

a conference representative of pretty well all the unions in the city—that considered this Bill, including Part VI. That conference came to the conclusion that Part VI was an undesirable form of legislation. I entirely agree personally with that view, and I hold very strongly the same ideas as Mr. Carey, that to deal now with the complicated industrial situation which is attempted in a measure by Part VI is not advisable. The better way would be to have a Commission that would go into the matter fully and exhaustively and bring down proposals which would be more effective in guidance. For instance, take clause 138, "Notice of intention to strike": Any one who has had experience of industrial affairs such as I have had knows that there are many occasions when strikes occur, not from an intention—they are not intended in the sense of being premeditated—they are blundered into.

2. *Mr. Anderson.*] The present one, for example?—I am not dealing with that matter at the present time. I am simply stating the facts. Mr. Millar, who has had much experience in these matters, will bear me out in this: that there are a great many—well, the majority of strikes are not premeditated, and they can scarcely tell that there is an intention until they are in them; but there is this feature of this proposed legislation that the unions are deeply concerned about, and that is this: that it sets out directions which would compel the unions to expose and make well known what their business was and the lines which those connected with them intended to take. Of course, the same provision is applied with regard to the employers—namely, that both shall give notice of their intentions; but a provision which in the abstract may seem equitable as applied to the workers' organization, consisting of perhaps a thousand men, if applied to the employers' organization, which may only consist of a dozen men, although in the abstract it may seem equitable, the provision does not operate the same in both cases. The employers carry on their operations in secret; and the unions know the workers know, that is the position—that if there is an intention at all to have a conflict the employers can very easily, even under this provision of the law, carry out their full plans, whilst the unions would have to expose their plans; and we say that is, in the present economic state of society, doing an injustice to the workers, because it is favouring the employers in respect to an economic battle which may take place. I am positively certain of this: that there is only one view that will be taken of Part VI of the Bill, and that is that it is an intention to forcibly bring the unions that have chosen to register under the Trades-unions Act under the Arbitration system. That is the view that is taken, I know, by the members of the unions that are not registered under the Arbitration Act. The seamen and wharf labourers and others whose unions are registered under the Trades-unions Act regard this Part VI as an attempt to coerce them and bring them by force under the system of the law which they do not consent to and which they do not think desirable. I would like to point this out to the Committee: that there are those who think that there should be some liberty allowed to workers' organizations in the handling of these problems which they have to deal with. They believe that that liberty should take the form that they should be free to carry on direct negotiations with the employers if they so choose without the intervention of any Court or Board of any kind. That is the reason for registering under the Trade-unions Act. The Trade-unions Act permits that freedom of action. I believe that the responsibilities of the freedom must go with it, but still there are a great many unionists throughout the country, and some big organizations, that believe that the freedom should be retained, and I personally believe that it should continue, with due provision that agreements that are made even by organizations that are under the Trade-unions Act should be properly enforceable in law; but that the freedom to negotiate and to make settlements by direct contact with their own employers—that should be retained to the very fullest extent. That is a matter that is very important.

3. *Mr. Davey.*] This clause does not prevent that?—It prevents it to this extent: that once they enter into an agreement that agreement is given the same force and effect as an agreement entered into by a union under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

4. That is, after its settlement?—Yes, but that brings them under the Court in the matter of interpretations, forms, penalties, and in other directions; and it has this result, simply to drive them into the position that they will have to carry on their negotiations in just the same way. With regard to the question of a ballot, I am strongly of opinion that there should be a provision in the law to protect the rights of individual members of a union. I believe that whilst majority rule is the best expedient we have yet got, majority tyranny ought never to be allowed.

5. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] We all believe it; but how would you do that?—I would have legislation in the form that no union's rules should be registered unless provision was made in those rules for the taking of a ballot prior to entering on a strike. I would have that set out in the rules, and allow a small number who could claim that right under the rules; in fact, I do not know but what it would be wise even to go further than that and make provision that no strike could be entered upon until a ballot was taken.

6. *Mr. Anderson.*] How would you prevent it?—I want to say this candidly: that you cannot prevent, and there is no use attempting to prevent, all strikes from occurring—I mean by way of legislation. That would be attempting the impossible. I want to show how I think you can minimize them, and I think that is the most that can be effected by legislation. I desire to say, with regard to the taking of a ballot, there is a serious point of danger. If you legislate to provide that any other than the organization itself shall control the ballot, that is an interference with free association, which has been the fundamental principle of trades-unionism for a long period of time in every law affecting them. It is attempting to turn trades-union organizations into a quasi-State department, and the thing will never operate properly along that line. I believe that there should be a provision for the ballot, but I believe the taking of the ballot should be left in the hands of the organization itself. Now, I may say candidly that