could see this coming, but there was no one to help me. I say that Mr. McVey should have 27 years. (Laughter.) He is my Town Councillor, and he is my old schoolmate. I hope you will excuse me, but I feel so upset over this matter now that I have learnt the truth. (Applause.)

The General President : I should like to tell you that what Mr. Holsgrove and Mr. Jenkins have said is perfectly true. In 1921 Mr. McVey himself asked me to receive a deputation of the Vigilance Committee of Liverpool to discuss what they considered to be grievances. I consented to receive that Vigilance Committee, as it was called. Mr. Jenkins was one of the deputation, and when they arrived at my office in London they told me their

mission. I said, "Well, what is it you want to put before me; have you got it in writing?" Mr. Jenkins said they had. But, unfortunately, as Mr. Jenkins has said, the brief that he and his mates had drawn up had been taken out of the attaché case and Mr. McVey's brief was put in its place.

#### Several Delegates : Dirty !

The General President : I was sitting at one end of the table; Mr. Cathery was at another, and when those papers were taken out of the attaché case they were marked, "Mr. McVey's papers." So it was quite evident that the whole of the 37 points that were placed before me were not the Vigilance Committee's stuff, but McVey's stuff. I got evidence, or some kind of evidence—a good deal of it rumour—that McVey was the founder of the Vigilance Committee, or the backer of the Vigilance Committee, but the principal man in it was White. Then following on that I had a meeting in Cardiff, and I discovered that Mr. Jenkins was there with a number of questions written on a piece of paper at McVey's instigation, questions that were to be put to me at the meeting. Then I discovered later that the financing of this Vigilance Committee was helped by McVey himself, and whilst he was backing the Vigilance Committee, on the other hand he was writing me letters asking me the best course to adopt to destroy the Vigilance Committee. So you see what a very awkward situation I was placed in. Here was a man, a District Secretary, pretending he was out to fight the Vigilance Committee, whereas, as a matter of fact, he was the man behind it. Then, when he discovered that the Vigilance Committee had served his purpose, he was the most vindictive of the whole crowd in punishing the members of the Vigilance Committee. For instance, take that man called Tommy Morgan. On McVey's instructions everything was done to prevent that man getting a ship. Mr. McVey's instructions to the Mersey Officials were: On no consideration allow Morgan to sign. Morgan is one of the bitterest men in the world to-day. He told me when I was in Liverpool that one of his reasons for being bitter was that whilst McVey pretended to help them, when he discovered they had not made good he was the first to try and destroy them and unduly punish them. So that I had to try and think that I was working with a loyal man. You will remember what I told McVey here three days ago. I said that he had caused me no end of trouble because, on the one hand, I was trying to make myself believe that he was an honest and straightforward man, and that at every turn of the game his crookedness was coming out. That went on for six years. I have many a time reproached myself for thinking badly of the man, and I have said it to others, "Well, am I giving that man a fair crack of the whip?" and I felt at times that I was not. Then at other times the evidence was so overwhelming to prove his wrong doing that I have said, "Well, I cannot understand it."

Now, when we come to the Transport Workers, last year I had just returned home from America, and I found Liverpool in the most disorganised state. I found the Liverpool men most resentful against the Union, and particularly against myself. I could not understand it. I set to work to alter that, and I am pleased

to say that inside four or five days I changed the whole situation; and whereas no one would come into the office, in five days I reversed that, so much so that the offices were crowded with men. I thought, that is good; that is all right; but I had no sooner got that done than I was faced with another difficulty, and that was the attempt on the part of the Transport Workers' Union to break us up by forming a marine section. I could not understand that. But there again McVey comes on the scene. While I am putting up a bold policy against the Transport Workers' Union, here is McVey temporising with them on every hand. For instance, I brought the matter before the Trades Union Congress. The decision of the Trades Union Congress was that all the men the Transport Workers' Union had taken over should be handed over to us. When that came to local application by the Officials, Mr. McVey said, "No, no, do not do anything." So that, instead of having all those men over at once, months and months went by and nothing was done. I have seen a bit of shady work in Trade Union life in my time, but I will venture to say that what has gone on in the Mersey for the last six years has been the most shady that I have ever known.

Mr. Holsgrove: That is right, Sir.

The General President: That was due entirely to two men, and the worst villain of the piece is White, because he is one of those men that never expresses an opinion; he never opens his mouth, but he does it in an underhand way all the time, manufacturing balls for other people to fire. I testify to what Mr. Jenkins has said, and it can be borne out by others in this room. (Hear, hear.) It is absolutely true.

When the crisis came on May 1st I was told by some of McVey's friends around here that this was going to rend the Union from one end to the other—it was going to destroy the Union. I went down to Liverpool to see the effect of it with my own eyes, and what did I find? I found that instead of my action in suspending Mr. McVey rending the Union to pieces, the Liverpool men were absolutely one solid block. (Applause.) Mr. Holsgrove has been a schoolmate of McVey; McVey represents Mr. Holsgrove on the Birkenhead Town Council, so that Mr. Holsgrove knows a good deal of him locally from that side. I am now going to say that the picture that has been painted to those gentlemen from time to time has been of such a character that would impress anyone with the fact that the state of affairs at the Central Office of the Union was rotten and corrupt from beginning to end.

Mr. Holsgrove: We have seen it for years, and we have never had a chance to speak. No one could speak. What you say, Sir, is absolutely true. I have never been so disgusted as I have been this morning, and I hope all these gentlemen here will take me at my word. (Hear, hear.)

The General President: That is all right; but I want you to realise, if you will, what a difficult job it is for a man holding my position to be able to get what I call the exact grip of the situation. You have got to be level-headed and you have got to be careful in every step you make. I know there are hundreds of men of your

way of thinking; I know there are hundreds of men who have said that it was due to this, that and the other on the Mersey side, but I cannot be influenced by any one opinion; I must take the whole thing collectively. If I go by the reports from America from Mr. Jarman, I could show you hundreds of letters from Mr. Jarman and from Mr. Bell in New York telling me all that has been said here this morning, not speaking without prejudice, but absolutely straight reports saying what was the feeling of the Liverpool men. Yet from the time I knew that, it was impossible for me to act unless I could get substantial evidence to bear it out. What is the good of me going to an Executive Council meeting or an Annual General Meeting and saying I have heard this, I have heard that, and I have heard the other? What is that? That is not evidence. You have a right to say to me, "Give us absolute proofs." Well, we have had it this week, and we have it to-day.

Mr. T. Harper (Folkestone and Dover): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I am bubbling inwardly. I remember a Conference in this Hall on June 28th, 1925, and I remember the speeches from Mr. McVey and Mr. White. I have got them in my mind now, and to hear you. Mr. President, ask for mercy, and to make it less than seven years for Mr. White, it upsets me. I should like to move an amendment, with due respect to your advice.

Mr. Jarman (Mersey District): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I am glad to think that at last we have got the truth of the Mersey situation. For fifteen months in New York I have been listening to the tales of the men in the Liverpool ships. They were so bitter and vicious that for at least six months I could not get on board one of the ships of the White Star Line. Eventually I got there and listened to the men. That bore out what Mr. Jenkins has said this morning. What Mr. Wilson has said with regard to the Transport Workers is quite true, that whilst he was negotiating with the Trades Union Congress Mr. McVey was actually making agreements with the Transport Workers' Federation Officials on the Mersey to put our men out of the ships. When the General Strike came along this was the position. I found in New York that 99 per cent. of the men in the Liverpool ships were members of the Transport Workers' Union, and there with Mr. McVey's sanction. There is absolutely no question about that. My reason for getting up to speak is this: To attempt to embellish what Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Holsgrove have said would be useless, but I do want to bring this out, that not only did they break the instructions of the Executive Council, and not only did they come here and say they would do it again, but they actually broke the instructions of the Trades Union Congress. I think that is an important statement which ought to go on these Minutes because we shall be able to confront the Transport Workers' Union in the Mersey with the fact that whilst they instructed Mr. McVey to call our men out they knew, and must have known, that their own men were manning the ships in Liverpool.

Mr. F. Riley (Liverpool North): Mr. President and fellow seamen, I cannot sit down and listen to our friend Jarman's state-

ment without getting up, and, in some way, supporting it. Since 1921 I have been the one official on the Mersey who has stood loyally by the Headquarters' instructions.

The General President : And Mr. Decker.

Mr. Riley : Yes. I only wish there was a Pressman here to carry it to the echo. I have never been in touch with Mr. McVey on any one particular stunt. He kept Mr. Decker, Mr. James and myself out of the show. It has all emanated from a place called the "half-way house" in Birkenhead. When I started as Branch Secretary of the North End the White Star boats were 100 per cent. ; in 1920 we were collecting £35, £30 and £32—anything between £30 and £35 on each ship—at a 5s. contribution. As soon as the Transport Workers started to get in touch, I objected right from the commencement. The first ship was the "Adriatic." When I rang up Mr. McVey and told him that these men had joined the Transport Workers' Union, he said, "Leave them alone, Frank; I will clear that up." Therefore I had to allow those men to sign on his instructions. The next were the C.P.R. boats, which were 100 per cent. The first ship was the "Mount Royal." These men joined the Transport Workers' Union and they even went as far during the unofficial strike last year of going in a body to Captain Foster, in the Liver Buildings, and Mr. McVey was behind them, because he had met Mr. Pugh. The result was that Mr. McVey told me just for the present to keep away. I carried out his instructions. It went this far, that not one man in the White Star Boats or the C.P.R. boats have been paying their contributions for the last two years. I never had a chance until our General President came down just after this General Strike. The only thing we can go by in the Mersey District at the present time is the blue registration card. I got a chance to get going with the C.P.R. and the "Adriatic" and these other people. What has happened? The first ship we turned over was the "Adriatic." Mr. Jarman was present with me and we collected £34. Then on the next ship we collected £28. The next ship was the "Celtic," and the next the "Cedric." Then we started on the C.P.R. With what result? With the result that where my Branch was only taking probably £20 or £30 in the first week of the Strike it went up from £25 to £40; from £40 to £70, and from £70 to £104, and now this week, from what I am told, our Branch has collected £90 up to this morning. (Applause.) I was going to deal with this matter by moving the first resolution from Liverpool—but I am glad to have been able to do it without that. So far as Liverpool is concerned, it has been absolutely corrupt. The men who wanted to be honest have been prevented from being honest by McVey's and White's ambition, and their ambitions have been political stunts, which, in my opinion, stink in the nostrils of every sane thinking man, politician or otherwise. I thank you. (Applause.)

Mr. H. Decker (Liverpool North) : Mr. President and fellow workers, as an old official for 15 years in the South Branch, I am not surprised to hear the intrigues of Mr. McVey. I want to say that I have seen this coming for ten years. Mr. Wilson no doubt

remembers me coming to London and reporting the antics of Mr. McVey from the commencement. I went so far as to resign my position; I reported to Mr. Wilson that I could not work under such a filthy man. The result was that Mr. Wilson would not accept my resignation; he empowered me to go back to the South End of Liverpool and be my own boss. He said, "McVey can tell you nothing; you have taught him all he knows." Ever since then I have gone on my own. I admit that Mr. Havelock Wilson's instructions to me were to carry out the Rules of the Union and only to deal with Mr. McVey through correspondence, and be absolutely my own boss in the South-End Branch. I am pleased to say ever since then I have carried out the instructions of the Union all through on the advice of Mr. Wilson. Furthermore, I am pleased to say, with regard to the Transport Workers' Federation, there is not a card to be found in the South End of Liverpool. I am continually, and particularly this last four weeks, day after day in the docks. My two Delegates were dismissed, and I had no one to help me. I received help in the office through the instructions of Mr. Mulvenny, who took my office whilst I searched the docks to get in the money and sign the men on the ships. I have listened to all the men's complaints and I have found the best time to hold meetings among men is to get in amongst them when you are signing on the ships. That is the time to hold your meetings and listen to the discussions that take place. That is my experience. With regard to branch meetings, the men will not come. I have had two or three big meetings, but I cannot get them to come. It is not my fault; it is the fault of the others poisoning the members' minds not to attend. Furthermore, I wish to state, as far as the South-End Branch is concerned, we are getting every possible assistance rendered to us by the shipowners of South Liverpool.

With reference to the blue card, no man is allowed to sign on without one. There have been several cases where men have received the blue card in the company's office. I rang up one office last week and acquainted them of the fact that these men who were receiving the cards were members who were out of benefit in the Union, and not entitled to sign on. The reply was given to me: "All right, Mr. Decker, if we give the men a card on the production of their credentials, if it is not satisfactory do not emboss it with your stamp, and then we will not accept them in the ships." I have quite a few of those members to contend with. But I am pleased to say that when this card dispute is settled within four or five weeks we shall be back again to our old position, and I hope I shall be able to say, like Mr. Riley has said, that we shall be up to 100 per cent. The ships we dealt with are nearly all coal ships, and they are laid up, and what ships are getting coal is coal that is brought in by the Harrison Line and the Elder Dempster Line. The Yellow Funnel boats are coaling in Las Palmas. They are the finest little firm in England. They will not have men on board their ships who are not members of our Union.

I do not wish to detain you any longer. All I have to say is that the South-End Branch is solid and in the very near future we shall be back to our old financial position. (Applause.)

The General President : We appear to be all of the same way of thinking. In those circumstances we must not waste any more time, and I would suggest that the vote be taken.

It having been moved that the vote be now taken,

On question, the motion was agreed to.

The General President : Now, the vote that I have to put before you is that the findings of the Executive Council stand good. I have read the findings out and I have explained them.

On a show of hands there voted :—

In confirming the Report of the Executive Council 66

Against            do.            do.            do.            None.

The General President : That is carried unanimously. Mr. Catherly has asked me to explain this : There are a number of Executive Councillors present who are not entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting. They have no vote, and that explains why a large number are not voting.

#### REPORT OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

The General President : We will now go back to the agenda proper. The next item is the Report of the Standing Orders Committee.

Mr. J. Cotter : Will you take your agendas and I will go through the resolutions.

With regard to the resolutions dealing with the General President and his action during the General Strike, there are quite a number of resolutions on the agenda. I will give you a list now of the resolutions which the Standing Orders Committee recommend be deleted, seeing that the whole question was dealt with on Thursday on the vote that was taken with regard to the General President's action.

If you turn to page 2, the resolution from Barry, Cardiff and Newport is deleted. The resolution from Dover and Folkestone on the same page is deleted. On page 3 the resolution from Holyhead is deleted. On page 4, resolution No. 1 from the Liverpool South Branch is deleted. On page 5, resolution No. 6 from Liverpool South is deleted. The resolution from Manchester on the same page is deleted. Then resolution No. 1 from North Shields on page 5 is deleted. On page 6, resolution No. 3 from North Shields is deleted. The resolution from Middlesbrough and West Hartlepool is deleted, and the whole of the resolutions from South Shields, Goole, Grimsby and Hull can be deleted on the same page. Then on page 7 the resolution from the Cardiff Catering Department is deleted. Then the resolution from Hull can be deleted. Those resolutions are all dealing with regard to the action which Mr. Wilson took.



With regard to political action, we recommend that resolution No. 2 from the North Shields Branch on page 5 become the concrete resolution. Therefore the first part of the Cardiff resolution on page 2 is to be deleted. On page 4 resolution No. 4 from Liverpool South can be deleted. On page 6 the first part of resolution No. 2 from Middlesbrough and West Hartlepool can be deleted.

We recommend that all the Branches affected arrange between themselves for the mover and seconder of the concrete resolution.

On the question of affiliation to the International Transport Workers we recommend that resolution No. 5 on page 4 from Liverpool South become the concrete resolution. Therefore the second part of the Cardiff resolution can be deleted, and we recommend that the Cardiff and Liverpool South Delegates arrange for the mover and seconder.

With regard to the next item, I want you to listen to this very carefully. If you will turn to page 3 to resolution No. 3 from Green's Home, that resolution has to be divided, and it will read as follows :—

“ That this meeting of financial members agree to place a vote of ‘ No confidence ’ in our Executive Council and further demand their immediate dismissal.”

There it stops. That becomes the resolution. Then lower down you will see an amendment has been carried at the same Branch. After having a conversation with Mr. Kimpton, the Branch Secretary, and hearing his explanation, we decided that that amendment should become the second resolution. That will mean deleting the words up to “ dismissal.”

Then turning to page 3, resolutions from the Victoria and Albert Docks. There are two resolutions there. We have received information from a Delegate present here that the individual who moved those resolutions was not in financial standing in the Union. We have had the cards examined, and there happens to be three similar names in the same Branch. He has paid no levies, but he has moved these resolutions. Seeing they are of a controversial character we recommend that the President be allowed to use his discretion as to whether they are allowed to be put or not. We do not want anyone to think we are burking anything of a controversial nature.

The next matter is resolutions dealing with political honours. We recommend that the resolution from Liverpool North on page 3 become the composite resolution, and, therefore, the resolution from Liverpool South on page 4 dealing with this question is deleted, and also the resolution from Hull No. 2 on page 7. The Hull and Liverpool Delegates will arrange for the mover and seconder.

Resolution No. 1 from Newcastle on page 5, as it involves an alteration of Rules, is out of order. Dealing with that question, we would point out to the Delegates from that Branch that if they turn to Rule 6 on page 29 it will be found that the Branch Secretary has power to grant exemption as asked for in the resolution, with permission from the Head Office.

We finally recommend, as a lot of Delegates will want to get home this afternoon, and the train service is not too good, that the maximum amount of time allowed for speeches be five minutes.

The General President: Will anyone move the adoption of that Report?

Mr. Clouston: I have much pleasure in moving the adoption of the Report.

Mr. H. Decker formally seconded.

On question, the motion was agreed to.

### RESOLUTIONS FROM BRANCHES.

The General President: The most important resolution, and, perhaps the most interesting is resolution No. 2 from North Shields, at the bottom of page 5, which is as follows:—

“That we, the members of the North Shields Branch, are of the opinion that the time has now arrived when we should, as a Trade Union, disassociate ourselves from all political affiliation. We are also of the opinion that an extended ballot should be taken with the hope of giving all financial members a chance of voting.”

