

## **PART FOUR**

### **Chapter thirteen - Conclusion**

#### **Introduction**

The major aim of the thesis was to make explicit the role of structure and agency in managerial decision making. The theory used was derived from two social theorists, Giddens and Lloyd. A key feature of the combined theory was the role of social actors being free to choose, but with constraints provided by structures, of both a physical and social nature. In order to test the theory Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited and antecedent organisations were used as a case study. The case study commenced in 1883 when the mineral leases which were to be the foundation of the future development of the Company were pegged. These leases were originally owned by the syndicate of seven, the Broken Hill Mining Company, until 1885 when the Company purchased and used these leases as the assets backing a public float of the Company.

The thesis then examined the role of structure and agency in managerial decision making in two parts. One part examined the physical processes and physical infrastructure necessary for the mineral discovery to be turned into dividends for shareholders. The other part then examined the social structures of the relationships between shareholders, directors, and senior managers, as well as discussing recruitment of senior managers, personnel administration issues, and industrial relations. The decision by the directors to enter the iron and steel industry was examined in some depth in chapter five in order to demonstrate the extent to which a

theory of managerial decision making based on structuralist concepts could more effectively capture the complexities of decision making than could contemporary theories of managerial decision making.

This concluding chapter assesses to what extent the theory of structure and agency in managerial decision making processes, as developed in chapter one of the thesis, has any explanatory significance. This will be done by discussing how well the various elements of the theory explain the developments within the Company.

While the thesis examined different aspects of managerial decision making and the impact of structure and agency on managerial choices, a common thread in the chapters was the way or ways in which managerial choices were constrained or enabled by both physical and social structures. Specifically, a number of different structures enabled and constrained the actions of individuals in the following ways:

### **Physical structures**

When considering physical structures, it is necessary to differentiate between natural structures (for example, the structure of the ore body and the structures of the human body) and built structures (for example, transport and communication structures, office structures). Natural structures impacted upon managerial decision making in a variety of ways. For example, there was the physical structure of the ore body. As chapter three demonstrated, due to the physical nature of the structure of the ore body, new methods of the mining of silver and lead in Australia were necessary. Mining methods which had been developed in the United States as a result of the discovery

and exploitation of the Comstock lode were used to mine the silver and lead ore discovered at Broken Hill, but only after the directors of the Company had perceived that the structure of the ore body at Broken Hill was such that there were no mining managers in Australia who could successfully mine the ore.

Chapter four examined the processes associated with smelting the ore in order to produce a marketable commodity. Again, the structure of the ore body meant that expertise not available in Australia had to be imported from the United States. The directors perceived that the smelting of the ore was of prime importance to producing a marketable product and such expertise was not, apparently, available in Australia. As a result of this perception, the first appointment of an American to the Company was a metallurgist, H. H. Schlapp. Also, as demonstrated in chapter four, the nature of the structure of the orebody varied as mining proceeded. For example, the initial ore body consisted of highly oxidised material, which was relatively easy to smelt, but still required judgement in terms of the appropriate 'mix' of ores to be smelted. This 'mix' of ores was important, as not only could this factor impact the life of the mine, but also could make smelting more or less expensive. As the mine was developed, a different type of ore was encountered, which required different mining and smelting techniques.

At all stages of the mining and smelting processes, it was necessary for choices to be made, but such choices were influenced by the structures of the ore body, both in terms of how the ore body was mined, and then how the ore body was treated to form a saleable product. The structure of the finished product of the operations of the Company also impacted upon choice. The two main products discussed in this

thesis, silver and lead, had a physical structure which carried implications connected to methods of transport, sale, and end use. The very nature of the product served to constrain the choices of directors and senior managers.

Built structures also impacted upon managerial decision making. For example, the geographic location of mining and smelting operations at Broken Hill, and the head office at Melbourne meant that directors and senior managers travelled extensively. The directors were not compelled to undertake such travel, they could have chosen to run the Company for either Melbourne or Adelaide. They chose not to, but took an extremely active role in the management of the Company. During the course of such travel relationships could be established not only with each other, but also with other individuals with significant influence as a result of the institutional position they occupied. For example, choices made by directors and senior managers were influenced by encounters between directors, the general manager and politicians while these individuals were travelling from one point to another. While these relationships appeared to be conducive to the business of the Company, the potential also existed that such relationships could also be detrimental to the Company, by provoking opposition to any plans of the Company. The decision taken by the directors and senior managers to take the Company into iron and steel manufacturing and the role of Federal and State politicians in supporting such a venture is an example of how the built environment impacted upon managerial decision making. Associated with the natural and built environment were geographic factors.

## Geography

Geographical elements also had an impact upon managerial decision making. For example, as chapter six demonstrated, the geographic location of the discovery of the silver and lead ore meant that climatic conditions associated with a specific geographic location impacted upon managerial decision making. Water was an essential part of the process of turning silver and lead ore into a marketable product, yet the geographic location of mining and smelting operations and the concomitant lack of rainfall as a result of the geographic location meant the directors and senior managers were constantly grappling with securing water of sufficient quality and quantity to maintain mining and smelting operations. The geographic location of the ore body also meant that transport and communications structures were not well developed. As a consequence of the lack of development, particularly in terms of infrastructure, the State was in a much stronger position to be able to impact upon mining and smelting operations at Broken Hill than might otherwise have been the case in a more developed geographic region. While directors at the head office of the Company in Melbourne could communicate on an international level, communication links with the mine were not, initially, very well developed until after the Company had been operating for some time. A similar point can be made in relation to transport. The geographic location of mining and smelting operations were located, initially, beyond the reach of any substantial infrastructure. When the ore body was first discovered, transport to and from the silver fields was slow, time consuming, cumbersome and expensive. With the construction of rail links from Broken Hill to Adelaide, transport of people and materials to and from the silver fields became easier, quicker, and also significantly reduced the costs associated with producing a marketable product. With the geographic closeness of Adelaide to operations at

Broken Hill, the colony of South Australia received significant economic benefits when compared to the colony in which the actual operations were established.

International transport and communication structures were already well developed when the Company commenced operations at Broken Hill and thus international issues that concerned the Company were relatively easy to manage.

### **Institutional structures**

By the time the Company commenced operations at Broken Hill, institutional structures necessary for the operations of the Company had been established for some time. For example, as chapter eight demonstrated, the institutions necessary for the operation and maintenance of an international economy were not only well in place but were also well understood by the directors and senior managers of the Company. The established existence of these institutions meant that the marketing of the end products of the Company could take place within pre-existing structures and there was no necessity for the Company to create new structures. Institutional structures were so well developed that the Company was able to take part in international lead cartels, without necessarily knowing personally all the individuals involved in the institutions that comprised the cartel. The existence of institutions that had been established in the United States as a result of the discovery and exploitation of the Comstock lode also assisted directors and senior managers when travelling overseas. It was not necessary to know anyone personally (although this did help) for directors and senior managers to be able to access those individuals with the specific expertise needed by the Company. Directors and senior managers could locate those individuals they needed to contact through the already-existing and well-developed institutional structures.

## **History**

Underpinning, and contributing, to the overall development of the Company were pre-existing historical conditions. Every facet of the operations of the Company was influenced by pre-existing historical factors. For example, the methods of mining, smelting, transporting, and selling the products of the ore body were all influenced by developments which had taken place prior to the discovery of the Broken Hill lode. The structures that were in existence when the Company commenced operations were the outcomes of the actions of individuals and collectivities of different times and places. Directors and senior managers were able to draw upon these structures and use such structures for their own purposes. But it is also worth pointing out that while directors and senior managers were able to draw upon these pre-existing structures, they also contributed to the development and continuance of historical circumstances. In other words, while the directors and senior managers were concerned with turning the silver and lead ore into a marketable product, they were also making history themselves.

## **Time**

The past, present and potential futures also impact upon choices made by directors and senior managers. Of particular concern to them was the whole uncertainty associated with the future of the ore deposits of the mine. While geologists might write glowing reports of the potential of the mine, and mining managers attempt to assess the potential from current circumstances, all everyone who was associated with

the mine had to work with was potential. There were no guarantees that the potential of the ore body would necessarily be realised. The past, in terms of prior experience, of mining generally was that there were no guarantees that an ore body would continue indefinitely. The opposite was more usually the case. That is, an ore body could promise much, yet come to nothing. Past experience translated into current practices which then had to take account of an extremely uncertain future.

