

*Mr. R. P. Johnson* : I should assume Mr. McLean means that in a sense of an arbitration, and not merely as a Conference. If in the sense of an arbitration, both parties should go into the thing at once, prepared to abide by the arbitration; but I take it, sir, that the feeling rather is that you should first try to settle it for yourselves.

*Hon. Mr. McLean* : I could not arbitrate, as I have other people to consult when I come to close quarters. I am not my own master. I must not do things which probably there would not be a settlement in after all, however willing I myself might be to settle. If it is settled we must settle it in such a way that other parties will agree to it. I am not arbitrator of all New Zealand, like my friend Mr. Millar. I have a lot of masters, I can assure you, and am a very humble individual myself. I am very willing and anxious to discuss it with you, but I must tell you candidly that I must carry other people with me in agreeing to a settlement.

*Mr. Meyer* : Mr. Chairman, allow me to point out that I mentioned two names—Messrs. Winter and Sandford—as two who are outside the real question.

*Hon. Mr. McLean* : They are both in it.

*Mr. Elvines* : I should like to ask the Hon. Mr. McLean if he has any one he would like to nominate to sit with him, as I think the nomination should rest with him.

*Mr. Winter* : There is this difficulty in Mr. McLean's suggestion : that if outsiders go in now we should have to go through the whole thing *de novo*, as an outsider would not know the ins and outs of the affair.

*Hon. Mr. McLean* : I do not mean any one outside this Conference.

*Mr. Mills* : I would commend to the Conference a proposition that we should adjourn now until two hours hence, or till 10 o'clock to-morrow morning, as by that time Mr. McLean may be able to consult with any parties he desires to argue the point with. That I think would be a step to lead us more quickly towards a settlement, and would save time really in the end, and be better than rushing into it. I move, as an amendment, in order to test the feeling of the Conference, that we do now adjourn till 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

*Mr. Hutchison* : I second the amendment. At the end of our private meeting we should be able to submit a list of names to Mr. McLean from which he might select suitable men.

*Hon. Mr. McLean* : I shall not say who you should elect or not. I only suggest that, as the feelings of the Maritime Council are rather raised in the matter—perhaps mine are too—it would be better to get men who are impartial in their ideas of what would be right or wrong to settle. That is all, and I shall be glad if you will settle it amongst yourselves. I leave you free to elect any one you like. As I have already said, I am quite ready to discuss the difficulty freely with any of you at any time.

*Mr. R. P. Johnson* : Would it not be better, Mr. McLean, for the different bodies to appoint three, say, and you select two others from the Conference.

*Hon. Mr. McLean* : I do not want to select any one.

*Mr. Dobson* : I should be inclined to support the amendment. As Mr. McLean would like to have some one outside the Maritime Council and, probably, the miners, we could work upon that at a caucus meeting, and appoint delegates to wait upon Mr. McLean; and in the meantime he could do as he wished in connection with himself, as to having some one from the Union Steamship Company with him.

*Mr. Elvines* : I shall vote for the proposition, and I would suggest Mr. Sandford as a gentleman outside the Maritime Council. He is impartial in the matter.

*A Delegate* suggested the name of Mr. Hoban.

*Hon. Mr. McLean* : I forgot. I was going to say a few words to Mr. Hoban. In my opinion, it was unwise to bring a lawyer into this matter at all. His speech was not conciliatory, but misrepresented everything I said. I think myself that you do not get smoothness by bringing outsiders into your affairs. I am not saying this with any ill-will; but it is just the nature of a lawyer—a lawyer must see one side.

*Mr. Hoban* : I cannot allow that statement to go uncontradicted. I allow no man to speak so of me in a meeting like this. The meeting can say if I made any wilful misstatement—and I defy any one in the room to point out to me one misstatement that I made. I cannot allow any such reflections to be cast upon my profession. We have come here to discuss the matter, and make our remarks in due fairness, and my colleagues would be the first to hoot me down if I made any misstatement. If this went broadcast into the papers that I, the president of an important union, came here and wilfully misrepresented matters to this meeting, how would they look upon me?

*Hon. Mr. McLean* : I said lawyers.

*Mr. Hoban* : I do not appear here as a professional man in any shape or form. When we go into a matter of this kind we leave business outside, and try to do the best towards a settlement of a dispute which is affecting every man in the colony, whether a unionist or non-unionist. I am sorry you made that statement, sir, as it is not altogether correct.

*The Chairman* : I think Mr. McLean was unfortunate in referring to the matter at all. We have got on very nicely all through the Conference; and I consider it my duty to compliment the Conference on the temperate and conciliatory spirit which has prevailed. At the eleventh hour, however, this turns up, but I hope it will drop from this instant, and that we shall hear no more about it. Coming to the amendment, I think it would be best to set up the delegation and adjourn. The delegates could then assemble, and, if need be, confer with the newly-appointed delegation, who could receive instructions from them. The newly-appointed delegation would probably be in a position to-morrow morning to meet the Hon. George McLean or any other gentleman he may have to represent him, with propositions. It would be a mistake to introduce fresh blood into this matter at this stage, because, if you do, it would only mean going into the whole thing again. There is nothing to be gained, in my humble opinion, by going into the origin of the difficulty. It is here, no matter who is to blame for bringing it about, whether officers, seamen, wharf-labourers,