You will understand that you cannot drop your political affiliations until you have taken a ballot vote of the members. Therefore, if that resolution is carried by this Annual General Meeting it will have to go to the members for a ballot vote. Now, I do not think anyone need be alarmed about it. It is quite evident from all that can be heard that there is quite a big change in the opinion of the members and workmen generally on this question. You can find it in this way, and the Officials will bear this out: that is, the difficulty in getting men to pay their political levy. You come up against that everywhere. Of course, it is well known that a man can have an exemption form, but apart from that there is a strong feeling against it. With regard to that feeling, it is only right and proper, I think, that it should be tested by a ballot vote. I think a ballot of that kind ought to have at least three months, not less. It is for you to make your voice heard on the resolution. The resolution is so important that whilst I am confining you to five minutes I will try and give you as much latitude as possible so that we may have a fair discussion of the resolution.

Mr. Clouston: Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I do not think there has ever been any resolution on any of our agendas which gives me as much pleasure to propose as this one. When I say that, I say it in all honesty, being firmly convinced that Trade Unions were started to carry out Trade Union works—(hear, hear)—and purely Trade Union works in the interests of the members of the Trade Unions, who must be of all shades of political opinion. When Trade Unions carried on their work for

Union purposes there was never any jealousy or the envy or the malice which we have since developed so unfortunately of late years. I should like to say this, that men who get into positions in Trade Unions who have been guilty of using political propaganda in the offices to which they have attained, it has all been to the detriment of the Trade Union side of the business. We have had evidence of it in this Organisation now for many years. Year after year it came up on the agenda that the time had now arrived when we should politically identify ourselves with the Labour Party. Every year from honest conviction I religiously voted against it. But the time came when it was carried. A ballot was taken, and, curiously enough to my mind, that ballot paper had two votes on it. One was: Are you prepared to give sanction to join the Labour Party? The second one was: Are you in favour of the nationalisation of shipping? Everyone, I say, knew at that time that nationalisation of shipping or the nationalisation of everything was one of the main planks of the Labour Party's programme. It proved to my mind in the result of that ballot that the members did not understand or appreciate the position on which they were voting. The result of the ballot was a majority in favour of joining the Labour Party. The vote against nationalisation of shipping was overwhelmingly lost. To my mind both votes were of the same value, one stultifying the other.

I think the time has arrived now when we should see what is the feeling of the men, seeing that some of our Officials have used the Union for the furtherance of political propaganda and not in the interests of the members. I am certain and sure, from the opinions of the men in the ships and from the opinions of the men in the Branches, that the time has now arrived when we should cut this Society adrift from all political parties. Never one—cease the lot, and carry on our work for the interests of the members as a Trade Union. (Applause.)

The General President: Is there any amendment to the resolution? Does not anyone want to speak in opposition to the resolution?

Mr. G. Jackson (Newport): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I rise to oppose the resolution standing in the name of North Shields which I believe is retrograde and reactionary, and which is not called for by the membership of this Union.

The General President: I will allow you time, Mr. Jackson, for my interruption. Now you will remember that that resolution has been passed in, say, 30 Branches where there was a large number of members present during the last month.

Mr. Jackson: Yes, lately. The General President quite rightly informs me that 30 Branches of our Union have had the pleasure of holding Branch meetings. We have just heard how difficult it was to get men to come to Branch meetings. This important question has been discussed by the members there and the feeling engendered there was that they did not believe we should continue our affiliation to the National Labour Party, but that we should

carry out the mandate of our membership. I am as loyal a man as ever there was, I hope, and I say that you are not loyal to the mandate; no official intimation has come to any of the Branches that I am aware of—not to my Branch—speaking of this particular matter. I do not know the reason of it. Perhaps we cannot afford the money to pay the fees. Well, we have met our financial obligations to the Labour Party to a certain extent, and I suppose we shall foot the bill later. But our moral obligations to the Labour Party have never been met; we have never supported the Labour mandate; we have seen nothing in our official journal with reference to the attitude of the men. We have become honourably affiliated to the National Labour Party of this country. I have watched with great interest the growth of the Labour Party from 1892, when there were only 15 members in the House of Commons. In 1923 we had 194 members in the House of Commons. I have always believed sincerely that if the workers wanted their rights and privileges protected it would be better protected by them themselves having representatives in the House of Commons. The wonderful work that our President did in the House of Commons in the twenty years that he represented us, to me means much. I have tried, and I have argued for direct representation of the men of the Mercantile Marine in the Parliament of this country. We have no direct voice in the House of Commons to-day, and there is legislation pending or proposed at the time to cripple Trade Union activity, and we have no direct voice in that assembly. The first intimation that we had that there was something moving in this matter was that there was somewhat of a rift in the lute; I will not say engineered, but it came about in this way: I saw it in a Liverpool paper when I heard that at Liverpool a National Organiser—I do not think it was Captain Tupper, who is our National Organiser—but a National Organiser had been advising the men at that place and in other places, I am told, to cut adrift from politics altogether. I want to say quite plainly that I think that is not playing the game.

I want, before I finish, to say that the only men who are concerned in this are the men who are paying the political levy. There are many men here who are not paying the political levy. The National Organiser to whom I have referred I have found out is not now paying the political levy, and I take it he has no part in saying how the political fund shall be allocated and used. I think in the days to come you will regret it if you pass this resolution, because there is not a Union in the country to-day but which is not affiliated to the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress. Many of them have members in the House of Commons who are doing good work and watching the interests of the working classes in our country. They are watch-dogs in Parliament. I say if you pass this resolution you will not stand well in the Labour world in the future. I am jealous of the status of my Union; I am jealous of its future. I am afraid sometimes when I see the trouble within its ranks, and I think we shall not achieve that great object that we set out to achieve, that is, to uplift the men and the general economic improvement of our condition at sea until we can say we are largely emancipated from the evils which we have had to suffer in the years that have gone by. There

are many different kinds of political minds in the Union. I admit that, and I respect the men for it. There are men who have no political convictions, and there are men in this room who have been candidates for Parliament—at least one—under the Labour Party's ticket.

Fellow seamen, I ask you to vote against the resolution.

The General President : There are three questions I should like you to answer, Mr. Jackson. The first is, do you believe that the majority of the men are in favour of the class war and conscious class war?

Mr. Jackson : I do not believe in it ; I believe in common sense and goodwill.

The General President : That is number one. The second point is, you know very well according to the Constitution of the Labour Party that you must subscribe wholeheartedly to their programme. And if you do not you are expelled.

Mr. Jackson : Why not?

The General President : Very well. Then how can you work those two things consistently together? If a man has to subscribe to class war and class-conscious war—you for one say you do not believe in it?

Mr. Jackson : I do not.

The General President : Therefore you are not entitled to be a member of the Labour Party or have any association with them. That is their programme, you know.

Mr. Jackson : Not class war.

The General President : Yes, Sir. The reason why there is such a revolution of feeling is that the Labour Party and those associated with them have adopted by resolution class war and class-conscious war. I think you will agree with me that they never submitted to a ballot vote of the working people of this country. That is quite certain.

Mr. Jackson : It is certain they would not.

The General President : Then where do they get their authority from to exclude a man from the Party because he will not support class war and class-conscious war?

Mr. Jackson : I do not admit that they preach class hatred. Let me answer you in this way, that practically all the Trade Unions in this country are affiliated to the Labour Party. They must all be duds and we must be the only wise people.

The General President : I say "duds" is the proper word to apply for working men to subscribe to an Organisation which

pledges and ties them down to class war and class-conscious war without them knowing it. Well, they can only be called "duds," and this is a reason for this resolution coming up to-day, because whilst we as a Union are endeavouring to preach and practise better understanding with the employers, the other side are declaring to destroy the employers and everyone associated with them—

Mr. Jackson : That is your opinion, founded upon a long experience, I will admit, but it is not mine.

The General President : It is not a question of opinion; it is a matter of fact.

Captain Griffiths : On a point of order. Where can you show me in the Constitution of the Labour Party any resolution dealing with class war?

The General President : I certainly can, and I can not only show you that, but I can show you the resolutions where it has been carried at the Trades Union Congress. You ought to know that. What is the difference between the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress? None. Surely you must know that the resolution on class war and class-conscious war emanated from the Labour Party and not the Trades Union Congress, but it was carried by the Labour Party to be endorsed by the Trades Union Congress. Do you agree with the class-war policy?

Mr. Jackson : No.

The General President : You will agree that what I say is true?

Mr. Jackson : I am not saying it is not true.

The General President : I am not expressing an opinion. Now the final question : You are a democrat?

M. Jackson : I hope so.

The General President : What objection have you to taking a vote of the members to see whether we are right or wrong?

Mr. Jackson : Not a bit.

Mr. W. Graham (Newcastle) : Mr. President and fellow Delegates, representing the Branch from which the resolution emanated, I take offence at Mr. Jackson's remarks. We did not have a National Organiser down at North Shields when the resolution was passed. The resolution was passed by 120 financial members.

Mr. Jackson : I did not say North Shields; I said Liverpool.

Mr. Graham : Well, it was inferred.

Mr. Jackson : I did not infer that.

Mr. Graham : The resolution was passed unanimously by 120 financial members. The Officials had nothing whatever to do with it. If a resolution comes here from the members, the members want the resolution to go forward as it is sent up.

Mr. T. Jones (Barry) : Mr. President and fellow Delegates, as one of the men who was in Liverpool at these meetings that we called, I am going to say here and now that the members themselves agree with this resolution. I also want to point this out to the members : If you will look at your balance-sheet you will find that there was £989 19s. collected for the political levy, and taking that at 1s. a member, you will find out the whole of this Union of just over 100,000 not 20,000 wished to pay it. We charge the men £2 for joining the Union, and without their sanction—I am going to admit that we do it wrongly—we have been charging them until a few months ago a 1s., whether they liked it or not, to become a member of the Labour Party. When the men come in and say, "Well, how much do we owe you?" we generally put a shilling on, and they are not going to have words with us for the sake of the extra shilling. I tell you right here and now that the Liverpool men are particularly strong that there shall be no political activities in this Union. (Hear, hear.) They are fed up with it. They say that is what has brought Liverpool to what it is, and they do not want any Official to have anything to do with it, but they want him to give the whole of his time to the Organisation which is paying him to look after the men. They feel very strongly on this point. If I am right we had about 14 meetings in Liverpool, and in some way this question always cropped up from the men. After we had addressed the men on Union business they themselves brought up this question of the political levy. They want to clear it out of the whole of the Organisation. We pointed out to them if they wanted to do that they must do it in a constitutional manner. We told them that there had been a ballot taken as to whether they should join the Labour Party, and that had been carried, and they would have to subscribe to a ballot being taken in this matter. That is all the resolution asks for. We want the Head Office Officials to be given the power to have a ballot vote taken of the whole of the members of the Union.

Mr. Cairns (Glasgow) : Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I feel bound to oppose this resolution, and I say that because if there is any class of workers in this country who wants to be represented in Parliament, it is surely seamen. From the time that a seaman joins a ship after he signs articles he is bound body and soul, hand and foot, by Act of Parliament, the Merchant Shipping Act—(hear, hear)—and only by political action will he be able to get any redress. Past history proves it. Samuel Plimsoll got the load-line in the House of Commons; Mr. Havelock Wilson got the accommodation for seamen increased from 72 cubic feet to 120 cubic feet by being in the House of Commons. I say now that it is a national calamity that Havelock Wilson is not in the House of Commons at the present time. (Hear, hear.) I do not care whether he is a Tory, a Liberal or a Socialist. I wish he was there now. Mr. Wilson has talked about class war.

There is no class war mentioned in the Labour Party's Constitution; but there are Left Wingers in the Labour Party, and that is one reason why we should stay in to help the Right Wingers to beat the Left Wingers out of it. Finally, the Party which you are proposing to leave is His Majesty's Opposition in the House of Commons. Sooner or later that Party will be in power, and take care and take heed in case they legislate against you if you come out of it now. That is all I say to it.

Mr. Jarman: Mr. President and fellow seamen, I cannot for the life of me think why there should be any opposition to this resolution. It is just a simple proposition of asking the members of this Union whether they desire or not to continue their affiliation to the Labour Party. With regard to our friend, Mr. Jackson, no one knows better than I do his sincerity in this matter, and I suggest to you now that if what he believes is true, that the men of the sea want political representation, then what objection can he have to a ballot being taken of the men? I am convinced that the most difficult thing that I have to get into the Union is the political levy. Surely that is a true indication of the feelings of the men when they say they do not want to pay it, and when it is pointed out that the only way they can get political representation backed up by the Union is by paying the political levy, they say they do not want it.

With regard to class-conscious warfare, I would remind our friends here, who are opposed to this resolution, of a resolution which was passed in 1917, subscribed to by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. Snowden, where they upheld the Russian Revolution, and where they decided to organise a British democracy to follow Russia. They wanted the Labour Party to begin here for this country what the Russian Revolution had accomplished in Russia. If that is not class-conscious warfare then I do not know what it is.

Mr. Cairns: They never said such a thing.

Mr. Jackson: May I ask a question at this juncture? With regard to men who are exempted from paying the political levy, have they any right to interfere in the matter as to how the levy shall be used?

The General President: That is not the question before the meeting. The question before the Conference is: Shall we take a vote as to our affiliation with the Labour Party?

Mr. McGhee: I think it ought to be made clear to this Annual General Meeting that they have a perfect right, whether they pay the political levy or not, to deal with this question.

The General President: Yes. I have made that clear, I think.

Mr. Tearle: Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I rise to support the resolution that a ballot be taken of the whole of the membership of the National Union of Seamen.



*(At this point Mr. Frank Hodges entered the Conference Room and was received with applause.)*

I do not think there is a man here this morning who will forget this Annual Meeting as long as he lives. We have seen what the result has been of politics in the Mersey. We have seen our comrades, men we have worked with side by side, going out of the movement. What has it been due to? Nothing but politics. Is not that sufficient evidence to convince any man or any Official here this morning that politics are the damnation of the industrial world? When the last resolution was carried I think there was hardly an ordinary member present, so I think it is only fair that the men of the sea should have a voice at this juncture in saying whether they shall be affiliated to the Labour Party or not.

Mr. R. Breckenridge (Scottish District): Mr. President and fellow seamen, I rise to support the resolution in its amended form. If the resolution had come before the Conference as it was on the agenda, I could not have given it any support whatever. I was like a great many more young men, I thought we had to have a strong Trade Union and we had to be strong politically, but, since the war, I have modified my views, as I have noticed in the Trade Union movement that the Trade Union leaders of this country were indulging more on the political side and neglecting the industrial side of the movement. I have noticed in recent events that politics have had the first place. What has happened at our Executive Council meeting on the first two days has influenced me strongly that we should pass this resolution and take a ballot of our members, and let them decide whether we shall continue our affiliation or not to the Labour Party. Someone has mentioned that we should have representatives in the House of Commons. I quite agree; and as a Trade Unionist I think we are at liberty to choose candidates for the legislative side of the seamen in the House of Commons.

Captain Davis: Mr. President and fellow seamen, I have listened with great interest to what the mover of the amendment said, and, while I do not agree with my friend, Mr. Jackson, I want to make it perfectly clear that after a long and continued acquaintance with him, I have come to this conclusion that no man who knows him will question his high integrity, his honesty and his sincerity in what he has said. (Hear, hear.) But while that be so, I must part from him at the present juncture. If I confine myself to the resolution, it means this, that as a democrat by conviction and having regard to the great upheaval and the continued expressions of opinion at this Conference with regard to the trouble that has occurred in our ranks, suggested all round the room as a result of some uncalled for political action—as a democrat by conviction I really believe the time has come when we should have the voice of the men of the sea on this important question. (Hear, hear.) Suppose, if we have this resolution and there is a violent change in the political atmosphere. What is there, in the name of heaven, to prevent us in a matter of six or seven years asking the members again if they have any reason to alter

their opinion? You know very well, friends, that I am one who sacrificed much and have suffered handicap upon handicap to bring into existence the Labour Party, but I never had any intention—there was nothing more foreign to my thoughts than those who spoke in the interests of Labour should advocate the doctrines of Lenin and Trotsky. I will never submit to the doctrine of foreign agitators—(applause)—and until we get expressions of opinion from the British working men purely and simply, I will not continue to subscribe to that Organisation which I held in such high esteem until they took the wrong road and allowed foreign agitators to dictate the policy of the British workers. We are not going right unless we have the votes of those men whom we have the honour to represent. (Applause.)

Several Delegates : Vote, vote.

Mr. J. H. Doxford (Executive Council) : I have heard it said that it is only four years since we took a vote. Many things have happened in the last four months, never mind four years, and after the experience of the Executive Council which they have had this last three or four days, and which has been reported to you, do not you think there is some reason why we should test the members again after four years? That is all it means. It is a simple question; you have nothing to do with the settling of it; that is in the ordinary members' hands. Let the ordinary members decide, because that is democracy. (Applause.)

Several Delegates : Vote, vote.

A Delegate : I move that the vote be now taken.

The General President : One Delegate was on his feet before you moved that the question be put, and I propose to hear him and then I will put the question.

Captain Griffiths : Mr. President and fellow seamen, I am absolutely in favour of a vote being taken of the men of the sea as to whether they want to be affiliated to the Labour Party or not. That is only a fair proposition. There is nothing in the Labour Party's Constitution dealing with class war. I do not accept the Trotsky doctrine. (Hear, hear.) I am going to accept the evidence of the British Government on that, because the other day when they searched the Communist headquarters they found a lot of papers which they printed in a Blue Book to be bought at any Government store. The Communist themselves, the disciples of Trotsky, stated that the Labour Party was the biggest enemy in this country of the Communist Party. (Hear, hear.) They had no quarrel whatever with the British Government. I thank you for allowing me to speak because I am a member of the Executive Council sitting down very quietly listening, but I hope this will go to a ballot of the members.

Several Delegates : Vote, vote.