## **Power**

Power was also an important issue. As the thesis demonstrated, conflicts occurred between and among individuals who occupied positions in various institutional structures. Such institutional structures were represented by the Company, other companies, the State, meetings of shareholders, and the unions. Differing institutional structures gave individuals differential access to resources which could be used in the exercise of power. For example, directors had access to information to which others (shareholders, unionists, other directors) did not have access. Economic resources were also another resource to which individuals had access by virtue of their positions embedded in institutional structures. The Company was not the only company operating at Broken Hill, but it was certainly the largest, using almost any measure. The sheer size of the Company gave directors and senior managers access to resources of a scale that individuals in other companies could not hope to match.



Institutional structures also provided a degree of legitimacy to the actions of directors and senior managers that under different circumstances might not be seen as legitimate. Directors and senior managers could supply employees with firearms for the defence of private property during industrial disputes. These same directors and senior managers could also use the resources of the Company to further individual or collective interests in state and local elections. These choices were given a degree of legitimacy as they were made within the institutional structure of the Company.

The above are some examples of how individuals were able to exercise power in the web of social relationships that existed between individuals in various institutional structures.

## **Individuals**

While all the above structures were influential in the development of the Company, none of these structures actually did anything. Physical structures, geographic locations, institutional structures, and historical structures did not make choices. It was individuals who made choices, but not in an unfettered way. Individuals were shaped by the structural contexts within which choices were made. Historical structures were interpreted, and translated by and through the experience of individuals. Individuals were free to make choices, but those choices were made within structured contexts in such a way that the structural context shaped (but did not determine) choices of directors and senior managers. It is also important to note that not all choices involved taking any action. A key element guiding this aspect of

choice was the possible consequences to either individuals or the Company. The perceptions of directors and senior managers were important, not only in recognising when choice was necessary in the first place, but also what consequences might flow as the result of a failure to take action. The perception of what the possible consequences might be then shaped the nature of any action that might be contemplated. The possible consequences could be viewed in social, economic, or political terms, with neither one facet assuming predominance over the others. Certainly, there were occasions when one did predominant, but as was demonstrated in the thesis, there were also times when all three facets were viewed concurrently in the making of choices.

### **Theories of decision making compared**

As a demonstration of the relatively greater explanatory power of the theory of structure and agency used in explaining managerial decision making in the Company, it is proposed to briefly examine how the dominant theories of managerial decision making, discussed in the introduction and chapter one would have explained a significant managerial choice. The example used is the choice made by directors and senior managers of the Company to diversify into the manufacture of iron and steel at Newcastle in New South Wales. This choice was significant as it laid the foundation for the future growth of the Company.

*(a) Structuralist theory*

As was pointed out in the introduction to the thesis, structuralist theory (of which Donaldson is a key protagonist) places heavy emphasis on the environment of an organisation in determining the “appropriate” choices available to managers.

Structuralist theory, as represented by Donaldson’s theory of structural adaptation to regain fit (SARFIT), would not have been able to explain this specific decision as the Company was operating at a good level of profitability. Donaldson’s theory seems to be based on the premise that problems have occurred in the environment such that the structure of the organisation (and hence the choices available to managers) is no longer “in fit” with the environment of the organisation. Managers then have to adjust the structure of the organisation to once again ensure “fit” with the environment, and hence the “appropriate” managerial choices can be made.

As Chapter five clearly demonstrated, the choice of directors and senior managers in 1912 to enter the iron and steel industry had little, if anything, to do with the environment of the organisation. Directors and senior managers had been regularly considering the question of involvement in the iron and steel industry as far back as 1896. There was no question of the economic viability of the operations of the Company, the general manager having pointed out in 1909 that the Company was making more than enough money to pay reasonable dividends and that it was now time to consider seriously the future operations of the Company. In other words, directors and senior managers did not merely react to the environment, but rather chose to take the Company into a new operating environment. The choice was not forced on the Company by circumstances taking place within the environment of the Company. Instead the choice was made by individuals, in their institutional roles of

directors and senior managers, to enter into a new industry, even though there appeared to be no compelling circumstances in the operating environment forcing such choice. Directors and senior managers chose to act proactively, rather than reactively.

***(b) Managerial decision making - the dominant model***

Just as structuralist theories of choice do not adequately explain the choice made by directors and senior managers to take the Company into iron and steel manufacturing, neither does the dominant theory of managerial decision making, based on the work of Herbert Simon. As was noted in Chapter one, the dominant theory also relies upon problems occurring prior to any action being taken. Clearly there were no problems for the Company. Rather the choice to enter the iron and steel industry was based on, as much as anything else, the need for one individual, the general manager, to have a new project to which he could turn his attention. While the question of the Company being involved in the iron and steel industry had been raised on a regular basis since 1896, it was only when the general manager had successfully completed the zinc spelter plant in 1908 that the whole question of the Company entering the iron and steel industry was taken seriously. Had the general manager been a different type of individual, different choices may have been made, as there were no compelling reasons for the Company to diversify into iron and steel. Certainly, the choice was made against the background of the uncertainty of the life of the silver and lead mine at Broken Hill, but this uncertainty had been a normal part of Company operations from the time the deposits were first discovered. The dominant theory of managerial decision making does not recognise the way in which individual differences can impact upon choice. There is also the assumption that when individuals do choose, it

will be on the basis of economically rational grounds, not on the basis of an individual seeking a significant project to undertake. It also needs to be kept in mind that the general manager still had to convince the directors that the time was right for the Company to be taken into the manufacture of iron and steel. The general manager was assisted in this task by having gained the active support for such a venture from politicians, who, in their institutional positions, were able to provide assistance to the project. These individuals could also have provided obstacles to the project. However, due to the nature of the relationships which existed between the general manager and the individual politicians, something which had been built up over time, active support at both Federal and State levels was gained for the Company to enter into the iron and steel industry.

**(c) *General comments***

While the above represents a brief discussion of the weaknesses of structuralist theory and the dominant theory of managerial decision making, both theories suffer from other common defects. For example as was clearly demonstrated in chapter five, the role of history in the form of pre existing structures is overlooked; the way in which historical circumstances are reflected in the practices of individuals is ignored; the type and nature of the individuals involved in the decision making process, and how these human attributes can impact upon choices, is not taken into account. Neither theory explicitly accounts for the way in which the natural and built environment impacts upon managerial choices. Structuralist theory does explicitly account for these factors as providing the structures which form the context within which directors and senior managers made their choices. As was demonstrated in Chapter five, it was individuals who made choices which resulted in the Company diversifying into iron

and steel manufacturing. But, as was also demonstrated in Chapter five, these choices were enabled and constrained by structural factors. The theory of structure and agency developed in Chapter one of the thesis provides for a much fuller explanation of managerial choice in the Company than could either one of the alternative theories.

The thesis has demonstrated quite clearly that the social theories developed by Giddens and Lloyd have a great deal to offer in explicitly understanding the roles of structure and agency in managerial decision making. The theory used in this thesis has much greater explanatory power than, and at the same time addresses the major criticisms of, the dominant decision making theory. By explicitly using the concepts of structure and agency, the complexity of managerial decision making is revealed. Revealed also is the role individuals as individuals have to play in managerial decision making. The values, experiences and so on of individuals are incorporated into managerial decision making, although tempered by institutional structures within which such choices were made. The role of power was also highlighted between and among individuals in various institutional structures and how individuals had differential access to resources which could be used in the exercising of power. Unfortunately, the nature of the extant material does not allow for a fuller examination of the power relationships existing between individuals within the institutional structures of the Company.

By using a theory of managerial decision making which explicitly accounts for the dialectical nature of structure and agency, the specific impact of the various structural elements on managerial decision making is explicated, particularly the way in which individuals incorporate experiences from the past in understanding their present circumstances, and the possible future consequences of contemporary choices.

## **APPENDIX ONE**

Minutes of the 14th half yearly ordinary general meeting of the shareholders of the  
Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited, 27. July 1892.

# The Broken Hill Proprietary Company

## L I M I T E D

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the FOURTEENTH HALF-YEARLY ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING of The Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited will be held in the large Hall, "The Oldfleet," Nos. 475 & 477 Collins Street, in the City of Melbourne, on Wednesday, 27th July, 1892, at Three o'clock in the afternoon.

