

The CHAIRMAN: Does any person second this?

Mr. BARRY: I will second it.

The CHAIRMAN: What is your pleasure?

(Carried.)

WITNESS: Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I wish to thank you on behalf of my colleague and members of my association for the privilege of appearing here to-day; because, as I said previously, for nearly five long years we have been fighting this thing, and for five long years we have made a study of it. We are only fighting for Canadian seamanship and efficiency aboard ships. We have gone to shipping companies when they have been in dire difficulties, when their front windows have been beautifully dressed and they have been actually bankrupt at the back and we knew it. We did not go to these companies and say, "If you do not pay what we want you to pay, we are going to tie your ships up." A trained seaman never acts that way. We went to them and said, "We know you are in difficulties and we will now co-operate with you and help you over the hill, but do not forget who helped you." We have done that on more than one occasion, because the merchant service—if you can only visualize what it means,—is too important a service to be contaminated so easily by strikes. That is the last weapon on God's earth that a seamen's organization will employ; and I want to tell you that there has not been a strike in the merchant service in Great Britain for years and years. I think the last one was in 1909, the last strike. Every time that we approached this question of the employment of white men aboard ships subsidized by our government from the treasury of the Canadian people, the issue has always been side-stepped. The companies employ an army of lawyers sometimes, and we cannot do that. We have to come in our small way and go to the people. Therefore we have appeared before ratepayers' meetings and city councils; and during all 1933 and 1934 protests from all these organizations and veterans' organizations were sent to the late government on our behalf. So these people must realize the justice of what we are doing.

There was another question raised by Mr. Clendenning, I believe, suggesting that the Chinamen would boycott these ships. Why, that is ridiculous, that they would boycott these ships. Why, if we wanted to boycott the C.P.R., we could do it, and I want to tell you the Native Sons one time did do it. I can assure you of this, if we wanted to act that way, it is the easiest thing that we could possibly think of and do, but that is not good tactics. We do not believe in stuff as cheap as that. That is cheap. We could stop excursion after excursion going on the Union Steamship Company boats, and we could have done that for years past if we had wanted to. We could stop people going on the Empress boats if we wanted to. We could appeal to them. Actually from 90,000 to 100,000 people have endorsed our recommendations to the late government during the period of the last five years practically, or the last four years. So therefore we have the sympathy of the public. It is only a very reasonable thing that we ask, when we ask that the native sons of Canada should have the right to be trained as seamen if they want to be. During the last three and a half years I have received letters, which I could show you in my office, from boys averaging in age from 18 to 20 who have appealed and asked my advice as to how they could get to sea. The last letter I received was in the last week in February. A young man wrote from Princeton and he stated that he had gone through high school. He was 19. He had gone through high school. He gave all the particulars about himself, who his father and mother were. He appreciated the fact that the organization was fighting so hard to give these native sons an opportunity of learning seamanship if there was a chance. But there is no chance for them. What has happened to these boys? The first thing they are