The General President : I am now going to put it to the vote, but you will let the President say a word, will you not? With regard to the question of class war and class-conscious war, three years ago in this very building a deputation waited upon us from the Transport Workers' Union to urge upon us to affiliate. Three of the most prominent men among them were Harry Gosling, James Sexton and Ernie Bevin. I was giving them reasons why they had made it very difficult for us to agree with them, and it was this : A week before they attended here there had been an International Conference at Hamburg, and along with them was Jimmy Thomas and a few more prominent men of the Labour Party, and they passed two resolutions to the effect that no Unions be recognised either by the Trade Union movement or the Labour Party unless they subscribed to the doctrine of class-conscious war and class war. I called their attention to that, and I said, " Now if we join up with you we are bound by those resolutions which you have carried, because if I got up at a Conference and opposed, then I would be reminded that those had already been carried, and, therefore, were the law which guides not only the Trades Union Congress but the Labour Party." When I told them that I got a first-class shock. The three of them laughed, and this is what they told me. Jimmy Sexton was the principal spokesman. He said, " Joe, you do not pay any attention to that; that is only a pious opinion—eyewash for the workers." I never got such a shock in my life, because I am of this opinion, that when a man gets up and preaches class war, class-conscious war, he believes what he says. If he does not believe it he has no right to subscribe to it, and he has no right to preach it. I am just afraid that all round there are people going to Conferences and they pass resolutions and they do not realise the effect of them, or the strength of their own language, with the result that they are doing great damage to the cause of the working man. I say that resolutions passed ought to be very carefully considered as to what is to be the effect of those resolutions, and if you do not believe in them, you have no right to pass them just for convenience' sake. That is as far as I am concerned. I have never been of the Labour Party. Mr. Griffiths talked about the good work that I did in the House of Commons. Well, if I did any good work it was not due to being affiliated to any one political party, because when I was in the House of Commons I sought the aid of all political Parties regardless of whatever Party they belonged to, and by doing that I was able to accomplish a good deal of work which I should not have been able to do if I had not sought that aid.

I am now going to put the resolution. You have heard the resolution, which provides that the time has arrived when we should take a ballot vote of our members to ascertain whether or not we should be affiliated to any particular party. There is no amendment, so the vote will be for or against the resolution.

On a show of hands there voted—

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	64
Against the resolution	...	...	...	...	2

The General President : The ballot papers will be issued in due course to ascertain the feeling of the men, and will be sent to every man's home address, and I feel sure their relatives will pass those ballot papers on to them wherever they may be. I think three months will be ample time to take the vote.

Mr. Borlase : I move that it be three months.

Mr. Powdrill : I will second that.

The General President : I recommend that we put on the bottom of the ballot paper a request that the relatives will forward the ballot paper to wherever the men are. (Hear, hear.) Is there any amendment to that?

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	64
Against the resolution	...	...	...	...	0

The General President : I think the question of how the ballot should be framed should rest with the Head Office Officials. (Hear, hear.) I am quite willing to submit a copy to the Branches before it goes out to see whether they approve or disapprove of it. The Branches will be able to make any suggestions which they choose to make. Is that agreed?

On question, the motion was agreed to.

#### RESIGNATION OF MR. HENSON.

The General President : Now will you turn to page 2, resolutions 1 and 2 from Green's Home. The first resolution reads as follows :—

“That we, the members of this Branch, wish to call upon the Delegates at the A.G.M. to fully inquire into the resignation of Mr. Henson, and ask that, with the wish of this Branch, Mr. Henson be reinstated at once.”

Now why such a resolution should have been passed I cannot understand, because if anyone wanted to know why Mr. Henson resigned the proper thing for them to do was to write to Mr. Henson and find out. Surely that was the right thing to do. But I gave the explanation to the Executive Council the other day, and I do not mind giving it now if the members want it.

Several Delegates : Yes.

The General President : During the Strike, from May 1st until May 4th Mr. Henson was at this office. He did not appear to me to be in favour of our policy, and on May 4th, I think it was, when the crisis was at its very height, he came into my room, and I personally was very sick—very, very sick indeed—I was very much upset, and I said to Mr. Henson, “It is a very strange thing you can express opinions to other people about our policy, and you do not tell me.” I said, “I think it would be better if you

have anything on your mind that I, being the General President, am the proper man to whom you should confide your fears and doubts," and so on. I must admit I used some very forceful language. I was not over polite, and I think I had some justification for not being over polite, because of the difficulties with which I was surrounded, and, to use a common expression, I let myself go. On that Mr Henson left me, and on the next day I had his resignation. Mr. Henson, I thought—and I have told him so, too—when he saw the very bad state in which I was, would have left the room, and then when I calmed down to something like normal he would have come back and said, "That was a good telling off you gave me," and so on, and I would have said at once, "Well, if I did something out of the ordinary, I am very, very sorry, and that is all there is to it." But a resignation to me is a resignation every time. When a man resigns I will always accept his resignation, because that means he is disgruntled with the job and does not want any more of it, and, therefore, the best thing is to put a man in his place to carry on the work. That is all there is to it. Mr. Henson has definitely declared that he is not coming back. Is there any further explanation required?

Mr. Kimpton : As this resolution comes from my Branch, perhaps you will allow me to say a few words. I happen to be the Secretary of that delightful suburb, Poplar. (Laughter.) I can assure you that at the meeting that was held there were about 17 men, including Officials and everyone. Some of them had come there with one set purpose. Unfortunately, I was not chairman of the Branch that day. I wish I had been chairman of the meeting. I received from Mr. Henson some insurance papers, and Mr. Henson has not got in touch with me at all since by correspondence or otherwise; but when I received these papers this week it looked to me as if Mr. Henson had fully decided to run this Insurance Society for the benefit of seamen's effects. I am in this awkward position now; I am between the devil and the deep blue sea. I had a talk with Mr. Henson's son this morning as to whether he knew anything about his father's ideas, and he could not tell me.

The General President : You were not responsible for that resolution?

Mr. Kimpton : No, I am not responsible for any of them.

The General President : Is there anyone else who wants to say anything?

Mr. Powdrill : Has Mr. Henson applied for reinstatement?

The General President : How can you discuss it unless you get an application for reinstatement?

Mr. Jarman : I move that we take the next item.

The General President : Is that agreed?

On question, the motion was agreed to.

## RESOLUTION FROM GREEN'S HOME.

The General President: The next resolution from Green's Home is:—

“That we, the members of this Branch, pass a vote of ‘No confidence’ in the Executive Council, seeing that from time to time Rule 7, clauses 1, 2 and 3, have been ignored by them in reference to the reduction of wages which have taken place during the past five years, and that the ballot re the miners’ dispute was not constitutionally taken according to Rule 7, and we call upon the Delegates at the A.G.M. to discuss the said Rule as to its future, as we feel that this Rule should at all times be acted upon when dealing with wages, etc., as laid down in the said Rule.”

Just let me say that the whole of that resolution is a concoction of fibs and misunderstandings. Look at your Rule, and what do you find? It says that before you enter upon a strike a ballot vote must be taken. I should like to explain this. I suppose the men who moved that had in mind what took place last year. Well, what took place last year was this: You remember that in 1924 we got an advance of £1 a month on our wages. That was done, if you like to call it so, by the Executive Council. The men never asked for it, and it was a shock to them when they got it. The only thing they did say was that it ought to be £2 instead of £1, but when that £1 was given a pledge was given by the Delegates attending the Maritime Board that if the freights went down we would voluntarily agree to the £1 being taken off. Freights did go down to the pre-War level, and you know there was a special Conference of Delegates, and you know their instructions. Then we went to the Maritime Board and we said, “Yes, freights have gone down, and as we made that pledge we are prepared to honour it,” and we did honour it. What ballot can you take on that? Do you want to make your Delegates on the Maritime Board look ridiculous? If you give a pledge and you get £1 on that pledge, when the time comes you have to honour that pledge, and, therefore, a ballot vote was not necessary.

Mr. Kimpton: With regard to this second resolution, I take it that these fellows mean this: As you know, we have a correct system of balloting in this Union to-day. Mr. Havelock Wilson has explained it to you and you are not nobbled at the Branches as you used to be in years gone by. (Hear, hear.) To-day things are done in quite a decent, legitimate manner. I am not so old as many Officials here, but I have seen some of the rot that has gone on in the Branches for the past 15 years. I want you to understand quite frankly that I was not pledged, and if I had been pledged I should not have accepted it, to come here and support the resolutions which are on the agenda. My brother Officials, particularly, will realise what it means when you get a few men rounded up to attend a Branch meeting and they insist on sending resolutions to Head Office. I cannot support this resolution because, as you remember yesterday morning, I believe I supported most emphatically the resolution from the Liverpool Central Branch, and whatever happens now in Poplar, and I have got

into this state that I do not care, but I am not supporting that resolution from Poplar.

Mr. Jarman : I move that this resolution lie under the table. Here is a resolution passed by 17 men. They have taken on their own shoulders the responsibility of saying what the whole of the Branch wants. I think they are entirely out of order. This man has never paid a penny into the Union, and, as a matter of fact, he is a transfer from the Dockers' Union.

The General President : Do you say his card is not in order?

Mr. Jarman : It is a vote of no confidence in the Executive Council. That is exactly what it means.

The General President : I am advised, according to this man's records, he is in arrears in all his levies.

Mr. Cotter : There is a slight mistake there. The man who is in arrears is the man who moved the Victoria and Albert Dock resolution, and not this resolution.

Mr. Jarman : Then I withdraw my remarks, but at the same time I shall not withdraw my remarks in moving that the question lie under the table, because here is a meeting of 17 men moving a vote of no confidence in the Executive Council.

Mr. Kimpton : Take a vote and let it be turned down fearlessly.

Mr. Jarman : I am quite willing to withdraw on that.

The General President : Will anyone move the Green's Home resolution? Will anyone move that it be not entertained?

Mr. Borlase : I will move that.

Mr. Burns formally seconded.

The General President : Does anyone want to speak for or against that?

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	0
Against the resolution	...	...	...	...	62

The General President : Then the resolution is lost. Now we will pass on to resolution No. 1 from the Victoria and Albert Docks. That resolution is as follows :—

“ That we, the members of the Victoria and Albert Dock Branch, wish it to be brought to the notice of the A.G.M. that two clauses on our Deep Sea Articles, i.e., ‘ Equivalent time off in lieu of overtime worked,’ be obliterated from the same, seeing that the overtime rate pay is 1s. 3d. per hour, and our sea pay runs out at 9d. per hour.”

I am bound to rule that out of order because that subject has been discussed at the Executive Meetings and the Annual General Meetings, and a resolution passed that it lay over until such time as the shipping trade is in such a condition as we can approach it with some degree of success. Is it agreed that I rule that out?

On question, the motion was agreed to.

The General President : Now resolution No. 2 from the Victoria and Albert Docks :—

“That this Branch meeting of seamen wish to lodge our protest against the reactionary policy of Mr. Havelock Wilson, in suggesting to the Government the scheme whereby the strike would be declared ‘illegal.’ This in our opinion is the worst type of strike-breaking, and we call for his resignation on the grounds that he is no longer worthy of the confidence of the members of our Organisation.”

I may tell you that that is a lot of rubbish, too. I never suggested to the Government anything at all. What I did was to go to the Courts of Law to vindicate our Constitution and Rules—(hear, hear)—and the Court vindicated them. The Executive Council has approved the action that was taken in that matter, so there is nothing more to be said. All I should like to say is that when those resolutions are moved it ought to be put in what was the number present at the meeting, because I understand in this case there were only about a dozen members present.

A Delegate : Seven.

The General President : And they say, “We, the members of the Victoria and Albert Docks”—we, seven of us! They give forth their view as representing 3,000 or 4,000 men. I think also in future we should have the names of those men set out, so that we shall know who they are.

A Delegate : One of those men was out of order; he was not in benefit; I am referring to the man named Butcher, who moved the resolution.

The General President : You say you can vouch for that?

The Delegate : Yes, I can.

Mr. Cathery : We scrutinised every man’s card who moved and seconded a resolution in our registration department. I can tell you that one of the greatest difficulties I am confronted with in settling claims is that, I should say, 95 per cent. of the claims that come up here for payment are made by persons out of benefit, and the reason for them being out of benefit is because they have not paid any political levy. We have scrutinised the names of the men who moved resolutions, and all those resolutions are in order.



The General President: I rule that resolution out of order on other grounds. Then at the bottom of page 4 there is this resolution from the Mersey District:—

“That this meeting is of the opinion that many of the affiliations with foreign Unions are waste of good union money, especially in the case of International Transport Workers' Federation, which has proved itself in the past to be more of a political association than that of a Trade Union. It therefore be an instruction to the Executive Council to withdraw forthwith from the International Transport Workers' Federation.”

Mr. Borlase: Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I have great pleasure in moving this resolution as it stands upon the agenda. I am advised that it should read “with foreign shore Unions.” My reason for moving the resolution is that the activities of the politicians from a national and international standpoint for a considerable time have caused a number of us who supported these affiliations to think furiously. We have, on the one hand, the Russians interfering with the work of the International Federation, and we have, on the other hand, the English I.L.P., who are constantly interfering with the work of Trade Unions from a national and international standpoint. I want to tell the Delegates present how this works out in practice. They have adopted a slogan which is not supported, by the way, by Mr. Philip Snowden and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald: “Socialism in our time.”

With regard to the Trades Union Congress, they set up a Committee composed of representatives from the Miners' Federation and from the Labour Party to deal with the situation in the mines. The English I.L.P. are interfering with the work of the Unions and sending men to Vienna. Shinwell is constantly going there. Those people are not taking into consideration the difficulties with which the industries are confronted at the present moment. Then there is a committee which is called the Industrial Committee of the I.L.P. This committee is stated to have a plan for dealing with the solution of the mining problem. This is adopted internationally by Mr. Edo Fimmen and others, and is only supported by Mr. Cook in this country. As for the Miners' leaders, they are in a very great difficulty, because this has got into their heads, and instead of a compromise being effected with the employers, a number of the leaders are bound by the policy of not a second on the day and not a penny off the wages. The mandarins of the Trade Union movement say that we have no right to reverse our policy, but I say we have to profit by our past mistakes. We have Mr. Edo Fimmen saying we must not handle any coal. But the men on the other side are working overtime putting coal into ships on the Continent. A docker said to me, “We are working overtime this week beating the miners,” and then they have the cheek to come round and tell the men of the sea not to carry any “black” coal. I have great pleasure in moving this resolution. (Applause.)

Mr. Jenkins: Mr. President and fellow Delegates, it gives me great pleasure to support the resolution, for this reason. In the

past few years I have watched the activities of the international movement, and the longer it lives the more I become convinced that it can never really honestly claim to be in the interests of the workers. You have to-day the First International, the Yellow International and the Third International, all claiming to represent the interests of the workers and all working for that blessed word "unity"—all working with the same object. I am going to suggest to you that if the three Internationals are sincere, if they are all striving with the same object, then I suggest to you that there is no need for three Internationals, but only for one. Again, who is governing your international movements? Not your Trade Union movement. One of the main powers in the international movement to-day is a man named Schwartz. He was turned down three days ago at the Paris Conference of representatives of the International Miners' Federation. To bring the matter home again, who is governing your national movement, which is absorbed in the international movement? Not Trade Unionists, but politicians, and the longer I look at the matter the more I am convinced that the sooner we and other Unions in this country break away from international movements the better for all Trade Unions concerned.

The General President : That is that kind of international.

Mr. Jenkins : Yes. Another point is this, that you are contributing to these international movements and going to do wonderful things in the name of the workers. Let us see how effective they have been during this big trouble. We were told by Cook, of the Miners' Federation, that within 48 hours after the big strike had started not a bit of coal would be shipped from the Continent ; not a bit of coal would be shipped from anywhere ; in fact, the whole of the international trade would be held up. What did it amount to? Nothing but bluff, absolute sheer bluff, and I am going to suggest to you that if you cannot get local unity amongst Trade Unionists, then I am quite sure you are not going to get international unity.

The General President : I will tell you what would make this debate very interesting. We have with us this morning Mr. Furuseh, Mr. Flynn and Mr. Grange, who are international men. I corrected Mr. Jenkins in one of his statements about the international movement. I am sure he never meant to convey the idea that we, as seamen, should not work on international lines. The whole of our policy for years has been on international lines to link up the seamen of the world—(hear, hear)—so that the seamen of the world would have charge of their own destiny—(hear, hear)—and be independent and free men.