### BUSINESS :

1. To receive the Directors' Report and Balance Sheet.
2. To confirm or otherwise the election of Mr. H. C. E. MUECKE, who retires by arrangement when he was appointed by the Board of Directors to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Mr. W. R. Wilson.
3. To elect two Auditors in the place of Messrs. G. W. SELBY and ANDREW BURNS, who retire, but are eligible and offer themselves for re-election.
4. To consider any Business due notice of which shall have previously been given in accordance with Article No. 52.
5. To transact any other ordinary Half-yearly Business.

DATED at Broken Hill Chambers, 31 Queen Street, Melbourne,  
this 17th day of June, 1892.

By order of the Board,

WM. KNOX  
SECRETARY.



Minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> Half-Yearly  
 Ordinary General meeting of the  
 Shareholders of the Broken Hill  
 Proprietary Company Limited, held  
 at the "Olderflees", Collins Street West,  
 Melbourne, on Wednesday, the  
 27<sup>th</sup> July 1892.

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Present.

Mrs. Howes Kelly (in the chair)	
Mr. G. Mc Culloch	Mr. E. L. Baillieu
" E. V. Tigg	" W. Rignell
" D. E. Mr. Bryden	" R. Bapper
" J. Darling (or)	" Adam Calder
" H. C. E. Kuecke	" J. F. Cudmore
Dr. G. Annand	" Alex. Campbell
Mr. S. J. Alford	" A. E. Collins
" A. B. Allan	" S. Chapman
" J. A. Aitken & Co	" J. Catto
" Alex. Buchanan	" W. G. Collins
" G. F. Bell	" W. D. Clarke
" S. Browne	" C. H. Chapman
" J. L. Bagley	" W. H. Clark
Mrs. H. Boyes	" E. A. Chapman
Mr. J. G. Beniley	" E. A. Clough
" J. G. Beaver	" Chas Cooke
" A. Burns	" R. Campbell
" J. Borrowman	" R. H. Cornish
" S. Baker	" Jenkin Collier
" C. E. Bradshaw	" W. H. Christian
" A. J. Brown	" S. A. Case
" F. J. Burwell	" F. Cumming
" J. A. Barracough	" J. H. Caton

Mr. W. Dawson.  
 " Thos D'archy  
 " J. W. Darlot  
 " Mrs. Dunne  
 " F. W. Dickenson  
 " R. Davies  
 " E. A. Darling  
 " F. G. Duff  
 " W. Drysdale  
 " W. B. Evans  
 " L. Ellson  
 " F. Eley  
 " E. England  
 " G. Evans  
 " F. W. Excell  
 " W. Eaglestone  
 " Jas. Fry  
 " Alex. Fraser  
 " A. F. Furniss  
 Rev. J. Fulford  
 Mr. J. G. Featherstone  
 " J. Ferguson  
 " S. W. Fulton  
 " D. Finlayson  
 " A. W. Ferrie  
 " A. H. Gornwall  
 " J. R. Gray  
 " E. J. Gage  
 " F. A. E. Gibson  
 " A. R. Golden  
 " E. Giles  
 " J. W. Gasquorne  
 " Alex. Gibb  
 " H. J. Gwynne

Mr. W. Gibson  
 " W. Gibb  
 " J. R. Greenert  
 " Alex. Guthrie  
 " Alex. Grant  
 " D. Grant  
 " Mr. R. Greene  
 " J. Holmes  
 " D. Hamilton  
 " J. Hamilton  
 " Jas. Howatson  
 " L. Howatson  
 " Thos. Hunter  
 " H. C. Hadfield  
 " C. J. Ham  
 " R. R. Hannay  
 " J. J. Harris  
 " W. A. Martnell  
 " J. F. Hyland  
 " E. Hart  
 " Thos. Hall  
 " J. H. Hume  
 " A. E. Hart  
 " R. Jacob  
 " J. C. Jesson  
 " W. Jenkins  
 " J. Ingram  
 " Mr. C. Jacobs  
 " W. Jamieson  
 " W. E. Johnston  
 " J. Jobson  
 " Mr. J. Jones  
 " R. H. Kinnear  
 " F. A. Keating

Mr. A. Knox  
 " J. Dr. Kerr  
 " G. Knowles  
 " Aloy<sup>s</sup> Kelly  
 " G. O. Kelly  
 " S. Kohn  
 " J. Kronheimer  
 " J. Longbottom  
 " J. Lane  
 " C. Dr. Lloyd  
 " W. Leonard  
 " A. Lilley  
 " A. Loughnan  
 " G. Lush  
 " J. Maidment  
 " J. Manson  
 " J. Moore  
 " C. G. Moul  
 " K. Matthews  
 " E. Miller  
 " H. H. Miller  
 " H. K. F. Moore  
 " Mr. Moss  
 " J. Morris  
 " D. A. Madder  
 " A. Mellor  
 " K. Dr. Smith  
 " J. W. Miller  
 " E. Mitchell  
 " J. L. Menzies  
 " Jas. Dr. Bonnell  
 " S. Mackay  
 " D. Dr. Lennan  
 " J. Dr. Galia

Mr. Dr. R. Macrae  
 " J. Dr. Meikhan  
 " P. K. Dr. Caughan  
 " D. A. Y. Dr. Iver  
 " P. Dr. Taughton  
 " G. A. Dr. Cowan  
 " J. T. Tash  
 " H. P. Vesin  
 " J. T. Ogilvie  
 " Alex. Oliver  
 " W. H. Oakley  
 " H. Osborne  
 " J. W. Prell  
 " H. Patterson  
 " H. J. Pullum  
 " J. L. Purses  
 " C. D. Philips  
 " J. C. Russell  
 " A. H. Russell  
 " G. T. Roche  
 " W. Riggall  
 " J. Rollason  
 " J. Robertson  
 " J. W. Reis  
 " J. A. Rowell  
 " J. Rott  
 " C. Kenne  
 " A. E. Rushall  
 " J. C. Kenne  
 " G. A. Russell  
 " A. Ramsay  
 " P. Riordan  
 " R. Searte  
 " L. Stewart

Mr. R. Short	Mr. J. Telford
" J. Solomon	" J. C. Tyler
" D. Solomon	" J. Thomas
" C. Shard	" W. Treacy
" C. T. Smith	" C. Templeton
" H. Sobersky	" C. Troedel
" R. Scott	" P. Wright
" R. Sleath	" J. H. Teesby
" R. Swan	" J. L. Webb
" W. H. Stephenson	" E. H. Wallington
" R. Stuckey	" C. Williamson
" G. A. Stephen (H)	" W. Wilson
" W. R. Stephens	Mr. J. Watson
" J. F. Somerville	Mr. W. Weatherly
" W. Stawell	" D. S. Wallace
" J. D. Subling	" Alex. Watson
" J. Sullas	" W. P. Walker
" Mr. Terrell	" A. C. Walker
" D. Mr. Twerdie	Mr. S. J. P. Wallace
" A. Tolhurst	Mr. W. Yeates
" J. Mr. Tewdley	" W. A. Geal
" G. W. Traill	" H. Karbaum
" R. Mr. Turner	" F. A. Houle (Lot)
" F. Thonemann	The Secretary

THE Fourteenth Half-yearly Meeting of the shareholders in the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited was held at "The Oldfleet," Collins Street, Melbourne, on Wednesday, 27th July, at 3 p.m.

BOWEN KELLY, Esq., Chairman of Directors, presided, and there was a very large attendance of shareholders.

Mr. KNOX, the Secretary, read the notice convening the meeting.

The CHAIRMAN moved "That the Minutes of the Half-yearly Meeting, held on the 2nd January, 1892, be taken as read, and confirmed."

28<sup>th</sup> Mr. HARVEY PATTERSON seconded the motion, which was carried.

The CHAIRMAN—It has been customary, gentlemen, to take the Report as read. If no one raises any objection, we will do so on this occasion.

The Report has been before you for some time, and if you have read and digested it you will know just as much as the Directors. I shall, therefore, only make a few remarks upon it, in as concise a manner as possible.

