

a public man having the confidence of the Government and Parliament and the public of the country.

20. Would you place the selection of that public man in the Cabinet?—Yes, I think it probably would be wise at this stage.

21. Do you think the employers would agree if a Labour Cabinet were in power?—It would be better if the parties themselves would agree, but failing an agreement between the parties as to who should preside and have a deciding vote then Parliament, or its Executive, must step in.

22. Do I understand that you would first leave it to the parties themselves?—Yes.

23. You suggest that the Court, or body, or Conciliation Council should be selected by both employers and employees, and themselves select their chairman?—I want to be careful. If my answer is only to be confined to this section and to the present position, then I will answer in that way; but if I am to suggest a tribunal which will give more satisfaction and better administration than exists at present, then I will have to give another answer. My answer is this: that for the best settlement of strikes and lockouts covering big unions in large industries not registered under the Arbitration Act, and in cases of disputes of likely magnitude, the remedy is for a compulsory conference of the parties, to be legislated for by the Government, with a provision for a chairman to be agreed upon if possible, and failing that the appointment of a chairman—with a deciding vote—by the Government.

24. *Mr. Davey.*] Supposing you take the case of an unregistered union outside the Arbitration Court, you suggest that each side should try and settle the dispute; that they should select two representatives, who should together select their own chairman. Supposing they fail, would you consent to the Conciliation Commissioner taking the chair?—Yes. We have carried a resolution in our Council urging that the Conciliation Commissioner should be given a deciding vote on Conciliation Councils, because I think it will put him on his mettle. After all, you have got to have arbitration either before or after a strike at some stage, and somebody has got to give a deciding voice; and it is just as well, in the opinion of the Trades Council, that the arbitrator should come along before the strike occurs.

25. Do you think it would be wise to take a secret ballot before something takes place?—I do.

26. I agree with you. Supposing a strike is decided upon in the heat of the moment and when men's feelings are very excited, do you think it advisable, supposing a certain number of members asked that another ballot should be taken, would it be advisable at any period?—I suggest that no trades-union should be registered that has not in its rules provision for a secret ballot, and that if at any time after a strike, even though the strike has been decided on by secret ballot, ten or twenty, or a minority of members, if they again demand a ballot on the strike, shall have power at law to make their officers give effect to the secret-ballot rule of the union, and failing the officers agreeing to take such further ballot then the Government should order a ballot to be taken.

27. You agree to a secret ballot before a strike takes place?—Yes.

28. After a strike has taken place would it not be an advantage to take a secret ballot on anything connected with the strike?—Yes, I think the officials would be wise to have a ballot taken if demanded during the strike.

29. *Mr. Veitch.*] You are not in favour of Part VI of the Bill?—No; even if it were passed I do not think it would be effective.

30. You think that legislation in regard to industrial matters will only be successful if it inspires the confidence of the people concerned?—Yes, if it is inductive rather than coercive.

31. What do you think would be the effect on trades-union men in New Zealand generally if this section of the Bill were put into law as it stands?—They would sum it up by saying they were having arbitration forced down their throats. We say that the system could be improved in the way I have pointed out, and then unionists would favour it rather than by the strike method.

32. In all cases of industrial unrest is it not a fact that the fight is between two parties—employers on the one hand and wage-earners on the other?—Yes.

33. Is it also a fact that those that suffer most by a strike are the general public, who are not parties to the dispute, and are not consulted in it?—Invariably so.

34. In the event of a deadlock being arrived at between the two contending parties—namely, the employers and the employees—and each side stubbornly refusing to give way, do you think it advisable that legislation should be introduced for the purpose of forcing a settlement in the interests of the public?—I think that the provision of the Commonwealth Arbitration Court is a very wise one, which says, in effect, that if in the opinion of the President of the Court trouble or magnitude is threatened, or is likely to spread over more than one State, or involve the big industries in the turmoil, the President of the Court shall have power to summon a conference, with big penalties if the parties refuse to attend, and that he shall have power to frame conditions for the settlement of the dispute. That has been effective there. It has given satisfaction all round, and no trouble has ever occurred, although it has been threatened, and more seriously than here.

35. Supposing the employers on the one hand and the employees on the other determined they would not give in. In the event of such a thing happening and Parliament not intervening, would not the result of necessity be that whichever side came out at the finish of the struggle on top would get an unfair advantage over the party that went down, and also over the general public? For example, we will say that a deadlock is arrived at and it is fought out by process of exhaustion, and the employers come out on top ultimately, does it not necessarily follow that the employers would gain a great advantage over the workers and over the general public?—Where parties of their own volition choose to ignore the system set up for the settlement of disputes