Now, Mr. Edo Fimmen, whose name has been mentioned, is the villain of the piece, because he is the man who has been using the International Transport Workers' Federation first to boom Mr. Edo Fimmen, and now the world believes he is the greatest man in the world, and he is the man who has been issuing manifestos without any authority whatsoever. I think you will agree with me we should work in our international fraternal Delegates on this

topic, and it will give them a chance of expressing their views, which will be valuable to us, and, at the same time, it will save the time of the Conference, because I shall have to call on them in order that they might have an opportunity of saying a word to you. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Andrew Furuseth (President of the International Seamen's Union of America), who was received with applause, said: Mr. President and fellow seamen, I could tell you some experiences of America and how we worked for six years together with the men ashore and how we carried their burden. There was not one of them who was affiliated to us who did not in those six years get an improvement in their wages amounting to 20 per cent. There was not one of them who did not have their hours of labour reduced, and when we seamen wanted a little bit of improvement in our position they were ready to tell us to go back to work. I have never yet been able to see any good coming to the seamen from these eternal mixings with men on shore. They do not know anything at all about us, and they care less than they know. They think themselves superior to us; they think they know all about it. They come to the conclusion that somehow or another they can use the seamen as a means of carrying from one country to another their propaganda. When there is a strike on, and a seaman comes into port, they say you must not do this, that, and the other. Now, the seaman has got to obey orders under the law. If he does not, his wages are taken away, and, in most instances, he is sent to goal. When I spoke to Edo Fimmen about that he said, "That is so, but I cannot do anything with regard to that now." I said, "At least you can give us a chance here at Geneva to discuss that question." He said, "Oh no, that would not do." There is only one thing they want, and I have got my convictions embedded in me from 40 years of affiliation with them and working with them, and they cannot be removed. The only thing they have is for us to serve them. They are not satisfied that you seamen can leave your vessels as soon as you come into port; they are not satisfied with the men in the forecabin, or the fire-room, or the donkey-engine-room leaving. When you are taking a vessel from Liverpool up to Glasgow they have to get you to do it. Are we seamen going to let everyone interfere with our business? Do not we know better ourselves what we ought to do? If we make mistakes they are our own mistakes, and our own blunders, and we will take the consequences of them. (Hear, hear.) My opinion is that each nation should endeavour to organise as completely as possible amongst the seamen, to get the seamen together. Then I believe that we should go on that International Seamen's Organisation, and that each National Delegate should take back to his particular nation the particular grievances. I want to say to you that in the 21 years in which I worked to get the American Seamen's law, I went to the Socialists, and asked every other party to help me. They said I was crazy. I went to every other political shade, the Progressives and the Revolutionists, and they said I was insane. I brought it up at Vienna. They said I was a cloud-pusher. They said I was the most dangerous man that ever came down the pipe. I went to Copenhagen, and then I went back to the United States, and I said I would not

come back to Europe until the Seamen's Act was passed, and I did not, except as a representative of the American Government on one occasion. I have been to Geneva. I watched the situation in Geneva. We were so close to the War that you heard the echoes of the guns, and then it was possible to discuss the seamen's real grievances, the fundamental grievances. I went to Geneva, but there I could not get a look in. It had been advertised throughout the world that there should be an open mind on seamen in Geneva. I went with credentials to that meeting, and lo! and behold, when they called the meeting I was kept outside. I represent the seamen of America so far as they are organised. They are not organised so well as you are; we have only about 17,000 or 18,000 seamen organised, but there are very few nations outside of Great Britain which are organised as you are. They might have let me say a few words at Geneva, but they would not.

Several Delegates : Shame !

Mr. Andrew Furuseth : Your Mr. Wilson was one of them, too. When Edo Fimmen came I spoke to him; I wrote letters to him; but they would not let me go in. They were immovable; in other words, they used me as a piece of putty. Now, I want you here to know that I am not very much of a piece of putty. I am going back to the United States, and I am going to tell them the facts and my observations at Geneva.

With regard to the International Transport Workers' Federation, it is up to you to say what you want to do about it. We were in it for years, but we found that the seamen had no chance there, and we quit it. We will never go back to it; we will sail our own ship; we will plough our own furrow. We want the seamen to live an ordinary human life. I say if the shoremen want to govern us they may go to Hades. (Applause.)

Mr. Patrick Flynn (Vice-President of the International Seamen's Union of America, and Secretary of the Marine Firemen, Oilers and Watertenders' Union of the Pacific), who was received with applause, said : Mr. President and Men of the Sea, President Furuseth, of course, is the regular accredited representative from our side, and he speaks for us in that manner. I have been a very patient listener to everything that has been transacted here from the time your Executive Council was convened up to the present. I am not going to comment on what you have done now, but when I return to the United States I hope to be able to take good advantage of your workings and practice as far as I have been able to see it. President Furuseth has given you his idea and his experience with reference to being connected with shore aggregations up till the period of 1906, when we were engaged in a conflict to better our conditions, and some of us were foolish enough to believe that we would be able to get assistance from those aggregations. But he has explained to you that fell flat, and we had to withdraw and go on our own. From then up till about 1918 we were on our own. I was sitting in the office of the Firemen's Organisation one day, and a man came to me and asked me if I had heard the rumours that were going along the

water front. I said no. Well, he said, you are directly accused of stopping the formation of what was known as the Water Front Federation. That took in longshoremen—what you call dockers here—teamsters and other men who are directly interested in transport by water. I said to him, "Is that so?" He said, "Yes." "Well," I said, "that is not a fair accusation to make as far as I am concerned." I said, "Who is it who is making the accusation?" He said probably the longshoremen. I said, "Now, if you will be kind enough to get the representatives of the longshoremen in this office, we will settle that issue in a few moments." They came, and I said we would be willing to get back in the Federation providing we should have equal rights along with the rest of them, and that agreements would be entered into at one time for all, and that they would terminate simultaneously, but that before any trouble—a sympathetic strike, in particular—should take place, that each individual Organisation would reserve the right to itself to say by referendum vote of its membership whether they would take part in the controversy or not. I said, if those terms are satisfactory, then I will throw my support into the formation of the new Federation on the water front. The teamsters and the machinists came along. Everything was agreed to. I helped to draw its Constitution up, and I was elected the President of the Water Front Federation, and I remained in that position for three years, except for the time when I was away on official business for our Organisation or as an International Officer. I attended every meeting and function pertaining to that particular body. Frankly, I want to tell you that I never had any faith in it, but I went into it for the purpose; or at least I advised the seamen on the Pacific Slope to become part of that Organisation for the purpose of proving that my contentions were correct, and that, after all, it was a hopeless situation so far as the seamen were concerned. First came the teamsters. They went on their own and entered into agreements for three years without consultation with the Federation. Next came the longshoremen. They did the same identical thing as the teamsters, and when we seamen started to move in the same direction we were called on the carpet to appear before that august body, and to show cause why we were doing what we were doing. The Acting Secretary of the Sailors' Union, the Cooks and Stewards and myself, waited on them, and they started to haul us over the coals. To be brief, I was the spokesman for our Delegates. I said, "Now, look here, you people have come along and you have done certain things here, and you did not ask the Federation or anyone else; you certainly never consulted the seamen, teamsters, longshoremen and the rest of you. We propose to do the same identical thing as you have done, and if you do not like that you can go to where Furusetth told you to go—that is to Hades; straight plunk." We went along and fixed up our affairs. Then we drifted along haphazard for a short while until it was very evident on the face of affairs that, unless we wanted to be a tail to the political ambitions of certain men connected with the other Organisations, it was useless to be a part of that Federation any further. We seamen have always refrained from taking part in politics; we do not believe in them. We know from experience that when Officials of an Organisation hold political

positions and they are confronted with a crisis they simply turn the matter over in their minds and say to themselves, "What will I do now? If I do this and that I am ruined politically," and so it goes without saying, men, that they adhere strictly to their political aspirations. You yourself have had proof positive of that, without any further comment on my part. So we drifted along. We were confronted with another struggle with the ship-owners in the States, and sooner than have a repetition of what happened in 1906 we were compelled to go back and sever our connection with all shore aggregations. It has been my experience—and I have been a practical seaman ever since my boyhood; I had been trained to the sea, and, of course, I can understand seamen's affairs; I have been nothing else all my lifetime; and I do not intend to be anything else—that any time it is convenient for shoremen to use us they have always made a bid in that direction. When they were tired of using us they wiped their feet on us; they simply dropped us and kicked us aside the same as they would do to any common doormat. In so far as society is concerned, why we are so stigmatised that we are not fit to mingle even with the commonest tinker who crawls on shore. As a seaman, I resent it. I want to be friendly with all people on shore—(hear, hear)—but until such time as the people on shore, my friends, want to accept me as their stock I intend to fight them until Hades freezes. (Applause.)

Mr. David E. Grange (Cooks' and Stewards' Union of the Atlantic), who was received with applause, said: Mr. President and fellow Seamen, I am speaking as the General Secretary of the American Cooks' and Stewards' Union of the Atlantic and Gulf. I am going to say, as the first thing, that I have listened with a great deal of interest to what has been said here relative to your affiliation to the International Transport Workers' Federation. Unfortunately I do not know Mr. Edo Fimmen, and I do not know the town in which he lives, so that I am not able to discuss him. But I am going to tell you in a few words some of the experiences I have had in linking up seamen with the men on shore. I am a very young fellow, and I am young in this game; I have only had 23 years of it, and you know you cannot learn much in 23 years.

In 1910 the seamen on the Atlantic Coast began to respond to the call of the Unions, and we felt as a result of them responding to our appeals we were going to be placed in a very nice position around 1911, whereby we would be able to go out and improve the conditions of the men, realising also that the great fight of the British seamen was going to come off around that time. For that reason, we had still more reason for feeling that we would meet with success, and I may say that we did meet with success. We went out in 1911; we conducted a little strike in New York. That strike started on one line of steamers. We did not have any Union men in the Company in which the strike started, because you cannot call six, eight or ten men Union men in a Line; you may as well say you have not got any. That is about all we had. By some juggling at the meeting where it was decided that we should start that fight someone picked this Line

to start the fight in, and I have been puzzled ever since as to the reason why the Southern Pacific Steamship Line was selected to start on, especially because we did not have any Union men in that Line. I do not know for what reason it was done. I have formed my own opinion. I filled with the importance of it. There was one Union man on that ship. About eight or ten men went down and spoke to this man, and we pointed out to him that if he would strike we would give the report out throughout the country that the strike had started, and he would receive all the credit for it. The man must have thought we were all crazy, but he was game. After hesitating for a while he said—and he was a big Norwegian, a good fellow—“By Jesus, I will come out.” We had a ballot vote taken long before that. We believe in the ballot. This man came out. I will tell you that this man was the bo’sun of the ship, and he crept down to the forecandle and said to the rest of the men there, “Boys, the Union has called a strike; we demand better wages and better conditions, and the strike has started. I have got my bag packed and I am going ashore”; he walked into the kitchen and he spoke to the cooks; he told the cooks that the strike had started. Then he went to the Firemen’s quarters and did likewise, and by gad, I want to tell you the miracle happened—every man aboard that ship followed him ashore. (Hear, hear.) Inside of four hours every man employed on the ships of the Southern Pacific Lines were standing in West Street; you have never seen anything like it. We won the strike, of course.

Now comes the big thing. The longshoremen came to us with their hats in their hands; the teamsters came to us with their hats in their hands; the hoisting engineers came to us with their hats in their hands, and everyone came to us. Why, we even conducted a strike of telegraph boys. They came to us and asked us to lead them on, and we were vain enough to accept what we termed the honour, and we formed at that time what was called the “Water Front Federation of the United States and Canada.” We had a man sent to New York who was a cartoonist, and as the emblem for that Federation he drew a great, big rock with a ship running into it, and at the bottom he had inscribed, “She has got to go down,” and there she started. I am happy to say I was elected the first Vice-President of the Federation, and I stuck my chest out, and I bought a new hat—(laughter)—figuring that the longshoremen, the teamsters, the boot-blacks, the telegraph boys, the street-car cleaners, the scrubwomen and the seamen were going to have a walk-over. Well, the first experience came in 1912. The longshoremen asked for a special meeting, and that meeting was called at 400, West Street. The representatives of the longshoremen proposed that the Federation put Delegates out on the waterfront to organise longshoremen at our expense—that is, at the expense of the Federation—because the longshoremen did not have any money. The longshoremen and cooks were carrying it all. We put Delegates on, and we started to organise the longshoremen. A few months later they thought they were organised enough, and they asked us to support their fight for a five cents increase an hour in their wages. We agreed to that, and we decided to support the longshoremen in their fight.

We went out. The fight did not last very long. We got the 5 cents.

When the shipowners made an attack on the seamen, and I want to tell you the thing could have been avoided but for the action of a few hot-heads—a man who was Secretary of the Firemen's Union at that time. His name was James Fladdell, a Spaniard, and he was an anarchist, a man like Mr. Sonny Ash. He went into a fight with the shipowners, and we had all the confidence in the world that we could not lose, because if the seamen could not stop the ships we felt the longshoremen could stop them; and if the longshoremen could not stop the ships, we felt the street-car men would not carry people, and the teamsters would not take the freight down; so we started, but we woke up and found that the seamen were standing alone, fighting alone, and the only Organisation at that time who did anything for us was the Stewards' and Cooks' Union. The then head of the Cooks' and Stewards' Organisation, Mr. Griffin, was opposed to the whole procedure, and he saved the situation as far as the cooks were concerned. The longshoremen, when I appealed to them said: "Fellows, we had no trouble; why did not you go and get yours when we got our 5 cents. We cannot come out now; you must fight your own battles." That blew the Federation up. We have steered clear of every shore Organisation ever since.

Saying that much, I hope the President will permit me to say a few words with regard to the men whom I represent. I was asked upon leaving New York for these shores by the members of my Organisation to convey to you gentlemen in session their heartfelt thanks for the deeds of kindness shown to them by your Organisation. We thank you. We want to assure you that we are struggling—it is a hard struggle—to rebuild an Organisation once she gets off the rocks.

The General President: Hear, hear.

Mr. Grange: And that is going to lead me to tell you this: A number of the men sitting here to-day are Officials and ordinary Delegates. You do not appreciate the wonderful position in which you find yourselves. You cannot appreciate it. Did you hear me say that? You cannot appreciate the wonderful policy followed out by you men during the recent General Strike in saving this Organisation. It is all right; it is quite easy for you to say, "Throw your lot in and fight;" but when the smoke of the battle has cleared away you find yourself in a hole and you will not be able to get out of it.

The General President: Hear, hear.

Mr. Grange: You are left there alone, and the hole is deep. As you know, during the years 1917, 1918, 1919 and 1920, in the United States of America we had the finest wages and the finest working conditions of any seamen in any part of the civilised world. I think I may say that without fear of contradiction. The captain had only to look cock-eyed at us in the morning, and we charged him an hour's overtime. The captain would press his button and



say to the steward, "Bring my coffee up." We said, "Atta boy! up goes the coffee, but it costs the company ten dollars for serving that cup of coffee." It went on and on. Then 1921 came, and a request was made to us to accept a reduction in wages. We entered into a series of conferences with the shipowners in New York, and when those conferences were broken off we were called to Washington, and under the leadership of our President we went to Washington. We conferred with the Officials of the Shipping Board, and I want to tell you right here and now that the men who were going to the Union Offices and suggesting to the members that the proper thing to do was to accept a reduction in wages at that time would have been thrown out through the window. We had our chests sticking out in front of us; we had a lot of money in our coffers, and we had a strong Organisation. As men who had that following we felt that all we had to do was to lift the ship out of the water and put her into West Street, and then wait until the shipowner said, "Please put her back." So we went on. The result of the conferences was nothing; we did not accept any reduction in wages. The first proposition was 25 per cent., the second was 15 per cent., by the Shipping Board, with several qualifications. Of course, we accepted nothing. We went out into a fight; we called it a lock-out, but it was not a lock-out. We just went in fighting, that is what we did. I want to impress upon you men here that we did some fighting; we did not stop at anything; and if I told you some of the things that we did in that fight you would be able to visit me in Sing Sing for the next 25 years. Perhaps some of you do not know that Sing Sing is a gaol.

I remember the day in New York. The Sailors' Union of the Atlantic had headquarters in New York, and the Firemen, Cooks, and Stewards were also in New York. I remember the day when we had to go to the men and tell them the truth, "You have lost, and we now advise you men to go back and get your jobs the best way you can." We qualified it by asking the men not to forget, and to stick to the Union, as our motto is: "To-morrow is also a day." To-morrow we may be able to win. Well, I shall never forget the loud cheers from the men, the "Hurrahs" from the men; and then they faded away—the men scattered. The wages were cut about 50 per cent. in the first slash, and a little later another slash came off, and the wages for sailors went from 95 dollars a month down to 40, and in some cases to 30.

Mr. Furuseth: And in some cases to 25.

Mr. Grange: Yes. In one case they went down to 15 dollars a month. Then the Bolshies got around and the I.W.W.'s got busy, and they said to the men, "Are you satisfied now that Furuseth and his gang have busted up the Union; you have lost everything; are you going to pay any more into that Union?"

I am telling you the story in order that you may get a moral out of it. We have been struggling since 1921 up to the present day, trying, as men have never tried before, to see if it is not possible for us to reorganise ourselves and get back into the position where we rightly belong, in order that we may be able to change some of the bad conditions imposed on us by the ship-

owners since 1921. We are making progress, but very slowly. We are not discouraged; we know that we are bound to succeed even though they say, "While the grass is growing the horse is starving." Well, sometimes we starved and sometimes we got a good feed; but on and on we went, and we do know that the encouragement that we have received from the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union of Great Britain and Ireland, and the encouragement that we shall receive from you in the future, will inspire us to go on; and you may rest assured that we are going on. Picture in your minds the disasters such as we have met with in America, and then figure out for yourselves whether the policy put forward by your Executive Council under the leadership of Havelock Wilson has not been a good policy. You could not have pursued another policy. Had you adopted any other policy, regardless of what may be said to the contrary, you would have been in a worse position than you are to-day. (Applause.)

Seeing that my few minutes are up—(laughter)—I want to say, in conclusion—and I am addressing these few remarks more especially to the ordinary members sitting in this room to-day—I want to say to you men, when you go back and join your ships, wherever they may be, when you come in contact with your fellows, tell them the story as I have told it to you here to-day, and point out to them this fact, that had it not been for the policy set forth by Havelock Wilson, your President, you would have found yourselves in the same position as American seamen are in to-day. Encourage the men to stand by your Executive Council and its policy; instil in their minds this fact, that they should do everything in their power to show their appreciation of the good work, the good leadership, and the sound judgment as displayed by your noble President, Havelock Wilson. I thank you. (Applause.)

The General President: Honestly, I could sit here for a long time listening to this fine talk. (Hear, hear.) By gad! how educational it is; it is fine, but time will not permit. Mr. Cathery has asked me to allow him to say a few words, and seeing that he is the General Secretary I have to call on him in preference to Mr. Damm.