The first question I shall deal with is the Water Supply. This subject has given your Directors and officers great anxiety during the past half-year. The late rainfall has relieved that anxiety to some extent, but we consider that to bring in water

from the Darling will be the only permanent method of meeting the difficulty. A scheme for that purpose has been drawn up, so that if at any time it is decided to carry it out everything will be available for the Directors who are then representing you. It will be only necessary to call for tenders. At one time it was proposed to bore for water about 30 miles to the east of the line of lode, although there was a difference of opinion as to whether the country was of such a character as would be likely to carry water. However, on going into the question, we found we could not get a title for boring from the Government, and if we did find water it was questionable whether we could take it. Your Board have therefore decided not to go on with that scheme, especially as they have the scheme for bringing water from the Darling in view.

With regard to the treatment of the Sulphide Ores, which is a very important question, I may state that your Directors have authorised the General Manager to make experiments. He has erected a plant, and is now experimenting with the sulphides, and is very hopeful of success. Of course you are aware that Dr. Schuabel, a scientific man with a high reputation at home, was brought out to test the ores. He has suggested two means of treating them—one by means of sulphurous acid, and the other by sulphuric acid. The former appears to be impracticable for operations on a large scale, and the latter requires to be supported by experiments and tests which are yet to be undertaken. Mr. Schlapp, your metallurgist, is now at home, and your Board have asked him to make inquiries into the sulphide

question both in America and in Europe. I believe he is at the present time in Germany. He is going to make tests to see if the process recommended by Dr. Schnabel is practicable, and he will also make inquiries as to the best mode of treating the ores; and your Directors are very hopeful that he will bring back a process with which we will be able to treat these sulphide ores profitably. If I am not going outside of my province, I might say, in this connection, that the Associated Mines have been considering a proposal to offer a bonus for a process that would be successful in treating sulphid ores, but the project is surrounded with many difficulties. Your Board are favourably inclined towards the suggestion, but it is a difficult question, and up to the present time no scheme for offering such a bonus has been decided upon.

As to the reported movements in the Mine, all I can tell you is that there are none. (Applause.) A letter from the General Manager will be read to you presently, regarding the condition of the Mine.

After mature consideration, your Directors have decided to create a Reserve Fund of £250,000. I cannot say at present whether they will do so by taking the money out of your dividends or from the profits that may be made over and above what are paid away in dividends.

The vexed question of Stopping by Contract I shall pass by for the present ("No"), but I shall come back to it presently. (Hear, hear.)

The stoppage of the June dividend was decided upon in the best interests of the company. Comments were made by several shareholders as to our action in stopping the dividend, and complaints were made that information of the intended stoppage should have been given to them previously. In the report you will find a paragraph referring to the meeting of shareholders which was held. It was not inserted with the intention of slighting anybody, but the only way the Board can manage a company such as the Proprietary is by not allowing sectional parties of the shareholders to interfere with them. If shareholders want to complain, or to obtain information, they can do so here, at a general meeting called for the purpose, and not by holding informal meetings. With regard to the paragraph on page 11 dealing with this matter, it has been pointed out to the Board that in asking the shareholders to adopt the report with this paragraph in it we are practically asking them to adopt a censure on those shareholders who held the meeting. Such was not in any way the intention of the directors; and, therefore, in moving the adoption of the Report and Balance Sheet I will ask you to consider that paragraph as not being in any sense a reflection on the action of any shareholder, but simply as an explanation of a general principle. (Hear, hear.)

With regard to the prospects of the Mine, the General Manager's Report will be found on page 18. That is the best information I can give you.

Your Directors have decided in future to give you the actual output each week. We used to average it, but the Board have decided in future to publish the actual output.

The financial position speaks for itself. The balance at the end of the half-year to the credit of the Company was £175,513 16s. 6d.

Mr. Schlapp has been promised by the Board that when he returns from Europe he will be appointed Assistant General Manager. The late mining manager, Mr. Harper, resigned, and Mr. Uren has been appointed to his position. The Directors of the Company have much pleasure in stating that the officers of the Company deserve your thanks for the manner in which they worked the Mine during the last half-year, under such adverse circumstances as the want of water. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. KNOX at this stage read a Supplementary Report from the General Manager, and also a telegram received that day, stating "All the underground workings of the Mine have been again carefully examined. There is not the slightest movement noticeable in any place, and everything is as safe to-day as the day when we shut down."

The CHAIRMAN (resuming)—You have heard the Report read, and I can only say it is very satisfactory.

The next matter I have to refer to is the Strike. I am very sorry to say there is a strike, and your Directors regret very deeply that the men thought fit to go out on strike. All I can say is that the Directors in their action have done the best they could for everybody—for you, and for the men who work for you. (Hear, hear.) If you can get 500 men to do the work, it is no use keeping 1,000. The other 500 might be doing something else for the country's good. (Applause.) I will not say much about the strike; you are probably as well posted as I am, if you have read the papers. Everything has been published in the papers; we published everything, and so did the men. We only wish the thing would come to an end, but we are sure it will benefit everybody in the long run.

I have much pleasure in moving the adoption of the Reports and Balance Sheet.

Mr. CAPPER—I beg to second the motion.

Mr. SLEATH—Will you allow me to move an amendment?

The CHAIRMAN—Certainly. Mr. Sleath is addressing you, gentlemen. (Laughter and applause.) I will ask that you give him a fair hearing. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. SLEATH—May I stand on the platform? ("Certainly.")

Mr. SLEATH (from the platform)—Mr. Chairman and gentlemen, I rise to move as an amendment: "That the Report be

referred back to the Directors and Manager for explanation and correction." I do not intend, in moving this amendment, to take up very much of your time. (Applause.) I shall deal with matters that I think are of most importance to you as shareholders.

The first matter I shall deal with is the first clause of page 11 of the report, dealing with stopping by contract. I am rather pleased than otherwise that the Chairman has given us a little explanation of the action of the Board, but I am afraid, from my knowledge of the circumstances of the case, that that explanation requires a further explanation, and one which, in the interests of the shareholders as well as of the employes, it would be wise to give at once. My reason for saying that the explanation of the Chairman requires further explanation is this. The question between the Board and the men is not a question of stopping by contract at all. The men have never refused stopping by contract, and if the Board have any evidence to the contrary they should produce it here. I want the shareholders and the Board to clearly understand the position, and I claim, as far as my knowledge goes, that the position has not been put clearly and correctly before you by the Chairman. In the first place, when it was the intention of the Board to introduce stopping by contract, that was never refused by the employes of the Company; but when the employes simply asked for an explanation as to what sort of contract it was intended to introduce, they were met with the answer that it was intended to annul the agreement and introduce freedom of contract. (Loud applause.) I am glad you thoroughly understand the action of the Board. ("Yes, we do.") I am glad you thoroughly understand the position, because my intention in rising was that every shareholder might thoroughly understand it. Therefore, I say the question in dispute is not a question of stopping by contract at all. It is a question of an agreement being entered into by two parties, which was morally binding, and which has been dishonourably broken. ("No, no!" "It is not broken yet." "What are you on strike for?") That is a question I will deal with directly. I have made an assertion, and I am prepared to prove it. I say the question in dispute is not a question of stopping by contract, but a question of an agreement entered into, at least on the one side with honourable and honest intentions, and which has been dishonourably broken by the other side. ("Rot." "Why didn't you wait till the end of the month?") I can tell you yet. One gentleman asks, "Why did the miners go out on strike?" I wish you to distinctly understand I am not here as a representative of the miners. ("Oh, oh," and laughter.)

Mr. CAPPER—If this gentlemen is not here as a representative of the miners, I move that he be not heard.

