

would have declared a strike which might have effected the company's business with other concerns; but that in regard to coal being supplied to Canadian Pacific Railway an effort would certainly have been made to prevent such a supply being continued.

Organized effort to form an Organization among Miners at Union.

There appears to be something more than a coincidence in the fact that at this time an organized effort was being made by parties in no way immediately connected with Union, but directly connected with Ladysmith and Nanaimo, to bring about the formation of a local organization among the miners at Union. Somewhere about the time of the sending of the circular letter by Baker to the several locals of the Western Federation, asking them to send a word of encouragement to the strikers at Ladysmith, three or four strangers arrived at Union and registered at different hotels there. These persons commenced at once an organizing campaign. They moved about among the miners, sounding them on the question of organization, and on short acquaintance suggested the advisability of such a step being taken. Two of these men represented themselves as being members of a delegation sent by the executive board of the Ladysmith union for the purpose of seeing if it were possible to effect an organization among the miners at Union. One man, Higney by name, appears to have been specially active in this work. As an example of his method of proceeding, the following may be quoted from the evidence of David Halliday, who was appointed to the position of treasurer of the union which was formed on April 5. In reply to a question bearing on the subject, he said:

There were two members sent here from Enterprise Union No. 181, Western Federation of Miners, by the executive board of that union.

Q. Where is that?
A. Ladysmith—by the executive board of that union.

Q. Was it by their wish, or by request from here?

A. No, sir, they were sent by the executive.
Q. Who were they?

A. One was James Higney, I think, and another was an Italian, I don't know his name, I never met him.

Q. When did they get here?
A. I could not exactly state. It was a week after they were here before I saw them.

Q. Can you tell us as nearly as you can?
A. About two weeks before the 5th of April.

Q. Did you have any conversation with one of them?
A. A conversation with one of them a week previous to the 5th of April.

Q. Tell us what that was about?
A. He asked my opinion as to how it would be to form a branch of the Western Federation of Miners, if the men would like to become members of that organization. I said I could not state that—I had only been here about two months previous to that, and that he had a pretty hard nut to crack to form any branch of a union under the conditions that were existing here previous to that.

Q. Yes, what did he say?
A. He said he came to investigate individual opinion as to whether or not they wished to form a branch of that organization.

Q. What was the result?
A. The result was that he found most of the men were in favour of forming a branch of the Western Federation of Miners.

Q. Most of them? Can you give us some idea of the numbers?
A. I could not give you an idea of the numbers.

Q. That was your own honest opinion?
A. That was his opinion—not mine. I told him I could do nothing to aid him; that he would have to do his own work, investigating matters. He only asked my opinion.

Q. Did Mr. Higney tell you he had an interview with Mr. Baker?
A. I cannot recollect.

Q. Did he tell you he had an interview with people in authority belonging to the Federation?
A. Certainly, that he was sent here by the executive board of the Ladysmith union.

Q. Would it be right to conclude that he had the approval of the Denver people before he started on this investigation?
A. It might be right to conclude so. I suppose it would, but I cannot state.

Having spent about two weeks in preparing the field for organization in this way, and believing that it might at that time be possible to effect an organization, Higney sent word to Baker at Nanaimo to come to Union to organize. Baker arrived at Union from Nanaimo on the 4th of April, and on the day following he organized a local union of the Western Federation among the miners at that place, under the name of the Cumberland Miner's Union No. 156.

Organization forced by W. F. of M. Representative on April 4.

The means whereby this organization of the miners at Union was effected, reveals,

in the clearest manner possible, a determination on the part of Baker and his emissaries to form a union at that place and time at any cost. It reveals, further, the fact that the miners were not allowed the opportunity which should have been given them of fully considering the nature and consequences of so important a step, but rather, that advantage was taken, by Baker and others, of their inclinations and susceptibilities to draw them into a trap from which they might find it difficult to escape. In the first place, the notices calling the meeting at which organization was to be effected, were posted only the day previous to that on which the meeting was held. They did not state for what purpose the meeting was being called, nor do they appear to have been signed by any one. When the meeting assembled on Sunday, the 5th of April, between 200 and 250 were present. No motions were put nominating any one as chairman or secretary of the meeting. Higney constituted himself chairman, and one of the men who had come with him to Union acted as secretary. Baker was called by Higney to the platform, and when the speaking commenced, there was not, as a matter of fact, a single local miner on the platform at the time. A letter was first read to the meeting by Higney, purporting to be from the Ladysmith miners, and calling for the sympathetic support of their fellow workers at Union. Higney then announced that he had received sufficient names to enable him to send for Baker, whom he introduced to the meeting. Baker then addressed the meeting on the subject of unions, and the benefits to be derived from them. He spoke of the number of unions which he had already organized, and of his intention to complete the work of the Western Federation in that part of the Dominion. On the conclusion of his address a miner named Barber (who was subsequently elected as president of the newly-formed union), moved that a branch of the Western Federation of Miners be formed. The motion was seconded, and Higney was about to put it to the meeting, without giving opportunity for any discussion, when

one of the miners arose and moved that this step be not taken, pointing out at the time that if the Ladysmith miners were out on strike that had nothing whatever to do with the miners at Union. This motion was seconded. Another motion was made by another miner, who suggested that the matter be left over for a week, that it was a serious affair, and that time should be given to consider the step, also that a secret ballot should be taken at the pit to decide the issue. Discussion on this point having been aroused, Baker took the matter out of the hands of the chairman, and stepping to the front declared that all the motions were out of order, stating that he had come to organize a branch of the Western Federation in Union, and that all those who were not willing to join the organization should leave the hall. As a result of this proceeding a few of the miners left the meeting. The others remained, and the organization was formed without any motion or resolution having been voted upon or even discussed.

Evidence disclosing methods adopted by Organizer Baker of W. F. of M.

It may be well to quote at length the evidence of a witness who testified pretty fully before the Commission in regard to the actual occurrences and order of events at this meeting, especially as none of the officers of the union took exception to or in any way contradicted it in regard to the material points. On the contrary, there was an evident reluctance on the part of these officers to disclose anything in regard to what had happened at the meeting, and we believe that the statements as here quoted from the evidence of this witness are substantially correct:

Q. Will you please tell the Commissioners exactly what happened, as nearly as you can remember, from the beginning to the end of the meeting. When the meeting was assembled, did anybody go on the platform?
A. There were four or five different men; I only knew one—an Italian.

Q. From what you have since learned, do you know?
A. One of the men was Higney.

Q. He came from Ladysmith?
A. Yes, and the secretary, Mr. Henderson, Peter Baranzoni, from Ladysmith, and Mr. Baker went on the platform.