Mr. Cathery: Mr. President and fellow Delegates, as this resolution is dealing with the question of whether we should still support the International Transport Workers' Federation, or whether we should dissociate ourselves from that body, I think I can confidently stand up here this morning and say that I have had more experience in the international movement of seamen until recent years, and I do not think Mr. Damm will disagree with me when I say that I have had a longer experience than he has had in Continental work. You all know what the Port of Antwerp was like many years ago. You have heard of the crimps of San Francisco and along the Pacific Coast of the United States of America. You know of the blood money that was extracted from a man to get on board a British ship. That same thing applied to the Continent, and more especially to the Port of Antwerp. In 1896 I went to Antwerp and advised the dockers

and the seamen to organise. I was expelled by the Belgian Government in 1896 for doing the same as I am doing here this morning, in what you might call delivering a Trade Union speech. But, nevertheless, I was expelled from Antwerp in 1896. But though I was expelled from Antwerp I still followed up the Antwerp work, as I was determined, if possible, on behalf of the Union which I was representing at that time, to stamp out the crimping system on the Continent. I have followed that up year after year. I have been in Rotterdam as much as three months at a time; I have been in Antwerp for five or six months at a time; and I have been in Hamburg on many occasions. I want to tell you that if you look up the records of the British Consul in Antwerp you will see where he pays a tribute to the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union at that time for abolishing the crimping system which then existed in Antwerp. I was followed; my life was in danger both in Antwerp and in Rotterdam. I had to be escorted to my hotel from the Seamen's headquarters, where they went for engagements and such like; but I followed up my policy, and when I landed in Antwerp on January 1st, 1911, I had the noble sum of half-a-crown in my pocket, and not a penny of the funds of the Union could be raised to give me my expenses to carry on my work on the Continent. However, I carried it on. I went to work, and I want to tell you this morning—I am not boasting; I do not want to blow my own horn—but I venture to say I have done more work, and more beneficial work, for our British seamen and British ships on the Continent than all the Transport Workers' Federation has done ever since we have been paying our contributions to them. (Hear, hear.) I have in my house emblems presented to me by the German, Dutch and Belgian seamen, thanking me for my services. The crimps in Antwerp, in Rotterdam, and in Hamburg used to practically run the Shipping offices and the Consuls' offices in those ports, and if a man went in and objected to anything it would not be the Consul or the Vice-Consul who would order him to be pitched out; it would be what was called the Shipping Master, who was practically a crimp, who would have the office cleared.

The General President: You are getting a long way from the resolution, Mr. Cathery.

Mr. Cathery: I want to justify our action as far as the Union is concerned. I think we can do our own work on the Continent just as well as Edo Fimmen or the International Transport Workers' Federation could do it. I was leading up to saying that no man could get an advance when he signed on a ship; the advance-note was given to the crimp in the Shipping office, and he took his slice of 5, 10, 15, 20, 30, or 40 francs. That was deducted before it was handed to the seaman. I can safely say—and you can back me up, Mr. Wilson, and I think Mr. Damm can also back me up—that I was the means of getting that abolished. Antwerp is now as free a port as any of our British ports. I say that, as far as I am concerned, with regard to the International Transport Workers' Federation, I cannot see any benefits that we get from them at the present time. (Hear, hear.)

This last twelve months we have had trouble in Rotterdam; we have had to close our Rotterdam Branch. Was it not the duty of Edo Fimmen and our international representatives to have assisted us to put that Branch back again into its proper position? But they never did anything of the kind; they have never given us any assistance; and therefore to-day our Rotterdam Branch is closed up because we could not get any help in that direction.

I maintain here this morning that the money we are paying to be affiliated to the International Transport Workers' Federation might well be saved and that we might trust to our own work as far as the Continent is concerned. If we want internationalism amongst seamen, let us try and revive our International Seamen's Federation. That is the way that I should prefer, and if we want to carry on our international work, that is the policy to pursue. Therefore, I hope that you will take into consideration what reforms have been got in England have not been got by Edo Fimmen or anyone in connection with the International Transport Workers' Federation, but it has been done at the expense of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union, whom I have the honour to represent on these Continental missions. (Applause.)

Mr. C. Damm (Continent): Mr. President and fellow Seamen, it may to some of you seem that this was a "bread-and-butter" question. As far as I am concerned, it was not. As far back as 1902 we thought the seamen should have their own International Federation. The shoremen would never allow the seamen to decide their own questions. We heard comrade Furuseth say that at Vienna they turned him down when he asked them to support him in his request for the freedom of the American seamen. In 1910 they would not even allow Mr. Havelock Wilson and the other seamen to have a Conference of their own without the Central Committee being present and dictating the policy. Therefore, when in 1918 we formed the International Seafarers' Federation we thought we had then obtained what would be beneficial to us; but Robert Williams, who at that time was a deadly enemy of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union, was the means of bringing into this world a spurious child called a section of seamen under the Transport Workers. They were nearly dead last year. The Seamen's Section boasted at Geneva that they were very strong, representing some 2,000,000 men. They do not represent 24,000 men—never mind 2,000,000. It has been proved, as was stated, that there has not been an ounce of coal stopped anywhere on the Continent. Mr. Morrison and myself, when in Rotterdam the other day, found 125 ships had signed on and paid off in Rotterdam, which had taken bunkers or cargoes.

I believe that if you to-day decided to withdraw from this so-called Seamen's Section of the Transport Workers you will get a number of the Seamen's Unions to come back to the Seamen's International Federation. It is remarkable that in those countries where the seamen stand alone the wages are somewhat tolerable. Take England, Denmark, Sweden and Norway; they have their own Seamen's Unions, and their wages are equal; but when you come to the countries where the seamen are linked up with the shore Unions, the wages are only half the others and

conditions are worse in every ship. Consequently, I hope that this Conference will decide to withdraw from the International Transport Workers' Federation, and will decide to let the world know that we are not in any way in agreement with some of the blunders committed by Edo Fimmen. But I am bound to say that to a large extent Edo Fimmen led the miners of Great Britain and the Trade Unionists of Great Britain up the wrong road. Only a few months ago at Amsterdam, Charlie Cramp and others attended a Conference where they were discussing the question of what should the workers of the Continent do to support the British miners. They were standing up singing "The International" and "The Red Flag." I told Charlie Cramp that he would get no support from any of the Continental Unions; and now to-day I believe he is of the opinion that I was right. There is a difficulty in anyone from this country going to attend a Conference on the Continent, because you do not understand the language. They whisper to each other, and Edo Fimmen interprets, or someone else interprets, what they want the Conference to believe, and not what the speaker says. I hope you will pass this resolution. (Applause.)

Several Delegates : Vote ! Vote !

It having been formally moved and seconded the Conference be resumed at three o'clock.

On a show of hands there voted :—

In favour of continuing at three o'clock ...	40
Against ... ..	9

The General President : It is decided that we adjourn until three o'clock. I am now going to put this important resolution to the vote. You have heard the resolution; it is that we withdraw our affiliation from the International Transport Workers' Federation. Anyhow, that means saving more than £1,000 a year. You have heard all the arguments, and I will now put the resolution.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution ... ..	59
Against ... ..	9

The General President : I want to call your attention before we adjourn to a book which Mr. Clee, of the Ministry of Labour (who has been attending the Conference at Geneva), has published. That book is entitled, "International Labour Office Discussion on the Freedom of the Sea." Mr. Clee was formerly Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine of Great Britain, and he is now at the Labour Office. I have not had an opportunity of reading the whole of Mr. Clee's book, but what I have read has impressed me with the fact that it is one of the best publications with regard to the sea that I have ever read. It is written by an impartial observer, and that makes it all the more valuable, because it is written from an impartial point of view. Are these books for sale, Mr. Clee?

Mr. Clee : Yes, at one shilling each, from the London office of the International Labour Bureau.

The General President : I am going to propose that the Union go to the expense of purchasing 200 or 300 copies—(hear, hear)—so that we can furnish all the Delegates who are attending this Conference, and the Branches, with a copy of this book. I recommend all of you to read it and study it, because, as I have said, of it being written by an impartial observer, it is well worth reading and considering.

(The meeting was adjourned for a short time.)

#### DEATH OF MR. TALBOT : VOTE OF CONDOLENCE.

Mr. Cathery : I want to make an announcement before we start our business. It is with deep regret that I have had word this morning of the death of another one of our old Officials of the Union, Mr. Talbot, the Secretary of our Southampton Branch. Mr. Talbot had been for a number of years working with us. He was an Official in London. We then shifted him to Southampton. He has been the Secretary for the Southampton Branch for a number of years. He has been these last six months in a very bad state of health, and I regret to inform you that he died at seven o'clock last night. Therefore, I think it is the duty of this meeting to pass a vote of condolence to the bereaved family of Mr. Talbot.

The vote of condolence was then put to the meeting and carried *sub silentio*, all members standing.

A Delegate : Mr. President and fellow Seamen, I should like to have your attention for one moment regarding the death of Mr. Talbot. Being the District Secretary for that District, I think you will agree with me when I say the Union had no more loyal servant, or more loyal friend, than poor Jimmy Talbot. (Hear, hear.)

Another Delegate : Mr. President and fellow Delegates, on behalf of the late James Talbot, no one is more sorry than I am to learn of his death. We were very old shipmates in Liverpool in years gone by. I am very sorry to hear that news to-day, because I know we are losing a good friend of the Union, and a good friend of everyone who ever was associated with him. (Hear, hear.)

#### RETIREMENT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY.

The General President : Now, Mr. Cathery has already intimated to the Executive that he is retiring, and he mentioned to me at the luncheon hour that what he had to say on that matter he had better now say, because people might construe things in their own way. They might say, "Well, Henson has left and Cathery has left; what are they all leaving for?" It is quite possible for that to be said, so I think we had better have Mr. Cathery's statement now.

Mr. Cathery, who was received with loud applause, said: Mr. President and fellow Seamen, it is with something like regret that I have to lay my resignation before you to-day. At the beginning of this year I thought to myself, taking into consideration my state of health and also my age, it was my duty, as I could not give value for money practically speaking, to resign my position as General Secretary, the position which I had had the honour to hold in this Union since 1894. During my young days, and right up to the present, I might say I have always endeavoured to do my duty and to serve as faithfully as I could the men who were paying me my salary. (Hear, hear.) For 25 odd years every year I was (excluding the months I was engaged on Continental business in the interests of the seafaring men) going round the districts. But the time has come—you cannot live for ever, and I recognise that I have had a very good innings.

I have seen the time when I had to go about the office and get sixpence or a shilling to send a telegram to one of the Branches. When I first took my position up in 1894 as General Secretary of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union, it was the same day that the National Amalgamated Union was dissolved. That Union was dissolved one day, and we went down to the "Wade's Arms" at Poplar to attend a meeting, and I was elected General Secretary *pro tem*. We had a little room in Jeremiah Street at 9s. a week. I had to go next door and ask for the loan of a table and a chair. Then I raised a shilling somehow and got sixpennyworth of writing paper and sixpennyworth of envelopes to communicate with the Branches to inform them that as the National Amalgamated Union had been dissolved we had decided to start the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union, and would they like to become a Branch of that Union. So you see the difficulties under which we started out. We had sixpennyworth of writing paper and sixpennyworth of envelopes, the loan of a table and the loan of a chair. That was the start of the great Union which we are representing here to-day. I have carried out my duties, I think, to the satisfaction of our General President, who is my superior, and I always recognise that where you have a superior it is your duty to carry out the instruction of that superior. (Hear, hear.)

As Mr. Havelock Wilson has told you, if he wanted me to go to the North Pole I would start out on that journey and try and get there. I never quibbled when he said, "Ned, I want you to go here or there." I can remember one instance of Mr. Foley, who was at Cardiff and had charge of our Cardiff Branch. The Cardiff Branch contributions went down practically to nothing. The office was locked up, the landlord locked the office up because he could not get any rent. Mr. Havelock Wilson asked Mr. Foley to come up to London and explain the position. Mr. Foley came to London, and the position he put before the General President was due, he said, to the cosmopolitan element of seamen in Cardiff. He said, "Mr. Wilson, if you were to send the Deity to Cardiff he could not take 2s. 6d. a week." Mr. Foley went away. The President said to me, "Well, that is a very serious position, Mr. Cathery; what do you say about going down to Cardiff to have a look at the position?" I said, "All right, if

you say I have to go, I will go." I put a few things in my little handbag and away I started. When I got there I went into the Great Western Hotel, which was a coffee-house at that time, and one had to pay 1s. a night for a bed, and the next morning I went out on my mission. I had to stand at the dock gates down the Alleyway in Cardiff. I stood at those gates from morning until night, and the first week I think I raked in about £5. So I went on and on until eventually we got Cardiff into a very good position. I am not saying that out of boast, but I am only trying to point out to you the difficulties which we had to face there.

If every man in this room had only known what the President and I, and our dear old pal who has gone, Tom Chambers, had gone through right up to the time of 1911, I feel confident that you would almost think it a miracle that we should be sitting here to-day representing this great Union. (Hear, hear.) I told you before that I landed in Antwerp with 2s. 6d. in my pocket. We had a job to rake up my boat fare. I landed in a strange country in Antwerp on January 1st, 1911.

But, however, we have battled through. I am not going into any of the history, but at the present time, seeing that our friend, Mr. Henson, who was the Assistant General Secretary, has resigned his position, I suppose people put it down to the General Strike; and now that I am resigning my position, it might naturally get around the country that I also disagreed with the General President, and that therefore I had tendered my resignation. But I beg to inform you, Gentlemen, that I am just as loyal to the General President to-day and his policy as I was on the first day that I knew him. (Loud applause.)

Therefore, I do not want it to go out to the world that there is anything in my resignation. I feel I have practically fulfilled the line of policy which has been laid down in the Scriptures. They tell us that our life is three score years and ten. On May 15th last I was 74 years of age. As I told you, at the beginning of the year I knew nothing at all about any resolutions coming up about age limits or anything of that kind. In the beginning of the year I told the President, and I also told the Executive Council at that very same meeting, that I intended to tender my resignation, but, although I tender to you my resignation, Gentlemen, I want you to fully understand that I am not going to leave the old ship. (Hear, hear.) I am not going away from here to-night and wishing you all good-bye and saying I am never coming back to see St. George's Hall, or the good ship's crew which belongs to it. If you have got that idea in your minds you can wipe it away altogether. I am simply resigning my position because I think I am not giving in one instance value for money. That is the first consideration. I can do the routine work, I can do all the work in connection with the office, but I am not able to get around the country, which is the duty of a General Secretary of a large Union of this description. My health will not allow me to do that, and since I met with my accident six years ago I cannot get about to-day as I should like to do in the interests of the men who are paying me my salary.

Therefore, Mr. President, it is purely on that account that I tender my resignation as General Secretary of the Great Organi



sation which we are representing here to-day, and I hope you will accept my resignation. My grandfather was a seaman, my father was a Master Mariner, and I followed those generations knowing the hardships that a seaman had to bear, in my young days. When I started out my whole object was to help to make the seamen's lives better than what I found them to be. (Hear, hear.) To some extent, and perhaps to a very small extent, I have been able, along with my grand old colleague—and that is what is going to cut me most, cutting myself adrift from my dear old colleague—trying to make a seaman's life what it ought to be.

I could go on for a long time, but the President has told you that time is precious, and I must take this opportunity of thanking my old colleagues for the way they have stood by me in many times when we have been practically down and out. Some of my old friends here to-day have almost served a lifetime along with myself.

I must thank, you, Gentlemen, one and all, for the assistance you have given me, and the loyalty you have shown to me in helping to build up this great Union which we are representing here to-day, and to help to make the life of the seaman better than what it was in my young days.

I thank you, Gentlemen, and hope that you will accept my resignation in the spirit in which I am tendering it to you to-day, and if ever you hear anyone say that I could not agree with the General President and his policy and that I left the Union because I did not believe in his policy, you can—

The General President : Tell them they are liars.

Mr. Cathery : Yes. I believe in the General President ; I believe in his policy, and I am sorry that I am not ten or twenty years younger to think that I could help him to carry on the great work in which he is interested at the present time. Thank you, Gentlemen. (Loud applause.)

Mr. Decker (Liverpool) : Mr. President, Mr. Cathery, and fellow Seamen, I have listened with great regret to Mr. Cathery's resignation, and I feel sure I am voicing the true sentiments of all present when I say that I am going to suggest that Mr. Cathery's resignation be not accepted. In fact, I will not be a party to his entirely leaving the office, and I submit to you that he remain in office as our adviser, which will assist him in the evening of his days. I am sure he will continue to assist the Union. (Hear, hear.)

The General President : I am very sorry to say I cannot accept that as a resolution. You know perfectly well that at the last Executive Council meeting they laid down a resolution for the time of retirement of Officials. That has been confirmed by the Executive Council, and they will make a report to this Annual Meeting as to the carrying out of that resolution. In those circumstances your resolution is not in order.

Mr. Decker : I merely proposed that because I would sooner see Ned's body than his ghost around here. (Hear, hear.)

The General President: I do not think there is anyone in this room who has a kinder feeling towards Mr. Cathery than myself—(hear, hear)—but when it comes to a question of dealing with the welfare of the Union, sentiment and myself part altogether. What we are doing to-day is not sentimental stuff; it is business; and that we must adhere to. That is the position, so that your resolution cannot be entertained.

Mr. Jackson (Newport): Mr. President, Mr. Cathery, and fellow Seamen, as one who has been associated with my comrade Cathery for many years—something like 36 years—and who lived in that dug-out in Jeremiah Street in what they call the dark old days, I regret to an extent that he is severing his connection with us; but the laws of nature are inevitable. I am no spring chicken myself. I shall be going that way myself shortly, I suppose—perhaps sooner than I at present know; but, anyhow, one thing I can say is that throughout all those years of battle, sometimes a little sacrifice, sometimes a little persecution, notwithstanding that, if I had to live my life over again I would live gladly through the experiences I have had of the past. If I could drive that into the heart, brains, and soul of every young man starting out on his career that I see to-day, I would be a happy man. I believe that would be a great help to the future of this great Organisation of ours. I remember the stalwarts; Mr. Cathery was one, and the Governor was another. All were stalwarts. I remember the time when we met in that hut, when we met together in secret to talk over matters in regard to building up an Organisation to represent the men. We swore to each other that we would be faithful and true in spite of all the persecution and sacrifices. We had signs and passwords. You remember it was not safe to say you were a Union man on board a ship or in the streets. We had simply to make a sign to find out if we had any Union man aboard a ship. So we have gone on until this day, and my dear comrade is leaving us. I hope he will be spared for many years to come, and I hope at the last he will sail down the stream of life to the harbour of our human hopes.