A SHAREHOLDER—Every Englishman has a right to fair play. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. SLEATH—It seems to amuse you very much, all but my friend here (Mr. Hyland), when I say I am not here representing the miners. What I meant you to infer was that I have not been sent here by any section of the community. I have come to Melbourne paying my own expenses as an individual. True, I am not a large shareholder, but I don't suppose that you have any fault to find with me for that. I do not suppose you have any objection to me because I am not fortunate enough to be a large shareholder. One gentleman said, "Why did you not wait till the 30th July?" Might I just explain in a few words the reason why the men did not wait, although I am not here representing them? You are all aware, as well as I can tell you, that I know the circumstances of the case. I have not come here to try and make disturbances among you, or to do anything that would in any way break up this meeting or cause disorder. (Laughter.) I have come here with the intention of treating every man as I expect him to treat me, and I am sure everyone present will be prepared to treat me fairly. (Hear, hear.) I say that the reason why the men did not wait till the 30th is that the Company, in the first place, violated the agreement. ("No.") If you will allow me to explain, you may say "No" afterwards. In the first place the Company, or the Associated Mining Board, raised a point of dispute as to whether ores should be stopped by contract or not. Whether they have right on their side I am not here to say, but I say they were not justified in raising that point. I say distinctly that when they raised that point of dispute they should have referred it to the tribunal which they themselves created for settlement. I do not think anyone is prepared to say or maintain that they should not have done so. ("Why?") If you agree to a bargain—if you appoint a tribunal and say that under any circumstances disputes shall be settled in a certain way, and then, when the first point crops up, you violate it by doing something else, you cannot claim to act as honourable men. In the first place the Board raised a point of dispute which was that stopping should be done by contract. But instead of referring it to a conference of the two parties, which I am confident would have settled it to the satisfaction of both sides, the Board refused to do so, and in fact refused to further correspond with the miners. ("Quite right.") Well, if you think it is quite right that is a matter of opinion. If you think it is quite right to enter into an honourable agreement, with honest intentions on the one side, and to violate that agreement at any time because it suits you, you are welcome to your opinion. Again, I say, the agreement has not been kept. When the point of dispute was raised the Board, instead of referring it to the tribunal, which had been arrived at more at the request of the Board than of the men, they simply said—"No; all agreements between us are null and void, and we refuse to further correspond with you." That is the position up to the present time. If that is not breaking the agreement,

I don't know what is. The agreement distinctly states that the points in dispute shall be referred to a Board of Arbitration and states how that Board shall be formed; and clause 2 of that agreement says, that until the Board has met and has given its decision work shall go on as usual without let or hindrance. Now, it is an admitted fact that work has not gone on as usual. ("Who stopped it?")

**A SHAREHOLDER**—You want the Mine to fall in and ruin the shareholders; that is what you are waiting for.

**MR. SLEATH**—You are very much mistaken. I have said nothing of the sort, my friend. ("Then you have been mis-rejected.") Then I am not the first man, anyhow. (Disorder. "Go on.") It is a very hard matter to go on, if I am interrupted in all directions. I say, before ever the men took any decided stand at all, work was not going on as usual. I want you to clearly understand this. Previous to the men deciding anything at all, work was not going on as usual as far as the mining officers were concerned, because in some shifts, where there were 260 or 290 men employed, every one of those men who was at all fit for the position was employed in timbering. ("Quite right." and "Why not?") Perhaps it is quite right from your standpoint, gentlemen, but it is a violation of the agreement none the less. (Laughter.) It is a violation of the agreement, because, as every one of you knows, when men are put on timbering work is not going on as usual, and it is distinctly provided that it should. (Laughter. A voice—"That's rather a fine point.") I claim that the actions of the Board have not been wise, neither have they been well considered in the interests of the shareholders. ("You are not the judge of that.") I repeat that the action of the Board in reference to this matter has not been wise, neither has it been well considered in the interests of the shareholders. I am satisfied that had the shareholders stood to the agreement that was entered into in September, 1890, the matter of stopping ore by contract would never have been a point of dispute that would have created a difference between the owners and the employés. I am perfectly satisfied of that, because I am sure there is not an employé of the Company, as far as the miners are concerned, but who is prepared to accept that which is fair, just, and equitable. Therefore, I say the shareholders should not expect anything less, they should not ask anything more than that which is fair, just, and equitable; and I say, on behalf of the workers, on behalf of the miners, that they are and always have been prepared to accept that. ("No.") I claim that they have, and that they were prepared to either meet direct representatives of the mining companies, or they were prepared to refer the matter to any impartial man who might be agreed upon, and abide loyally by the decision, whatever it might be. Therefore I say any party of men which is prepared to do that is prepared to accept that which is fair, just, and equitable. One gentleman interjected something about the interests of the shareholders. I say that the interests of the shareholders and the interests of the workers should, at least to a certain extent, be bound up together. Undoubtedly serious damage has been caused to the property, whatever the General Manager or any one else may say to the contrary, and I ask any one of you, who is prepared to find out facts for himself, to go to Broken Hill, and he won't require an expert to point out what is happening there. I say the Board's action has not been in the interests of the shareholder in this way. The Mine has now been shut down for considerably over three weeks. The loss that has accrued from the stoppage will never be regained. Had the Directors only said in the first place, "We will annul this agreement, we won't work under it any more," there would have been more justice on their side; but when they raise a point of dispute and refuse to refer it to the tribunal they have created, and say, "We will break the agreement because we cannot have it all our own way," I say that was not wise in the interests of the Company or the shareholders.

**MR. SYLVESTER BROWNE**—Mr. Sleath said he was going to propose an amendment. As we have only a limited time at our disposal, and he is occupying it by reiterating a number of statements which will probably be refuted by other speakers, I think he should be called upon to state his amendment.

**THE CHAIRMAN**—It is the desire of your Board that Mr. Sleath talks until he is tired. (Laughter and applause.)

**MR. SLEATH**—I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no intention of taking up much of your time. (Hear, hear.) I think that the unseemly interruptions which have come from one part and the other of the audience have not been made with any bad intention.

In dealing with the safety of the Mine, on page 20 the report deals with the position of the MacGregor Shaft, and very much to my surprise it says that the MacGregor Shaft is still in good working condition. The fact of the matter is that the shaft has been dismantled for over six months; yet in the report ending 31st May it is said to be in good working condition still, but it may be abandoned in the future. I do not suppose you credit me with being foolish enough to come here and make assertions which cannot be borne out by facts. ("We do.") I may be foolish enough, but I am not that foolish. I do not intend to make any assertions that cannot be borne out by facts and it is a well-known fact, and can be easily proved, that MacGregor Shaft had been dismantled a considerable time before the 31st May, and therefore could not be in good working condition on that date. The gallows of MacGregor Shaft is hanging at the present time like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth. I say the report is incorrect in making such an assertion, because it is a well-known fact that the whole thing has been dismantled

for six months, and at the present time it is nearly tumbling down and making an opening about ten feet wide. ("We will put it right again.") It is well that this meeting of shareholders should not consider this in an humorous or sarcastic manner. It will become any one when such interests are involved to look at it from a humorous point of view, and I think it would be wise if the shareholders of this Company looked into the matter carefully, and adopted some means to attain the end they have in view. If the shareholders of this Mine are prepared for a certain course of action—if they are prepared to shut down this Mine until the employés comply with certain conditions, it is wise to say so at once; but if, on the other hand, it is the desire of the shareholders to meet their employés fairly and openly, and treat them with honesty, and justice and equity, they should likewise say so. If it is the desire of the shareholders that the Proprietary Mine should be opened as soon as possible—and I am not for a minute insinuating that you should re-open it except under conditions that you think are advisable—you should consider well whether it would not be advisable to come to some terms or to some arrangement with the employés and have the Mine re-opened, rather than to leave it the position it is in at the present time. If any damage occurs to the property the responsibility will rest upon the heads of the shareholders, and not of the employés. The shareholders and the Board have been the aggressive party. (Laughter. "Did the shareholders strike?") Yes, they did; they struck against existing conditions. You gentlemen may laugh, but if you look at the matter carefully and honestly, you will see that the Board did strike against existing conditions. ("It struck against tyranny.") I wish you were working for £3 per week, you would know if it was tyranny. ("Do you do any work?") My friend, if you did as much as I do—(Laughter. "You look well on it.") Renewed laughter.) I would ask you, as shareholders, whether it would not be more in your interests to bring about such conditions as would cause the mines to be re-opened, and have them paying you handsome profits, instead of allowing them to lie idle and go gradually to ruin? It is a matter that you have carefully to consider. It is not a matter for you to simply laugh at, and say "We will crush these men who are working there." ("No, no." "You are not addressing a Broken Hill audience now.") A Broken Hill audience always listens to a man of common sense. ("Why didn't you take a vote the other day?") Yes, I might go into that, but why didn't you take a vote the other day. ("We will take it to-day." "Go on, don't waste time.") If anyone interrupts and asks anything, and I do not reply to it, you will go away and imagine that I am afraid to. ("Speak to the point.") It seems to me that everyone has his point, and wants me to come to it. If you leave me alone I will finish, and then you can come to your own point. (Disorder.)