The General President: I take it you will move that Mr. Cathery's resignation be accepted with regret, for reasons given—that is, old age?

Mr. Jackson: I will do that.

Mr. Lang (Victoria and Albert Docks) formally seconded.

Captain Griffiths: Mr. President, Mr. Cathery, and fellow Seamen, I feel that this is a time when one ought rather to view this position in the light of an occasion, because here we have a man, a gentleman, who is held in the very highest esteem and affection, and I think I am voicing the sentiments of the men of the sea in saying that he is held in the highest esteem and affection which would be the envy of many men. Not only is Mr. Cathery held in this high esteem by the men of the sea, but we have the pleasure of knowing that he is loved and respected by many thousands outside the pale of this Organisation. (Hear,

hear.) I should like to say, without taking up your time unduly, that I have sat on the Finance Committee. Apart from his position and activities as General Secretary, I have had opportunities of probing into his human character and his sweet disposition. When cases of distress come before the Finance Committee we have sometimes to point to the Rule when Mr. Cathery is present, because of his keen sympathy with suffering humanity. I do not want to strike an unduly sentimental note, because you know his character. But I do think it only right that I should point out that if there is a point to be stretched in the interests of the men of the sea and their wives and their families, it is Ned Cathery who is the pioneer of that effort. I have said to Mr. Cathery: I should like to subscribe to you in this, but let us look up the Rule; and when we have looked up the Rule he has said, "I only wish the Rule allowed me to go on." Well, friends, of course the President has said something with regard to Mr. Decker. I heartily subscribe to that. Mr. President, I do not want to cut the painter altogether. (Hear, hear.) You know there is a spring in all of us, a driving force, and if you happen in any way to check that spring it does not stop, but it goes back and decays. But to take Mr. Cathery to-day from his activities and associations would be the burial service over an old friend whom we are all anxious should have a long and lengthy finish to his days. (Hear, hear.) I respectfully submit to this Annual General Meeting, which is the supreme Council that can do many things, that, while Mr. Cathery has said to me many times, "I am not as good as I should like to be, William," I do think that it is within our power, Mr. President, to say that Mr. Cathery shall in some way be identified with the activities of this Union and not be relegated to obscurity. I submit that in all seriousness. (Hear, hear.)

As I heard our President say the other day—we were talking round the table, and the question arose as to politics and Trade Unions—"You have all had a lot to say." We had; we had different opinions; but he said, "Do you know the ideal Trade Unionist?" Well, you know, there are so many friends we have that it really did not occur to me. Let me tell you that Ned Cathery is my ideal Trade Unionist. (Hear, hear.) I think you will all agree with me that when you come to probe into the character of this man you can honestly say that you could leave the destinies of the seamen in the hands of such a man; and may last word is that such a man as Ned Cathery cannot be found under gooseberry bushes. (Applause.)

Mr. Tarbitten (Humber): Mr. President, Mr. Cathery, and fellow Delegates, speaking for the younger element of the Officials and members, none regret more than I do to hear of Mr. Cathery's resignation; but we have arrived at a stage now of turmoil when, as the President and Mr. Cathery have said, we need someone to get around the country to counteract the activities which are existing. I have known Mr. Cathery for quite a long time now, and have felt that he has not been giving justice to the movement. Those of us who have been at Head Office have realised the great responsibility which has been placed on the General President.

Mr. Cathery has done his best; he always has done; and what I would suggest at this Annual General Meeting is this, that while we accept his resignation we do not wish to lose him altogether; and I would suggest, if I am in order, that we keep the services of Mr. Cathery, and that this Annual Meeting recommend that he be made a life member of the Executive Council.

The General President: I am very sorry but I cannot accept that. That is not in accordance with the Rules. But it is quite competent at any other meeting that may follow that such a provision should be made. (Hear, hear.) In fact, it is within the power of any Branch to nominate Mr. Cathery as a member of the Executive Council, and that would be the biggest compliment that you could pay him. (Hear, hear.)

Captain Tupper: Mr. President Mr. Cathery, and fellow Delegates, as one of the old gang who sat round the first table—I see there are only five now—I want to say that we at Head Office are losing a colleague whom we love, admire, and respect, and whom we will love, admire and respect to the end of his days. We love our dear old Ned, and we regret to lose him.

Mr. Foley: Mr. President, Mr. Cathery, and fellow Seamen, all through Mr. Cathery's life there has been no such things as asking a man his nationality, his religion, or his Party politics. That was clean cut out of Mr. Cathery's life. I remember the time when we had no money to pay the rent, and yet we struggled on and brought this Union to its present proud position. I take it that it will be possible to co-opt Mr. Cathery on the Executive Council and make him a life member of the Finance Committee as well.

The General President: It cannot be done.

Mr. Foley: Very well. He has never questioned the orders that have been given by the captain. I hope Mr. Cathery will live long and enjoy his retirement.

The General President: I should like to have more time to give everyone an opportunity of expressing their appreciation of Mr. Cathery, but I feel that really it is not necessary, because I do not think there is any man in the Union with a grain of common sense who does not appreciate the long service, the long and faithful service, which Mr. Cathery has given to this Union. A man might give long service and just be a passenger in the ship, drawing his wages and that is all; but no one would dare to suggest that Mr. Cathery was one of that kind. I always try if I can to take a practical view of these matters, and always to keep in mind the constitutional side. I have no doubt many of you would like to load Mr. Cathery with many honours. Well, that is good; but we must keep within the Rules. Now, I am going to say what, in my opinion, might be the right thing to do. First, at long as Mr. Cathery is able to attend Executive Council meetings, I should like to see him there. (Hear, hear.) I should like to see him there, not as a dummy but as a man with the rights and

privileges of a member. He would be useful because of his long experience; and I recommend that, when the time comes for the election of an Executive Councillor, the Branches will keep in mind that it is within their power to nominate and elect Mr. Cathery to represent them. (Hear, hear.) That is No. 1. Now No. 2: I can see many ways in which Mr. Cathery, although retired, can be exceedingly useful. In my opinion, he is not past now and again having a run round the country—(hear, hear)—or even here sailing the old ship a few times. All the old sailors are not dead yet; and to take a refreshing breeze in the way of sailing the ship would go down very well, and especially coming from Mr. Cathery. (Hear, hear.) My idea is that now and again—perhaps once or twice a month—Mr. Cathery might take a visit to some of the various ports to let them know he is still alive. (Hear, hear.) Then I see another important function which Mr. Cathery could perform. It often happens that I want someone to go and interview shipowners, and I do not know anyone who can draw more out of the shipowners than Mr. Cathery. (Hear, hear.) They all honour and respect him. (Hear, hear.) I know that if ever I wanted anyone to go down, and I said, "Well, Ned, go down and see that Company," for my part I have every confidence that he would represent us in a capable manner, and if there was anything to be got, I would put my money on Ned Cathery getting it. (Hear, hear.) So that in that way, as far as it will be possible to utilise Mr. Cathery's services, it will be done. It would be a waste of time for me to extol Mr. Cathery's virtues, because he knows them.

Mr. Cathery: Yes. (Laughter.)

The General President: Heaven knows he has put up with my rotten temper for 35 years. But all he has said is, "Good luck; God bless you." That is what Mr. Cathery has said; and I think he is a very wise man to never argue the point with me. Now, Gentlemen, we all regret that old age is coming. In a little while my own time will come. Personally, I shall be jolly glad when it does come, because I am beginning to feel the strain of the work. I should like you to carry this resolution. Mr. Cathery will retire on a pension, which I may tell you Mr. Cathery has been contributing to for ten years now. Mr. Cathery will have that pension, the same as I shall have when I retire. I hope the resolution will be carried now without any more to-do after the statements that have been made.

I will now put the resolution, that the resignation of Mr. Cathery be accepted, with regret, as we know that the age limit has been reached, and we wish him long life, and that he be honoured by being made an additional member of the Executive Council, and that his services be utilised whenever they may be required.

On question, the resolution was unanimously agreed to.

The General President: Mr. Cathery, the Annual General Meeting tenders to you their grateful thanks for your past services, and they hope that you may enjoy a good measure of health

so that you may render any service that may be required of you in the future.

Mr. Cathery (who was received with loud applause) said: I thank you, Gentlemen, from the bottom of my heart for the way in which you have accepted my resignation. All I have to say to you is, I hope if you hear any rumours going about the country, as I said before, that I am resigning my position because I do not agree with the General President, or anything of that description—well, I have told you what to do. All I can say now is: Gentlemen, long live the National Union of Seamen. (Applause.) For the rest of my life, if there is anything that I can do, and I feel that I am able to do it, you have only to call on me and I will give you the best service and the best advice that I possibly can. I thank you, Gentlemen. (Applause.)

#### RETIREMENT AGE LIMIT.

The General President: If you will look at your Rules you will see that they provide, in the event of the General Secretary resigning, how the election shall be conducted. Any member can be nominated by any Branch and seconded by another, but it is not necessary to do that now; in fact, it is not our duty. A notice will be sent out, and then the Branches will act accordingly. While we are dealing with retirements, I think it will be well to have the report of the Executive Council on Branch Officials, District Secretaries and Head Office Officials. It has been moved and carried by the Executive Council meeting—not this last one, but the one before—that the age limit be fixed at 60 years for Delegates, 65 years for District Secretaries and Secretaries, and 70 years for Head Office Officials. That has been confirmed by the Executive Council which sat last week, and recommended to be approved by this Annual General Meeting. So that is the subject now before you. Will anyone move that?

Mr. Lang (Victoria and Albert Docks) formally moved the resolution.

Mr. Kennedy (Victoria and Albert Docks) formally seconded.

The General President: That resolution has been moved and seconded. Does anyone want to speak in favour of it, or does anyone want to speak against it? Now is your chance.

Mr. Harper (Folkestone and Dover): On a point of information. Does that mean that when a man reaches 65 years of age, whatever his capabilities are, he has got to resign?

The General President: Yes.

Mr. Harper: I am a young man myself, but I have in mind men of 65 years of age in this Union who are of more use and more service to the Union than some of the men of 40.

The General President: Who are they?

Mr. Harper: I have no compliments, Mr. President. (Laughter.)

Mr. Kimpton (Green's Home): Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I beg to support the resolution of the Executive Council, and my reasons for doing so are these: Possibly the Executive Council realise to-day that when a man, particularly an outside man, gets to 60 or 65 he cannot put on the pace or withstand the type of men round the docks whom you have had the privilege of firing out of this Union, because in many cases that is a young man's job, and no one knows it better than your Head Office Officials do to-day. I realise that this matter has had deep consideration, and in their wisdom the Executive Council have come to the conclusion that the age of 60 and 65 for outside men and Branch Secretaries is quite old enough, so that they may get a few years remaining to them to spend in peace.

Mr. Jackson: Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I am heartily in accord with the resolution sent up from the Executive Council. In regard to stipulating the age at which men shall retire from active duty in this Union, I am quite a few years beyond 65, having turned 67, but I feel quite nimble, though. I think that for some time I shall be able to carry out the duties which devolve upon me as a Branch Secretary, but I feel sometimes that we older men are standing in the light of the younger men—(hear, hear)—who are full of youth, full of spirit, and full of vision and high ideals. I suppose that when the Union has finished with me they will say, "You have run your gamut; you have had a good innings." I transferred to this Union from another Union 36 years ago. I have had a very good innings, but I think it is time that some of the men gaye way and let the young tree grow up to maturity. Therefore I am quite in accord with the decision come to by the Executive Council in the matter of age. (Applause.)

The General President: I have no doubt there are a good many who would say, "Well, he has been so many years on the job; why not let him remain?" Well, that is very, very kind and very nice; but, after all said and done, you must remember that you have other responsibilities outside that. I find it a very hard task in dealing with men in Branches. I am always reluctant to discharge or retire anyone and I am always reluctant to tell a man he is getting too old and he ought to hand in his resignation. It is an unpleasant job to do, but really it is essential—it is most essential—and the man who is at the head of this Union, if he is doing his duty properly, has got to safeguard the funds of the Union. That is the President's duty, is it not? (Hear, hear.) Because, if he does not you have a right to turn round and say he is not doing his duty. Now, let me just give you an example with one Branch—I will not mention the name of the Branch—but there is a certain Branch which was doing about £8, £9 or £10 a week, and there were three men on the job. We had to send that Branch nearly £10 every week; sometimes £8, sometimes £10, and sometimes £12; so that the Branch was being run at a loss. Well, if there was only one Branch being run at a loss the matter would

not be very serious, but you might have nine or ten or more Branches all in the same position, and if you allow that to go on, in the course of time those Branches will sap and take away the foundations of the Union. I sent for the men who were working that Branch, and I said, "Now, look here, you know the resolution of the Annual General Meeting that wherever a Branch exceeds 50 per cent. expenditure as compared with the income, the Branch must be dealt with. Either I must discharge the Officials or I must close the Branch." I said, "The state of affairs has gone on like this for nearly nine months, and owing to my being away I have not been able to deal with it, but now I feel I must. If you cannot make your Branch pay you must close it up." Well, the man who was acting as Secretary said he did not think they had had a fair chance. I said, "I will tell you what I will do. I will give you three months of what you call a fair chance, and if at the end of that time you have not made good, I am going to close the Branch up." Then what happened? From that very week onwards they paid their way, followed by remittances every week to Head Office, and now they are sending, I will say, £12 a week to the Central Office. Now, if you put the £10 or £12 that we had to send them, that is really a saving of £22 a week to this Union. Supposing I had said, "Oh, well, I suppose they are doing their best," and had let things run on; look what a loss that is in the course of a year; and if you have got two or three Branches all in the same way, all the good that the good Branches do is lost in keeping a lot of duds running. So you see I have got to take drastic action, and, as a result of it, the funds of the Union are preserved.

Now, you cannot allow sentiment to come into these things. You may talk as you like about Trade Unions, but you have got to run them on proper lines. (Hear, hear.) Their accounts must square; there must be ample provision made for members; because what is the good of telling a man when he comes up for his old age pension, "Well, I am very sorry, my friend, but the money has all gone." He says, "How has it gone?" Then I say, "Well, in keeping the Branches running." Is that going to be enough to satisfy the man who has been paying into the Union for 25 years or more to say, "I cannot pay your old age pension?" Could you expect a man to take that? No, certainly not. So I am out for the principle that the Union must pay its way; but, in addition to that, it must make ample provision for all the claims that are coming against it in the way of benefits, either one thing or the other, and especially the old age pension. That is just exactly the position. So when you come to the question of age limit, our friend over there remarked that there are plenty of men at 65 quite good and capable of giving a good account of themselves. That is perfectly true, but you cannot run it like that. Who is going to be the judge as to whether he is capable or not? And then if you put it to the General President for him to judge, you are putting more on my shoulders than ought to be there—(hear, hear)—whereas if the Rule is laid down everyone knows the Rule, and that when he retires he will get a pension. How many of you sailors and firemen to-day have got any guarantee of a pension when you retire?



Several Delegates : None at all.

The General President : So there is no hardship, as far as that is concerned, with regard to Officials; and if the Officials are getting a pension, in my opinion they are very fortunately placed as compared with the members they are working for. (Applause.) Does anyone wish to say anything on the resolution?

Several Delegates : Vote ! Vote !

The General President : Very well. The resolution is that the retiring age of all Officials shall be 60 years of age for outside Delegates, 65 years for Branch Secretaries and District Secretaries and 70 years for all Head Office Officials. Now, that is the resolution. Shall I put it to the vote? (Cries of "Yes.")

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	65
Against	...	...	...	...	0

The General President : That is carried unanimously.

*(The meeting was adjourned for a short time.)*

#### ELECTION OF ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY.

The General President : The next item on the agenda is the election of an Assistant General Secretary. You see the Rule says that the Annual General Meeting may (not must) appoint an Assistant General Secretary, and therefore under the Rule we have to appoint an Assistant General Secretary, and I am going to recommend Mr. George Gunning for that position. (Applause.)

Mr. Damm : I have much pleasure in moving that.

Mr. Decker formally seconded.

The General President : Mr. Gunning has had a good training; he has been for 25 years a member of this Union, and I do not think you could do better. (Hear hear.) It has been moved and seconded that Mr. Gunning be the Assistant General Secretary. Are there any other nominations?

Mr. Cathery : I might say that Mr. Gunning has been under my supervision since Mr. Henson left, and I can assure you that I do not think you could find another man in the Union who could fulfil the duties better than he could. (Hear, hear.)

A Delegate : I move that nominations be now closed.

The General President : Is it agreed that the nominations be now closed? (Agreed.) Then I will put the resolution.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	53
Against	...	...	...	...	0

The General President : That is carried unanimously.

Mr. Gunning (who was received with applause) said : Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I must thank you for the very great honour which you have conferred on me this afternoon. I do consider it a great honour, because I shall be representing one of the greatest Unions in the world. I am very sorry there was one dissentient, but I am satisfied, because he tried to hang me at Liverpool. I am referring to Mr. Grange. I am not so frightened of his opposition, but there is one thing I should like to mention. I did not speak when Mr. Cathery handed in his resignation. I have been working with Mr. Cathery for the past twelve months, and there is no one who will miss Mr. Cathery more than myself. The effect of seeing his cheery old face in the mornings when the dark clouds were over us, or sometimes when there was a very heavy day's work before us, seemed to make that day very much lighter, and we tucked into our work and got it done quicker than we should have done if we had not seen that cheery old face. I know I shall be one who will miss that dear old face; but still we have Mr. Wilson left, a man whom I have tried to follow from the first time I was made an official. He has very often pulled me over the ropes, and one time he told me, "Please do not take the weight of the world on your shoulders," and I have endeavoured not to do that. I have endeavoured to see eye to eye with him at all times. During my service as a Branch Official I endeavoured to carry out the policy of Mr. Wilson. I found that that policy was more than successful at all times during my service in the Branches. But coming back to Mr. Cathery and his experiences, it struck me, with all the Officials round about us to-day, what a fine thing it was for a man like Mr. Cathery and also our President to say to you men and to me that they started with sixpennyworth of paper and sixpennyworth of envelopes and built up an Organisation like this. If those men could achieve an object of that kind, what could not this Conference do if only they had put their backs to it and put aside those feelings of petty jealousy amongst themselves? (Hear, hear.) Let us go forward with that spirit of co-operation, having one object in mind, not only to build up this Organisation, but to make it so great that the danger can never be brought about, as our General President has told us, through strikes. Strikes would become impossible. The power you would have behind you would be quite sufficient to meet the shipowners, and you would achieve all the success by keeping men at work the whole time while you are carrying on negotiations. I think if we took that spirit from this Annual Conference and we carried it right throughout the Branches, by the next time we met we should be 50 per cent. ahead of where we are to-day. I do beg of all the Officials in the Branches to go ahead with that spirit of co-operation and with the feeling of jealousy entirely wiped out, and I do not think we should have any need to regret it. I do thank you,

Mr. President and fellow Delegates, for the honour which you have conferred upon me. (Applause.)

#### APPOINTMENT TO NATIONAL MARITIME BOARD.

The General President: Following upon the appointment of an Assistant General Secretary, there will be the necessity of appointing a Joint Secretary to the National Maritime Board. You will understand that on the Maritime Board there are two Secretaries—Mr. Michael Brett, representing the Shipping Federation, and Mr. Henson, who was the Secretary representing our Union. Now, in consequence of Mr. Henson's retirement we have got to appoint another Secretary to the Maritime Board, and as Mr. Gunning has been unanimously elected as Assistant General Secretary I suggest to you that he be appointed Joint Secretary to the National Maritime Board. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Spence formally moved Mr. Gunning's appointment.

Mr. Borlase (Manchester) formally seconded.

The General President: It has been moved and seconded that Mr. Gunning be appointed Joint Secretary to the National Maritime Board. There is no pay attached to that position—you understand that. It is an honorary job.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	62
Against	...	...	...	...	0

The General President: Now the whole Panel was as follows: Mr. Havelock Wilson, Mr. E. Cathery, the late Mr. T. Chambers, Mr. J. Henson, Mr. McVey, Mr. Kimpton, Mr. Spence, Mr. Walsh, Mr. McKee, Mr. Bond and Mr. Bennett. That is eleven.

Mr. Cathery: And the Ship Constructors.

The General President: Yes, we give them one place—the Shipwrights; that makes twelve. Now, we have got to elect a man in the place of Mr. Chambers; again, in the place of Mr. McVey; one in the place of Mr. Walsh, and one in the place of Mr. McKee. We want five new nominations.

The following gentlemen were nominated: Messrs. J. B. Wilson, Percy Knight, Captain Davies, H. Decker, Captain Tupper, C. Jarman, J. Tarbitten, M. Tearle, C. Jenkins, R. Breckenridge, G. Jackson and R. Clouston.

The General President: Mr. Jenkins's name is withdrawn from the list. Now, there are five men required. Will you kindly take a piece of paper and each of you write on that piece of paper the names of the five gentlemen whom you want to be elected. While the votes are being counted we will get on with the next business.

**PAID OFFICIALS AND PARLIAMENTARY AND MUNICIPAL OFFICES.**

Liverpool North has a resolution which we have not touched yet. That is on page 3, and reads as follows:—

“ That we, the members of the North Branch of the Seamen’s Union, emphatically assert that no paid official of the Union should or will be permitted to become a candidate for Parliamentary and Municipal honours while they are the servants of the Organisation. If he or they desire to become a candidate for any such position they must tender their resignation before seeking same.”

Mr. Riley : Mr. President and fellow Delegates, in moving this resolution I should like to say that there has been a lot of discussion to-day on part of this resolution, as far as the political business is concerned. I want to be as brief as possible. We have had four meetings in the Liverpool North End Branch, and prior to those meetings being held I had on board ship complaints of all descriptions, but the most serious complaint of the lot was from men who were going down to the Liverpool Central Office and going to other Officials’ offices, asking for particular Officials. and when they got to the offices they were told that their Official was not present as he was on some particular Committee of the Town Council, or some particular stunt outside the Organisation, with the result that that has been one of the things which has got the men’s goat in Liverpool, especially in the North End, because in the North End of Liverpool there are two classes of political opinion. There are the Irish Nationalists, and there is the Labour Party. As one of the men who supported the Irish National cause, never since I have been in that Branch have I allowed myself to be intermixed with either the Irish Nationalist Party or other Party. The position is that the men have definitely told me not later than Tuesday night prior to my coming up—I held a meeting and there were 60 members present, and they definitely told me this. One of the men was a very old member, Mr. FitzGerald. He said, “ Frank, if you come back from London and tell me as an old member of this Organisation that you have not supported that resolution, I am paying no more into the Union.” He said he had sent complaints to the other offices, and they had never been attended to because there had been too much political business going on. I want each and everyone of you present to take the same view as I am taking. I personally make this statement here, that so far as we are concerned we are, considering the times, getting well paid, and I think the time has arrived, whether it be 14 hours or 16 hours a day, Sunday included, it is our policy and it is our principle, especially after what has gone on at the Executive Council meeting, and what has been discussed here, that each and every Official, whether he be a Branch Secretary, a District Secretary, or a Delegate on the dock, it is his place to do nothing else but look after the interests of this particular Organisation, irrespective of nationality and irrespective of parties, or anything else. He is paid by the Union, and it is his place to look after the men of the sea. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Jenkins : Mr. President and fellow Delegates, I have much pleasure in seconding this resolution. I can endorse all that Mr. Riley has said. Even though myself I am a keen student of politics—no one loves his political history more than I do—but I do say if you are paying a Trade Union Official, then you are certainly paying him to devote all his time, his energy and his interest in looking after the welfare of the men of the sea. Let us look at it from the other point of view. Supposing you do allow them to go into Municipal and Parliamentary matters. Look at the time that is lost when a man is sitting on the Liverpool City Council, where the sessions may be two or three half-days a week. Look at the time that is lost if they vote on committees. The consequence would be, in the case of a District Secretary, he would be more in the Liverpool Town Hall than in his office. Well, that is not right, because, after all is said and done, if you are paying a man to look after your interests it is his duty to look after them, and the same thing applies to Parliamentary matters.

The General President : Is there any amendment to the resolution? It having now been moved that the question be now put.

Mr. Jackson : Might I ask a question? Does this resolution apply to Officials or others of this Union who happen to be on a National Health Insurance Committee or a Court of Referees?

The General President : No.

Mr. Jackson : Thank you.

The General President : Are you willing that I should take the vote? (Cries of "Yes.") You know the terms of the resolution.

On a show of hands there voted :—

For the resolution	...	...	...	...	57
Against	...	...	...	...	0

The General President : That is carried unanimously.

#### ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES ON SEAFARERS' JOINT COUNCIL.

The General President : Now with regard to the Seafarers' Joint Council. We want four representatives.

A Delegate : Might I ask with reference to the Catering Department that we have not been there since the Organisation has been reformed. Will nominations be taken for the Catering Section?

The General President : Yes. There are four wanted. There are three sections : Deck, Engineerroom and Catering.

Mr. Catherly: I might say the present representation has been: Mr. J. B. Wilson, who took the position after Mr. Chambers's death, Mr. Tarbitten, myself, Mr. Powdrill, Mr. Henson, Mr. Walsh and McMcVey. Of course, Mr. Henson has gone and Mr. Walsh, I suppose, has gone; Mr. McVey has gone, and Mr. Chambers is deceased.

The General President: We will go on as the ballot is not ready.

#### FRATERNAL DELEGATES FROM AMERICA.

We have completed the Agenda, but we have one or two other little matters. First, we have the Fraternal Delegates from America, and they did not get a fair hearing. They came in on what I call a sort of side issue, where they were not at liberty to go outside what they were talking about without the President calling them to order. Now, I propose that we give each of them, say, ten minutes each. Therefore I am going to ask Mr. Furuseth to lead off.

Mr. Andrew Furuseth, who was received with applause, said: Mr. President and fellow Seamen, first of all I want to bring you from the American Seamen fraternal greetings and expressions of kindness. Secondly, I want to thank you for sending someone to attend our conventions in America. We are happy to see those who come there, and we are thankful for the opportunity to be present here.

So much for that. I presume that now you would like to hear a little about our hopes and our aspirations in America. There is something that I think will be of very great interest to you that we are now trying to do—my latest information is that the King Bill, as we call it, dealing with immigration, has been reported unanimously from the Committee in the Senate. Now the immigration question is a very important question in America to-day. The American people have come to the conclusion that they are getting too many of the wrong kind coming to their country. They are afraid they are going to slip the moorings because of that new element which they now recognise they cannot absorb. America would not, in my opinion, have passed the kind of Immigration Laws that it has passed if the immigrants had come from what are now generally known as the Nordics, that is to say, from the men of the Nordic blood; but the great bulk of the immigrants coming into America in the last two years have been what is known as Mediterraneans—that is, people coming from the south of the Mediterranean; from the northern borders of the Mediterranean; from the interior of the Mediterranean and from Asia Minor, and also from the Balkans, together with Hungary, Russia and the Southern part of Poland. They are not the same blood or the same breed as the men of Great Britain, Norway, Germany or Northern France or Northern Poland, or the Scandinavian countries and some particular districts of Northern Italy. They are not the same. Anyone who knows anything about humanity knows that New York has become a kind of a city of Israelites. They realise that the state of Massachusetts has become something of an East End

European Colony; they do not believe in going on with it; and for that reason they adopted in 1921, first the quota system, saying that 3 per cent. of those who came in 1900 should be permitted to come in the future. They found that that was too many, and there were many difficulties about it. In 1924 they reduced that to 2 per cent. of the number that had arrived in 1890, and they found that it was not altogether a fair crack of the whip, as you say here, to base it upon that, and so they based it upon the blood in America. The result is that 160,000 immigrants can come to America in one year. They exclude anyone who cannot become a citizen of the United States, and no one can become a citizen of the United States unless he is a white man as we recognise white men; that is to say, Europeans of different kinds and of that breed. No one can come from Asia as long as he is purely Asiatic.

Now, they have found that there was a large number of men coming notwithstanding that—that there were about 1,000,000 seamen, including all ranks from master to boy, coming into the ports of the United States of America every year. Six hundred thousand of them, of course, may be possible immigrants—officers of vessels. If you take the officers and petty officers out of it you have got about 600,000 who might come into America every year. So what is the use of talking about 160,000? So to this extent I want you to bear with me, and watch carefully what I say. They gathered in the beginning, when the first Bill was introduced, that there was going to be no permission for any seaman who was not a citizen of the United States to put his foot on American soil at all unless he could put up 500 dollars forfeit to show that he was going out again. When I saw that in the Bill I drew it to the attention of our Legislative Committee, and we set to work to show it to the Senators and the Congressmen—and mind you, they are not connected with any political party at all in America—and said, “What are you going to do? You are going to do something that no nation has ever done in times of peace; you are going to make a man a prisoner on board a ship; you are going to make the ship a gaol when she is lying in harbour.” Whether you can do that constitutionally or not, I do not know; I doubt whether it could be done, and it could stand the test of the Supreme Court; but, at any rate, that is the proposition here, and you know, men, that when a man has been two, three and four months at sea he comes into harbour and he looks at the shore. There are a dozen and one reasons why he wants to go ashore. I do not need to mention some of the things. I can leave those to your imagination, and to your knowledge. At any rate, there are hundreds of things that a man wants to go ashore for when he has been to sea for a long time. I told them brutally and frankly why some men wanted to go on shore, and so forth, and after a little while I got them to understand that that would be a wrong thing for them to do as a civilised nation. The result was that they cut the *bona fide* seamen completely out of the immigration system altogether. The result is this, that a *bona fide* seaman, a man who is actually a seaman and a man who actually wants to become a seaman—I am speaking now of a boy—he can come and go, and come ashore and go on board again,

and if he wants to leave his vessel completely he can go, under the Seamen's Act, and ask for one-half of his pay. Then if he wants to stay; he can stay. If he does not want to stay he can take his clothes and walk ashore in the middle of the day and no man can say him nay or interfere with him. (Applause.) I can tell you that from America some day when it is actually accomplished I think the British seamen will say "Thank God."

Mr. Patrick Flynn, who was received with applause, said: Mr. President and members of the National Union of Seamen, I realise the terrible strain you have been under during the past week, and that you are very desirous of getting back to your homes. But I would ask you to be indulgent with me for the space of ten minutes. I am certainly glad to be in your midst once again, and, like my colleague, I bring you fraternal greetings from the men on the other side. Last year when addressing this audience, or an audience similar to this, I make certain remarks. I said then, and I repeat now, that the course which you had chosen then upon the advice of your Executive Council, who in part were advised by your General President, Mr. Havelock Wilson, was the only safe, sane course to pursue. It has been my good fortune to be amongst you once again when you were discussing a very, very serious situation, and one that has a bearing, my friends, not alone on the seamen of this country, but on the seamen the wide world over. Your actions were watched not only by the seamen but by everyone, as far as the United States were concerned—the Labour movement and everyone outside the Labour movement. The picture of your General President was in practically every daily paper of consequence throughout the United States, and whilst it was a tense time for you I can assure you it was equally as tense for us on the other side, especially we men of the seamen movement. You are to be congratulated, friends—and particularly is your President to be congratulated—(hear, hear)—for having the foresight to be able to grapple with that situation and to give his advice to your Executive Council in order that you might be able to meet the situation as men. That you have met the situation as men goes without saying; and take it from me, my friends, that as time goes on you will be complimented for the stand you have taken in this particular crisis, far more than you were complimented last year on the stand you took. Just imagine for a few minutes if you had taken another position, what your condition would be. You would have been reduced to a similar condition, if not a worse condition, than we are in in the United States. What a forlorn situation we should have been in in so far as a real brotherhood of the sea was concerned. After all, my friends, if we are ever going to have a real International Seafarers' Federation you can take it from me that the two dominant factors to bring it about finally rest on the two English-speaking nations, namely, Great Britain and America. So you see, you people in this country were going through the same identical thing as what we are going through now. In 1911 we were in a position to throw our shoulder to the wheel, and now, by using the good common sense that God Almighty gave you, and, after all, men, it is nothing—only common sense.



The General President : Hear, hear.

Mr. Patrick Flynn : It is only a matter of common sense being used at the right time, and at the psychological moment. We are in a position to carry on our end of the fight knowing that the anchor on this side is ever ready to be with us. It is for that reason that I say to you now that I am ready and willing, and shall defend your position in this instance against all comers, the same as I defended your position last year; and I am not talking for sympathy. (Applause.)

As a seaman, I say to the world at large it was the only sane, logical conclusion that you could come to. My admiration to the day of my death will always be held in reverence to the man at the wheel. I have reference now to your General President. May he live long. (Hear, hear.)

The General President : Wait a moment. How do you know the President is the "Man at the Wheel"?

Mr. Patrick Flynn : I have not reference to your publication. As far as the man at the wheel in your publication is concerned, I do not know who he is. (Laughter.) Whoever he is, he is a good guide, to use the language of the Americans. I do not want my time to be taken up, because I have to touch the high step; but, nevertheless, men, as I have said, you are to be complimented. I laughed inwardly, and with great glee, when I heard the advocates of a Minority Movement standing on a platform and trying to convince men that they were the Moses and the only saviours of the Seamen's Organisation. They forget, my friends, that if there is anything that is unobtainable in the Trade Union movement throughout the world it is a cessation movement. (Hear, hear.) It cannot be tolerated, irrespective of what the circumstances may be. It is unjustifiable in the eye of God. Men, in such circumstances there was nothing else that you could do but what you did do, and, as an impartial spectator, I want to compliment you, for never in my life before have I seen men who were confronted with the circumstances that you were who tempered justice with the milk of human kindness. It will everlastingly be said to your credit that you have done wonders.

In closing, I want to say—if I may be permitted to digress—my colleagues said we were glad to have representation from this side. Of course we are, and you have sent good men on every occasion, but a more lovable individual, a diamond in the rough, representing the seamen of Great Britain, never lived than my long-beloved and esteemed old friend, Ned Cathery. (Applause.) Our Conventions, men, are not one-tenth of what your Annual General Meeting is here. They are wild and woolly while they last—take that from me. (Laughter.) We are stormy petrels, each and all of us. It happened to be Ned Cathery's lot to attend one of the stormiest Conventions that we had for some time, and you could always find our dear old friend going round and saying, "Paddy, my son, watch your step." So I say, men, while I know that each and every one of you love Ned Cathery, you have no more love and admiration for him than we have on our side.

(Applause.) May he live long and be happy, and, as your President has said, you will find there is many a kick left in Cathery. But, in the circumstances, there was nothing else for you to do. I want to say that the men in America certainly appreciate everything that you have done. Our position, of course, is explainable. It is impossible for men to appreciate our position except when they are in the firing line themselves. It is milk and honey one day, and there is neither milk nor honey the next day, but with it all, like myself slightly disfigured, we are still in the ring, and we shall ever keep a stiff upper lip; but oh, what would have happened if you had done anything else than listen to the good common sense of your grand old President, Havelock Wilson? (Applause.)

Mr. Grange, who was received with applause, said: Mr. President and Delegates, this is a tough job. Paddy Flynn has said everything I was thinking about. It has afforded me a great deal of pleasure to be with you. It has been a life's ambition gratified. It is not only a pleasure, but it is a privilege, and a great privilege. In addition to being here with you I have had the honour of shaking hands with your King. Of course he used to be my King—and I want you to know that I am not ashamed of it—I still love him, and I have had the honour of broiling under your flag.

Mr. Cathery: God bless him.