**THE CHAIRMAN**—Order, gentlemen; allow him to finish.

**MR. SLEATH**—I like to treat everyone with civility and courtesy, but I am not one of those you can pull down, you know. I want you to fairly understand that to start with. Had I been left alone I should have been finished long ago, but, if you think by interjecting you can compel me to take my seat, you make a great mistake. ("We don't want you to do that.") Then what is the use of these continued and persistent interruptions? It does not matter much to me, I only want to point out the position to you. As far as I am individually concerned it does not matter much to me, but perhaps it matters considerably to some of you, and it matters to others outside of you altogether. I simply want you to look at the matter seriously, and not from a humorous or sarcastic point of view. You have a great property, you have wealth untold in it, and you have it in your hands to say whether you will work it or whether you will keep it lying idle. ("We are going to work it.") It is for you to say, and it is for you to decide whether you will work it under such conditions that the employés employed by you can, by doing a fair day's work receive sufficient to give them a bare subsistence. ("Oh, ch.") I want you not to forget one thing, that any man who goes to the Barrier and works 3, 4, or 5 years there, adds 5 or 15 years to his life. We can produce hundreds of young able men who have been made cripples for life. We can show you medical certificates stating that the men have died from lead poisoning. Don't forget the hardships we have to undergo on the Barrier. If the cost to the Company for water has been so heavy, think what the cost was to the men, when they were paying £1 out of their £3 per week for water for domestic purposes. Do not always look at it from your own point of view; look at it all round; look at it fairly and honestly, and then you will be in a position to form an honest opinion. I claim that no hundred men who have worked on the Barrier for 12 months, can be produced who have not suffered more or less from lead poisoning. I challenge any one to produce one hundred men who have worked there 12 months or more who have not suffered more or less from lead poisoning. Assertions have been made that the men loaf, and if so, surely your management can find one case; if they can find one case, and prove it, and sheet it home, then we are prepared to admit we are wrong. We publicly made a challenge months ago, and defy any manager to produce one case in which he can prove that a man has not done a fair day's work or has been found sleeping underground. We are prepared to let the matter go to a fair and open investigation and let you be the judges. ("And strike in the meantime.") No, that is where you make the mistake. There is no strike about us. We don't want to strike. (Laughter.) It is only as a last resource, when no other channel is open to us, that we resort to that. In one case where a man was said to be sleeping underground, we have gone no less than three times and asked to have a fair and open investigation, so that the public and shareholders could get at the truth of the matter, and that has been refused by the mining companies. That is a fact which can be proved. I don't think any one has so much

moral courage, or so little respect for the truth, as to deny it. The investigation was refused, and we as a class were libel ed, but we did not go on strike. We asked that arrangements should be made that any cases of that sort in future should be dealt with in a friendly spirit, so that they would not require to be made public, or require extreme measures on either side. This likewise was refused. The miners of Broken Hill are prepared to give the shareholders a fair return for money received, and do a fair day's work for a fair day's wage, and they are prepared to work under fair condition in harmony with the employers. ("Thanks.") I am speaking earnestly, honestly, and truthfully, and ask you to consider this matter carefully. My amendment is that the Report be referred back for explanation and correction. I have pointed out that the first clause of page 11 is not correct, because the question at issue is not stopping by contract at all. The miners have never refused stopping by contract. On page 20, the second last clause refers to the condition of MacGregor Shaft. I positively assert that the statement is incorrect and untrue. Therefore I move that this Report be referred back for correction and explanation.

I have finished, gentlemen, and I thank you for the hearing you have given me.

The CHAIRMAN—Has the amendment been seconded? ("No.") I want to know if it is your pleasure that the Board should reply? ("No," and "Yes.")

Mr. DARLING—I may say that the Directors regret exceedingly the introduction of the matter that has now been brought before you; but as you have heard certain statements on one side of the question, perhaps it is only right that you should expect to hear something on the other side. (Hear, hear.) We as Directors are merely the stewards of your property, and we are responsible to you to see that, when we hold your confidence, we treat it with the best ability we are able to command, and to your advantage, as trustees. In this matter we think we have done so, and the accusations and charges which have been brought against us, we think we can consistently refute.

Your mines were being worked under an agreement that had been signed by two parties. It was found that that agreement was not being satisfactorily carried out to the interests of the shareholders, and to the Managers and Officers at Broken Hill. It was submitted, from time to time, to your Directors that a fair day's work was not being given for a full day's pay, and it was suggested that some alteration was necessary. It being quite apparent that to continue working under the agreement would be unjust and unfair to the interests of the shareholders, when they were not getting a fair return, it was sought to have matters put upon a satisfactory basis, so that the working of the Mine might go on on lines mutually satisfactory to the employer and employee. Some negotiations took place, and the responses to those negotiations were of a most unsatisfactory character—so much so, that the question of stopping by contract would not be recognised. As stopping by contract was distinctly disallowed in this agreement, it was not a matter to be referred to arbitration, for it would simply amount to a question whether the shareholders should be compelled to work their mines at a disadvantage. The agreement speaks for itself. It distinctly states that stopping by contract under that agreement shall not be allowed. There is therefore no point to submit to arbitration, if it is found impracticable to work the mines under other conditions. This was assured. Then the question was, what is a fair and business-like view to take of the agreement? It was found impossible to work under this agreement with any degree of satisfaction, and the only course open was to terminate the agreement, and make some other arrangements. There was no time specified in the agreement wherein it was to be terminated, and your Directors therefore, as entrusted with your property, considered that the most proper course to take was to give a fair and reasonable notice of the termination of this agreement, allowing ample time for any negotiations from the other side. (Hear, hear.) Accordingly notice was given. A mass meeting was called, as you are aware, under the presidency, I believe, of the last speaker, at Broken Hill. The mines were then working, everything had been going on satisfactorily, and without any notice, without any warning whatever, at that meeting on that Sunday they declared a strike, irrespective of the interests of your property in any shape or form. We are now told that the shareholders and their Directors are the men who made the first aggressive movement. I say that is false *in toto*. (Hear, hear.) We did nothing of the sort. That agreement has been respected by you through your Directors to the present time. We have not committed one breach of it. On the other side is all the responsibility of who struck. Why are these mines not working to-day? Why is an immense loss now being sustained by ourselves and all the commerce of Australia? Because it is now an extended question, and not narrowed down to the limits of two parties to a contract. It has widened out, and public opinion has now to be respected, and is more or less drawn into this matter. How absurd to say we are the aggressive party at this stage, when the liberties of our officers, of our workmen, and of the townspeople of Broken Hill are taken away by the establishment of a system of pickets! We are invited by the last speaker to go to Broken Hill, but he did not tell you that we could not get to the mines without a pass. (Laughter.) If we wanted to view our property we should have to apply to the last speaker or his defence committee to be allowed to do so. (Renewed laughter.) That is merely one instance of the state of things that has been brought about at Broken Hill, and you are asked to believe that no such thing exists. (Mr. Sleath—We can prove that it does not exist.) I am told that there is no exaggeration in the reports that have reached us as to the treatment to which

our officers have been subjected, as well as the civilians and citizens of Broken Hill, and no doubt later on we shall be able to show whether we are right or whether we are wrong. (Hear, hear.) It is the desire of your Directors as your trustees to deal fairly and honestly, and we wish to be treated in such a manner that we can give a just account of our stewardship to the shareholders. After what has happened we feel it is imperative that if those mines are to be re-opened, they can only be opened under freedom of contract. (Hear, hear, and loud applause.) I may say, gentlemen, that, unfortunately, I have had some little experience in maritime strikes. After we had for a considerable time suffered and endured persecution from what are called the leaders of the labour organisations, we were compelled, in our own self-defence, to act aggressively, and in defending ourselves, to say—"The banner we must have in future must be freedom of contract." (Cheers.) After a protracted struggle, and having endured many difficulties, we were able to get for ourselves and for our workmen the emancipation that many of them desired from such tyranny. (Applause.) We do not wish to combat unionism in any shape or form. (Hear, hear.) It is the usurpation of our just rights as free British subjects that we will fight against, and I am quite sure the shareholders in the mines at Broken Hill are prepared to support the Directors in that stand, which we must take if we are going to be men, and see your interests advanced. (Applause.) And in advancing your interests, it will be found in later years that we were advancing the interests of the true Australian workman. (Hear, hear.) In a short time he will turn round and thank those men who to-day are said to be his oppressors. The Directors will not endeavour to oppress the workmen in any shape or form, they will only ask what is fair and reasonable; but the suggestion at this time that the question of freedom of contract should be submitted to arbitration is one which you, or no sensible man, would think worthy to be entertained. (Hear, hear.) We have not acted aggressively, we have no desire to be harsh; our desire is to treat things fairly, and to be fairly treated. But we owe a duty to our officers and to our men on the Mine, who we hope will continue to conduct their business as they have conducted it in the past—in a way which is creditable to them as men and to you as shareholders; and, with your help and support, we have no fear of results. (Hear, hear.) There is no necessity for me to enter into details, I have merely spoken in general terms, and in your interests we have felt it imperative to say that those mines cannot possibly be re-opened unless under freedom of contract. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. RUSSELL—I would like to mention that the firm I represent purchased during the last six months over 20,000 shares for London. That business is now brought to a standstill owing to the number of shares placed on the London register being limited. I would like to ask whether any facilities can be afforded for transferring shares from the Melbourne issue to the London issue?