Mr. Grange: I am the only one of the family who is away from the flag, and I am away on business, that is all. (Laughter.) In addition to that, I want to say that I did not know there were so many Lords and Dukes in the world as I had the privilege of meeting the other day. There were three people at the King's Garden Party, the King, Havelock Wilson and Grange. (Applause.) When I returned to the hotel after the Party I found it necessary to buy a couple of bottles of vaseline. I had sore hands with shaking hands with so many Dukes and Lords. And I enjoyed it. A dear friend of mine who happened to be there escorted me in great fashion to the King's feet, and, oh boy, what a feed I had. I had the King's strawberries; I had his cake, and I had everything with him, and I was so happy. So much for that. It has been my good fortune—it has been my privilege, I should say—to be permitted to visit a number of your ports and address meetings in them. It is to be regretted that not only in our country but in your country there are different views; there are a number of people who are always out trying to wreck an Organisation, particularly so the Seamen's Unions. We have them on the other side. I will make this qualification, that I do not think we have got as many of them there as you have here. I have never seen so many Union busters in all my life as I have seen here. (Laughter.) You have got the Minority Movement, and then McVey—oh, I cannot begin to name them. But I want to tell you something. The old captain at the wheel has been able to keep the ship on a steady course, and I must say that this is the time, right here and now, to congratulate the captain upon having such a noble crew. Look at them—the finest body of men

I have ever had the honour of addressing, or even of looking at. There are good-looking fellows here; others not so bad looking. I put it to you that altogether you are a wonderful body. I can say to you men, in a word of advice, keep the good work going, and when the time comes for the old skipper to leave the bridge, and for him to pass over the gangway and go ashore and bid the ship good-bye, someone, I know, from among this crew will be able to walk up and take the sail and keep the ship on her course the same as your old captain has kept her on her course for all these years. It is true that at times it is somewhat sickening, and it makes you feel a bit upset, when, after you have licked one gang in Liverpool, you find another. When you have got them licked there they start somewhere else. But I can only say to you, keep on licking them, and remember these words: "You can fool some of the seamen all the time; you can fool all of the seamen some of the time; but you cannot fool all the seamen all the time." I thank you. (Applause.)

The General President: This has certainly been the most wonderful Annual Meeting that it has ever been my experience to attend. I am somewhat delighted with the high-tone level of the speeches that have been delivered by the men of the sea. It certainly is refreshing to see that the seamen are waking up. Now, I am afraid there is a good deal in the policy of our Union that has not seen the light of day. There are many reasons for it. When a General is in a battle he cannot afford to expose all his plans to the enemy. He has got his diagrams and his charts in the general headquarters, and he himself has to keep those plans and diagrams to himself as much as he possibly can—(hear, hear)—because if he does not do that they may get out and the enemy may get after them, and in the result disaster will follow. Now, for four solid years I have carried on a greater fight than some of you really think—a much greater fight. Four years ago there was an Organisation started with £100,000 of capital, and it was proclaimed to the world at large that their one aim and object they had in view was to destroy the National Union of Seamen, and, in particular, your worthy President. Well, if anyone offers me a fight of that kind I am never reluctant to take them on. (Hear, hear.) I will take it up that way with whoever comes along, and for four solid years I have waged a fight with that Organisation with one object in view, that if they were thinking of destroying us I would take good care I would destroy them first, and I am very glad to say I have wiped them out. (Applause.) I have wiped them out clean; there is not a vestige of them left to-day. Well, while that has been going on, some men of the sea have unfortunately gone astray in more parts of the world than one. On the Continent we have been subject to attacks from Seamen's Unions—very vicious and bitter attacks; but I am very proud to say now that they are all coming to their senses. They are all beginning to say, "Well, after all, as men representing Seamen's Unions, our salvation is closer to our British comrades than to the shoremen."

Now, Mr. Furuseth has said very often—I thought in a very brutal manner—in speaking of shore Organisations—he has put

it very brutally on more than one occasion in my presence, that shore-working Organisations, as far as the seamen are concerned, could not be trusted. I have often thought he went a step too far in that direction, or, in other words, perhaps he put it too brutally; but after years of reflection we must come, if we study the events of the past, to the conclusion that, whilst we have always been prepared to make up those federations of seamen and shoremen, it has unfortunately turned out on several occasions that when it suited the purpose of the shoremen they have turned us down. More than thirty years ago, who was the founder of the National Union of Dock Labourers? Myself. With what money? The funds of the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union. Who was the founder of the International Transport Workers' Federation? The National Union of Sailors and Firemen; and for every shilling the other fellows paid we paid £1. Then, when they got on their feet, as it was truly said by Mr. Furuseth, when they wanted something, the seamen were always wanted to go into the fight. But when we wanted anything the time was not opportune. Here is a remarkable fact worth putting on record. Robert Williams, of the Transport Workers' Federation, in 1912 got a microbe on his brain that the strongest Union that could be formed was the Transport Workers' Federation, with the seamen as a section—as a section, mark you. Before that time, 1912, the seamen of Germany, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Sweden and Denmark had all got strong Seamen's Unions, but after 1912, in Germany, Belgium, and in Holland, from the time they joined up as part and parcel of the Transport Workers in those countries, those Unions have decayed, and, if I may use a stronger term, they have perished; because to-day they have to depend on the contributions of the Dock Labourers to keep them going. I say you can get no independent Organisation of seamen where you have to depend on other people to keep you going. If you cannot keep yourselves going, then you are not keeping going at all.

Now, there are several seamen's Organisations who could not quite understand our policy, and who have been up against us because they did not understand us and did not understand where we were. Take Australia, for one. In Australia the leaders of the movement, rightly or wrongly, came to the conclusion that we were a most backward race. They had gone ahead because the conditions that prevailed there were so different from ours that they were able to get nearly twice as much wages as we could; and because of that they were of the opinion that we were going on wrong lines. Well, they went ahead and went ahead, and what is the result to-day? The Union in Australia, I am sorry to say, is practically broke through their go-ahead policy. You can only go a certain way; if you go above the level you get a check, and when you get that check you get a nasty set-back. Now, we had an Organisation appeal to us the other day for help. The men at the head of it were young men. We tried to advise them and guide them in the right direction, but no, they would not be guided by our experience—they knew better. They were going to turn the world upside down. Well, they tried it, and now to-day they are practically down and out and have had to come back to us and confess that they made a mistake and appeal to

this Union to get them out of their trouble. Friends, there is nothing like experience to teach you to be wise. (Hear, hear.) We are wise because we have gone through it and because we have had to suffer in the past for the mistakes which we made. To-day we are wiser men, and during the General Strike our wisdom was manifested in every direction.

I do hope that in the future we shall get the men to recognise that there is a limit to what you can do. I advised six years ago, and I think it was good advice, when the great depression of trade came, to keep your powder dry—(hear, hear)—that is to say, do not waste your ammunition merely for the firing of it in making a noise, but preserve your ammunition until you are within reasonable distance of your opponent, and then, when you fire your shot and shell, see that every one of them goes home. (Hear, hear.) Well, that is sound sense, and one half of the Unions in this country to-day have been making a noise wasting their powder and shot. It would have been better if they had reserved that, because improvement of trade must come soon, and sooner than some of us think, and then you can approach the employers and show them that you are in a position to fight. When they are in a position to hand out, then you are more certain to get what belongs to you. (Hear, hear.) Is not that right?

Several Delegates : Yes.

The General President : I thank you very much.

#### RESULT OF THE ELECTIONS.

The General President : The result of the elections are as follows :—

The Maritime Board :—

Captain Davies	...	...	...	...	52
Mr. J. B. Wilson	...	...	...	...	44
Captain Tupper	...	...	...	...	33
Mr. Jarman	...	...	...	...	28
Mr. Tarbitten	...	...	...	...	26

Then the elections to the Seafarers' Joint Council :—

Mr. George Gunning	...	...	...	...	8
Captain Davies	...	...	...	...	8
Mr. Tarbitten	...	...	...	...	5

#### SUGGESTED MONUMENT TO SAMUEL PLIMSOLL.

The General President : You have all heard of Samuel Plimsoll. His name is a household word throughout the country. Well, Samuel Plimsoll died June 3rd, 1898. Samuel Plimsoll was a great philanthropist and a friend of seamen. Now, it is reported to me that Mr. Plimsoll is buried at Folkestone and his memory there has been very sadly neglected, and his grave is really a dis-

grace. There is a tombstone over his grave, but I understand it is in a very dilapidated state, and it looks as though it belonged to no one. Remembering what Mr. Plimsoll did for the men of the sea, I think we have a duty placed upon us to see that those who did so much for us in the past years shall not be forgotten. (Hear, hear.) Now, it is suggested in this letter that something might be done to put this right. I think myself, remembering the services of Mr. Plimsoll, we ought to erect a monument to his memory on that particular place where he lies. (Hear, hear.) This is not the time to talk about spending money, and we have a right to be careful of what we do in that direction, but I am going to suggest to you that a very small Committee should be appointed to consider and inquire into what it would cost to have a full-sized statue of Samuel Plimsoll erected over his grave, and, when the time comes to unveil that monument or statue, that it ought to be done in a manner befitting the nation. (Hear, hear.)

I would suggest a small Committee should sit from now until the end of the year to make all inquiries as to cost, and everything else, and to report to the Executive Council at their meeting in December or January, whenever it is held, and then it will be for the Executive Council to consider whether it is a good plan, whether it is a reasonable price, and so on, and if we find it is reasonable and good, and the Union can afford to go on with the scheme, we shall be ready to put up a monument to Samuel Plimsoll. I suggest if the report is favourable that at our next Annual General Meeting all the Delegates and friends throughout the country should attend and let it be a red-letter day in our history; let people know that we are not forgetting to honour a man who did so much for us. (Applause.) Will anyone move the appointment of a small Committee?

Mr. Cairns: I move that the matter be left in the hands of the Finance Committee.

Mr. Harper: I will second that. Every time I pass that cemetery I feel rather embarrassed. On Samuel Plimsoll's tombstone there is a picture of him, and underneath is inscribed, "The Sailors' Friend." I had to take away the weeds to uncover that inscription. I was rather sorry afterwards when the weeds uncovered those words, "The Sailors' Friend," because it seemed to me that it was absolutely neglected by all. It was about six years ago when the last mark of respect was paid to the grave, when a wreath was laid on it by the Folkestone Labour Party. Since then nothing has been done. I have made inquiries in Folkestone, but there is no relative left there. A son and daughter attended his funeral on June 8th of 1898, and his wife was buried in 1911, but since then no one has been near the grave. Originally his daughter was intended to be buried there, but no visitor has been there since.

The General President: As far as Mr. Plimsoll and his relatives are concerned, I do not think anyone knows in this country more about Mr. Plimsoll and his relatives than myself, because I remember this: For over 15 years I worked in close association with

Samuel Plimsoll, and, as a matter of fact, I carried on the work which he started. But we may amend it in this way, seeing that we are going to erect a monument—at least, we may—and seeing we are going to pay a proper tribute to his name, it might be found advisable that the Annual General Meeting next year should be held in Folkestone so as to give a large number of Delegates the opportunity of paying their tribute of respect. (Hear, hear.) It has been moved and seconded that we adopt that course. Is that agreed?

On question, the motion was agreed to.

#### MR. RICHARDS, OF AUSTRALIA.

The General President: We have in this room a gentleman from Australia, Mr. Richards. He is not here as a Delegate, I mean what I call a proper elected or appointed Delegate, but he has come here for one purpose. He came some ten days ago. He has been a Union man in Australia for twelve years, and he has heard a good deal said against this Union, and his mission was to come and have a look at it. I always believe when anyone comes like that, show your hand—show what you are at; there is nothing secret about it, and I have shown Mr. Richards all about the building, all about our work, and I have extended to him an invitation to come and see this Union in conference. He has come, and I should like you to hear any impressions that he may have gathered, as I am sure he will convey back to Australia, when he goes in a week or two's time, to the Australian seamen what he has seen, what his belief is, and that will do a wonderful lot of good to have that first-hand information handed round in Australia. I will now ask Mr. Richards to take the floor.

Mr. Richards (who was received with applause) said: Mr. President and Gentlemen, I first of all want to express my thanks and appreciation for the invitation extended to me by the General President of this Organisation to attend both parts of the Executive Council meeting and also this Annual General meeting. This is the first time I have been in this country for 13 years. I have not been in Australia for twelve years as the President said. I have been there a matter of eight years. Prior to that I was in India and South Africa. I entered the Labour Movement industrially some eight years ago, and I have found it very interesting so far.

I want to dwell for a time on the life of the General President of this Organisation. Prior to coming to England I knew that he had spent a number of years in building up this Organisation, and I found when I got here that 38 years of his life have been spent in building up this Organisation. The majority of you here present, I think, will agree with me in saying that due to his untiring efforts and with the co-operation of his colleague Cathery, and numerous other people who might have been in this movement for a number of years, they have brought this Organisation to such a great position in which it is to-day.

After spending a few hours with your President he invited me to have a look round the building. I was conducted around with

another mutual friend of mine, Mr. Grange. He was surprised, and I think I was a little more surprised than he was. With regard to the building, it is one of the finest buildings that any one Organisation controls which I have seen so far, and I have seen a few. We have a few nice buildings in Australia, but no one Organisation has a building of this size, or controls the amount of business which is transacted under the roof of this building. We passed out of one office into another, and all you could see was everything working in a systematic way. There are files; some of them, I think, date back 30 years, and all these records can be looked up, and looked up with interest, by those members who have been in the Organisation for any length of time.

With regard to organised Labour in this country as a whole, I am prepared to say here that it is very much behind the organised Labour that we have in Australia. Possibly you people here may not think so, but in my opinion and in the hundreds of investigations I have made outside of the Seamen's Organisations I find that industrially this country is backward. I am prepared to say that conditions in a number of cases in this country are deplorable in different industries, and, with the assistance of the men and women of those industries, by a matter of solidifying their position industrially their conditions could be bettered immensely.

It has come to my knowledge, through meeting different people in England during the course of the last fortnight, that they are of the opinion that from one year's end to another we in the industrial world in Australia are always harping on the verge of an industrial upheaval. I want every Delegate present here, including the General President, to get that right out of his mind. We are not harping on any industrial upheaval with the exception of one or two isolated cases, which very often cannot possibly be avoided. We have a method in Australia whereby the majority of Trade Unions are offered the opportunity of getting recognition from the Arbitration and Conciliation Courts. This is a thing that I have advocated for, I can honestly say, seven years. I must say that the Judges we have had have been impartial Judges; they have given us a very fair deal every time we have had the necessity to go into the Court and state our case. I pointed this out to your worthy President, and he said, "Well, you have got to bring every grievance before the Court and place them before the Judge, and you might make your case look far worse than what it is before you get any satisfaction." I have listened to cases in Court. I listened to a very interesting case of the tramwaymen in Melbourne, and although the men giving evidence had to paint their case worse than it really was, it was not elaborated, and it would be impossible to elaborate it to the extent that you could convince any Judge sitting in the Arbitration or Conciliation Court that that was not the case. These men have studied the industrial laws, and they understand the working man; and, as I said before and I will say again, they have always given us a very fair deal. The President of the Arbitration and Conciliation Court retired just recently, and I am waiting with interest to see who



takes his place. He was one of the finest men they ever had on the Arbitration Court.

For the benefit of those gentlemen who were not present on the last day of the Executive meeting, I should like to dwell once again on the question of affiliation to Seamen's Unions outside your own country and also the country of which I am a native—that is, Australia. The wonderful benefits to be derived by an affiliation of Seamen's Unions is simply something which we cannot altogether see the end of; in fact, I cannot see the end of the benefits that could be derived from a constitutional affiliation of Seamen's Unions throughout the world. It has come to my knowledge that this has been tried on several occasions. In one case Mr. Furuseth pointed out to-day it was far from being a success, owing to the fact that the head of that particular Organisation was a man who in a number of other capacities, like other men in other Organisations, was trying to be the supreme being of that particular Organisation, not for the benefit of the people whom he is supposed to represent, but entirely for his own benefit. Those are the people we have to eliminate in some way or other. If we fail in putting them out of office in one way we shall have to find some other method of putting them out. We have one man in particular in Australia who, I think I am right in saying, will within a very short time be removed from office. These men cannot possibly do any good for those whom they are supposed to represent, because they go there with one object, and that is to further their own ends. I know of cases in Australia where the Federated Marine Stewards, of which I am a rank-and-file member, have come to the assistance of the British stewards in particular and assisted them to a great extent in whatever grievance they had. Whether these men were members of this particular Organisation or not, I do not know; but I have always kept to one motto since I have been connected with industrial organisations, and that is: Do not kick a man because he is not a Trade Unionist; use every endeavour to convince him that it is his duty to become a Trade Unionist at once.

Mr. President and Gentlemen, I want to convey to you that I personally have one great ambition in life, and that is, to do some good to and for others. If this is not the ambition, it should be the object of everyone present here, and everyone in the world, come to that, to try and do good to others. Then, as I claim to be an industrialist, the good I attempt to do is naturally industrially first. Possibly there are times when you cannot do good industrially to the benefit of another man, but you can do another thing if you cannot do good, and that is, do not do harm. Also, as I am a seaman—if stewards are permitted to term themselves such—my services first and foremost go to the men of the sea, and they will continue to do so until such time as I decide to take up some other form of occupation in life. I have studied official and unofficial documents pertaining to seamen's affairs, but I say here without fear of ridicule that I still have a lot to learn, the same as men who are twice my age have still a lot to learn. Then with regard to the men of the sea, I was telling one of the visitors present here that with regard to seamen I have come to the conclusion

that they have a psychology of their own. Now, this psychology can only be learnt and mastered by being one of them and living with them. That is the only way by which you will ever be able to understand the seaman as he wants to be understood.

In conclusion, I should like to give one word of advice, although I am only a recruit in the movement, and that is, to organise and to continue to organise; but please do not lose sight of the fact that an official affiliation of seamen throughout the world on constitutional lines would prove a great advantage to the men of the sea. In fact, I am prepared to say that in a very short time it would be about 100 per cent. benefit. Again thanking you, and wishing you all health, happiness and industrial success in the future. (Applause.)

The General President: I now declare this very successful Annual General Meeting—the best we have ever had and the most important—to be closed.

*(The proceedings then terminated with three cheers for the National Union of Seamen.)*

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