The CHAIRMAN—The Board have the matter under favourable consideration, and will in the near future bring it before the shareholders at a general meeting. The idea is to put the colonial shares on the London register on the same terms, and to remove the present restriction on colonial shares in London.

A SHAREHOLDER—There should be a fair understanding between this meeting and Mr. Sleath that neither the Directors nor the shareholders object to unionism, or to a fair day's wage. We don't want to cut down wages; we only object to the aggressive acts of unionism. We are willing that a man should have a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. We heartily support the Directors in their action, and that is the feeling of the shareholders and Directors.

Mr. CAPPER—I think so also; and I hope that Mr. Sleath when he goes back to Broken Hill and tells them that he has addressed the bloated capitalists of Melbourne, will not take back any untruth, but will tell the miners there he has had a fair hearing and had justice done to him. Of course, I am one of those who do not exactly approve of this tyrannical unionism. I believe in proper unionism, a unionism of the whole people, not a disintegrated unionism, one section overbearing another. I hope Mr. Sleath when he goes back to Broken Hill will advise his fellow workmen there that they should carry out their unionism by uniting with the shareholders in working their property for their mutual benefit and also for the benefit of the country.

The Rev. J. FULFORD—I rise to thank the Director who has given us such a lucid and, at the same time, moderate account of this unfortunate strike. I think we are all deeply indebted to him for the very concise way in which he represented the facts. It is very easy for one person to stand on the platform and make assertions, and for another to contradict them, but the whole thing seems to be in a nutshell—freedom of contract. There can be no doubt that that is only what is due between man and man; and if we are freemen, and anxious to protect our rights, we cannot admit the unfortunate principle which has crept into this Mine, and which really has so far, for a time as we hope, paralysed our work. I do think we are deeply indebted to Mr. Darling for the very concise way, and the very honest way, in which he has placed the matter before us. (Hear, hear.) I think the shareholders will one and all support the Directors in the position they have taken up. They are not interfering with unions, they are willing to render to every man what is due, but they are maintaining the principle of freedom of contract. There was a paper signed by a number of shareholders—I think it emanated from a certain shareholder—I for

one signed it, and I did it with the intention of supporting the Directors in the position they had taken up. It was a difficult position to maintain, and when they had taken up that position I thought the shareholders should freely express their opinion, and strengthen their hands. I will therefore thank the Directors, on behalf of the shareholders, for the position they have taken up, and I hope they will carry it out to the end. (Loud applause.)

The motion for the adoption of the Report and Balance Sheet was then put to the meeting, and carried, Mr. Sleath being the only dissentient.

Mr. F. A. KEATING—I think this meeting should not separate without recording a formal resolution supporting the Board in the attitude which they are now assuming in this labour conflict. For my own part, I am very glad to see Mr. Sleath here. (Hear, hear.) I think it was rather a plucky thing for him to come. (Hear, hear.) I don't think he made at all an unreasonably violent speech. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) I hope, however, now that he has been here, and has been able to judge what the general feeling of this meeting is, when he has seen how little we are likely to be intimidated by the display of physical force which he is able to command; when he sees how little we are likely to give way to the pecuniary pressure—to the want of dividends, serious as it is in these hard times; and I trust, sir, when he sees also we are not a body of voracious capitalists, and that we really have no desire to humiliate the men, or to pay them anything but a fair day's wage for a fair day's work, he will be able on his return to Broken Hill to advocate to the miners at their next meeting on the reserve that they should withdraw their pickets, and so pave the way to an honourable settlement and to an honourable peace. (Hear, hear.) I would ask Mr. Sleath, what, after all, is the use of his pickets? It is quite true, that, at the present moment in Broken Hill there is apparently an enormous preponderance of physical force on the side of those thousands of miners who flock every day in the reserve who, I believe, are to day demonstrating in the streets of Broken Hill, and who have their pickets stretched like a beleaguering army round our mines. I admit, too, that Mr. Howell and the small knot of men who stand keeping watch and ward over our property on the Hill seem a small and insignificant minority, and seem to have but feeble power of resistance against the enormous mass of miners. But, sir, Mr. Sleath knows, and we know, and I believe that all the miners—at least all of them who trouble themselves to think—know, that behind that little knot of men stand the forms—the at present shadowy forms—of the two great guardians of modern civilisation, law and order. (Applause.) And, sir, if the miners should attempt to give practical effect to their overwhelming physical superiority, those shadowy forms will become substantial enough to drive the whole besieging force in rout and disorder from the field. The Government of New South Wales, unless it wishes to abandon its claim to be one of the civilised Governments of the world, cannot allow a rule of force to take the place of a rule of law. (Hear, hear.) I suppose there is scarcely a sane man who doubts that, when the manifestation of physical force becomes pronounced, whenever anything like outrage or violence is really resorted to, the Government of New South Wales will bring forward an overwhelming and irresistible force to suppress it. That being so, I would ask Mr. Sleath again, what is the use of his pickets? Either they are there for violence, under certain contingencies, or they are there for bluff. ("Bluff.") If they are there for bluff, they are useless and a sham; if they are for violence, they are doomed to inevitable defeat. What, therefore, would he lose by withdrawing them? They irritate the shareholders of this Company, and they irritate the shareholders of all the other mining companies. They are the main obstacle to all negotiations and settlement. If they are withdrawn, I believe an honourable peace and an honourable settlement may be arrived at. It is not for us to say what exact form that settlement would take; that would come hereafter; but I think there is one thing we are all determined upon, and that is, that in that settlement should be embodied the principle that the shareholders who pay the wages are to control the working and government of the Mine, and not the men to whom the wages are paid. ("Hear, hear.") I hope, therefore, these pickets will be withdrawn, but if Mr. Sleath, on his return to Broken Hill, refuses to withdraw his pickets, and determines to fight this battle, *a de l'outrance*, all I can say is, he is knocking the longest nail into the coffin of the New Unionism that it has ever received. Unionism, since its trial now all over the world, and if it destroys, as it has destroyed, industry after industry, then the great patrician long-suffering public will rise, and will sweep it away, and instead of Unionism obtaining what it now claims, a monopoly of employment, it will obtain no employment at all. I will formally move—"That this meeting of shareholders desires to record its confidence in the Directors, and pledges itself to support them in their present attitude, and in their co-operation with the associated mining companies." (Applause.)

The Rev. Mr. FULFORD seconded the motion.

Mr. J. L. PURVES—I do not know that I should have said a word to-night had I not been, apart from being a shareholder in these later times, and the representative of dead shareholders in former times, also an advocate of Unionism, and a very steadfast one indeed. I claim that I have done more work in that direction than a hundred of such delegates as the gentleman who came here to-day. I am an advocate of Unionism of this

description—that the wage-winners should combine together in days of prosperity, and lay up a store for themselves or for their friends and fellow workmen in less palmy days. I have travelled throughout the length and breadth of Australia in advocating a great institution of thrift, and also that higher and nobler unionism which is known as Federation. It strikes me, gentlemen—I don't know whether it struck you—that these mining companies, of which the Proprietary is one, are not merely commercial enterprises. They are really more than that. They affect the fortunes of each individual State. Not merely are the Broken Hill Mines affected at this juncture, but every mine throughout the length and breadth of Australia. Not merely does it affect the workers that Mr. Sleath says he represents, although I maintain he does not—(Hear, hear)—not merely is that little isolated body of men affected, but every miner throughout these broad and prosperous lands. Now, let me tell Mr. Sleath, and let him take this message back to Broken Hill, that when he seeks to induce the Government of New South Wales to enforce labour covenants to assist these men on strike he is not merely asking the Government of New South Wales for assistance against this particular group of mines, but he is asking them to institute a new order of things, by which each individual Parliament of each individual State would be enabled to paralyse mining enterprise; because, if the labour covenants are to be enforced under these circumstances as against the Proprietary Mine, they can be enforced against every mine in these colonies. It would be a monstrous injustice that, in order to assist the men at this juncture, anything of that sort should be done. No individual instance of misfortune can be taken advantage of by any Government of any of these colonies, because the whole of the mining interests throughout the length and breadth of them would rise up and protest against such a course. Our friend here is a very different man to what he is on the waggon under the burning effigy of some decent man discoursing to these misguided men at Broken Hill. Mind you, all the men do not follow him, they only follow the mob that he has at his heels—the mob that terrorises the true working man who would do a fair day's work for a fair day's wage. Let him go back again to Broken Hill and tell those people who are working with him in this strike, and who are telling the men from the platform that the shareholders in this town, and throughout these colonies, will be so fearful of the Mine falling in, and of the loss to their pockets—let him go back and tell them that we don't care if it falls in to-morrow. (Hear, hear.) It is better that it should do so, better that we should lose a little at the present time than that these commercial enterprises should be paralysed as he would seek to paralyse them. But if it does fall in—and the man who has addressed you here has stated at Broken Hill that he hoped it would, and there are thousands of living men who heard him say it—if it does fall in, where are his underground miners? They would not get into the mine again till the quarrymen and unskilled labour have taken the crust off it; so it is all nonsense his coming here and talking to us in that fashion. Then there is another little point that he had better consider on his long and lonely journey from here to Broken Hill. He says he comes here and wants peace, honour, and justice. I say we are quite prepared to give it to him. He says he represents the miners at Broken Hill. We say we represent the shareholders in the mines in which those miners work. Therefore we are two parties to a contract—that ordinary domestic contract that goes from your own household up to the greatest manufactories and the greatest industries. Dependent on the exertions of the miners in that Mine are not merely the fortunes of the shareholders, of our families, and of our wives and children, but also the fortunes of the wives and children of honest working men who desire to work for us. (Hear, hear.) There are thousands of men, not merely at Broken Hill, but in Tasmania, in New Zealand especially, and in New South Wales, who are just as good miners as Mr. Sleath or his comrades who are the Board of Advice (or whatever they call themselves to these miners), who will go there and work on contract. (Applause.) I work on contract—I am a working man, and so is every one of you who earns his bread in this colony. I work on contract, and if I do not give a good day's work for the wages I get I am not asked again—and quite right too. If a man who is a follower of Mr. Sleath goes to sleep or loaf in the Mine, and the manager dares to dismiss him, the manager is at once asked, "Why did you dismiss that man?" He says, for loafing, or for incapacity. They hold a meeting and declare, "He is not a loafer, but a good workman; take the man back or else we will strike." That is their principle. (Hear, hear.) Now, we want to test whether these men are the workers Mr. Sleath says they are. We say to him: "You prove it; here is a contract; show us what you can make out of it. If you suffer any loss, show us where your loss was, and we will pay you a fair wage per ton for stopping by contract. Surely that is a fair contract, and one that ought to be encouraged by you and all reasonable people. Mr. Sleath says: "No; that won't suit us; every man must be paid the same; the most competent and the most incompetent; every man is to have the same wage, and he is not to be the servant of your servant, the manager of the mine, but he is to be a servant of Unionism, as it is called." Well, gentlemen, we say that does not suit us, and we won't have it—(hear, hear)—and if this Mine is to be shut down, not for a month, but for six months, we will stand by our guns. (Applause.)

And now I will tell Mr. Sleath another thing. If he wants to go back with real intelligence for his friends, let him tell them this—that I, for one, not merely on my own account, but on behalf of those I represent, am willing to give away the whole of our dividends if we can drag them out of that mine, and put men there who can work, and pay them a fair day's wage, and put



two men to watch every worker. Mr. Sleath's argument is that that would be foolish. Don't you think it would be a silly thing to put two soldiers to watch one workman? I should think so; there should be no doubt about it. But he says force is to be the thing. "Not merely will we not work ourselves, but we will prevent anyone who wants a day's wages going up to the line to work."

Mr. SLEATH—I rise to a point of order. I ask if I said anything of the sort. This loquacious friend (loud laughter) has made a lot of untrue statements. I would ask if I made that statement?

The CHAIRMAN—Not here, but you did at the Mine.

Mr. SLEATH—I say that any man who makes that statement tells an absolute falsehood.

Mr. PURVES—Gentlemen, I am told by this worthy representative of labour that what I have stated is false. I tell you, gentlemen, that although I am not a labouring man I claim to know just as much about my business as this man does. I claim to have a voice in the management of my property, and I choose that it shall not be managed by Mr. Sleath. (Hear, hear.) I was going to point out to you another thing. This gentleman comes here laughing in his sleeve—he thinks it is a very fine thing to say I am loquacious because I earn my living with my tongue, and he is welcome to do so, and when I go to Broken Hill I will have something to say about a loquacious friend there. But I would like to point out another thing. He is not standing on a waggon here under the burning effigy of a decent man; he has not a squad of slobbering boys following him about here. (Laughter.) But he says he comes here to ask you for honest and just treatment. He tells you one reason and his main reason, that the wages are not sufficient; that 10s. a day is not enough; that £3 per week kills miners, because they suffer from lead poisoning. Well, gentlemen, he is a miner. I do not see any signs about him of lead poisoning. He is a working man; why, gentlemen, his hands are whiter than mine! He is one of those indolent people who make a great deal of noise in order to obtain a living; and, he tells you, forsooth—and this is one of the ways in which he humbugs and bamboozles ignorant people—he tells you that he comes here with his own money, and paying his own way. Gentlemen, he comes here with the money of poor starving women and helpless children. (Hear, hear, and applause.) He is one of the *Chevaliers d'Industrie*—one of the Knights of Indolence who live and prey upon the real working man and prevent him doing his day's work. (Loud and prolonged applause).

Mr. SEARLE—I am heartily in support of the Directors of this Company, and in accord with the shareholders in this room. I think a great deal depends upon the kind of resolution we pass to-day, and although I go as far as anybody in this room in supporting the Directors, and take the same view as the gentlemen who have spoken, yet I think we can put our resolution in much better terms, and, while supporting the Directors, we can at the same time pass a resolution which will pave the way to peace and work again. ("No.") Well, gentlemen, I propose this as an amendment—"Sit down"—"That this meeting heartily supports the Directors in their action, but considering the large and varied interests involved, it urges the holding of a conference as soon as practicable. ("No, no;" "Sit down.") I am not going to sit down. I will move an amendment, whether you pass it or not. I wish to support the Directorate thoroughly, to the backbone; but I think the sentiment in which we are passing the resolution can be better put in this way: "That this meeting heartily supports the Directors in their action, but, considering the large and varied interests involved, urges the holding of a conference as soon as practicable"—("No, no," and interruption.) Vote against it by all means, gentlemen, but hear it—"and that the preliminary conditions be the undertaking on the part of the men to withdraw their pickets, and the undertaking on the part of the Company not to re-open their mines during the progress of the conference." (No, no.)

Mr. GIBSON—I will second the amendment. I quite agree with Mr. Searle that this is not a time to continue the struggle with the employés. For three weeks it has been going on; why not try conciliatory measures? We do not want to always be fighting; we have had quite enough. (Laughter and dissent.) I will support the amendment.

The amendment was then put and lost, only the mover, seconder and Mr. Sleath voting for it.

The motion was carried unanimously.

#### ELECTION OF DIRECTOR.

On the motion of Mr. KARLBAUM, seconded by Mr. CAPPER, the election of Mr. H. C. E. Muecke as a Director was confirmed.

#### RE-ELECTION OF AUDITORS.

Mr. TURNER proposed, and Mr. GILES seconded, a motion that Messrs. Andrew Burns and G. H. Selby, jun., be re-elected Auditors, and that their fees be increased from £60 to £70 per annum each, which was carried unanimously.

The meeting then terminated.

Amey Mrs. Butler  
Chairman

Conformed  
25/1/93

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**Note:** Due to the nature of the thesis, the bibliography is divided into three sections.

The first section lists primary material; the second historical material, and the third social theory/organisation studies material.

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