

63. Do you think it is essential to the success of that company that they must have the whole of that water?—That is going into technicalities I knew nothing about. I am only a miner, not an engineer.

64. You have had a good many meetings about this matter?—Yes.

65. There is an impression conveyed to this Committee that this company is in a sort of nebulous stage, and that the idea is to secure these rights and then to float a big company on the English market: have you heard that phase of the matter discussed at Rimu?—That is, to secure all the available water-rights?

66. Yes?—There are millions of horse-power to be obtained. The Government Engineer considered the To Aroha was of very small importance altogether. There are millions of horse-power independent of that. This company is not seeking all the To Aroha. I believe, after they leave their Pelton wheel there are some hundreds of horse-power lower down again. I think there are millions of horse-power capable of development elsewhere.

67. You say the syndicate or proposed company has taken up 800 acres, or they want a minimum of 800 or 900 acres?—Yes.

68. If this concession is granted will the company be able to monopolize the whole of the 6,000 acres—because there will be no other water-power available to work the balance of the area?—No; there are millions of horse-power capable of being developed elsewhere besides that of the To Aroha.

69. To develop the area of the 6,000 acres?—Yes.

70. *Mr. Seddon.*] About the water-supply that at present exists at Rimu: you just depend on what can be gathered in the dams?—Yes.

71. How long will that take you to run out?—In a fortnight.

72. And if this proposal is carried out you will have a permanent supply?—Yes.

73. *Mr. Greenslade* asked you, if the total rights were granted over the To Aroha, would that be a monopoly: how much nearer is the Kanieri Lake than To Aroha to Rimu?—It is much nearer—several miles.

74. You are aware that at the Hokitika Gorge there are just as good streams as To Aroha?—Yes.

75. There are several places where water-power could be generated just as easily as at To Aroha?—Yes.

76. *Mr. Anderson.*] What is the distance between the generating-station and the pumping-station? You practically answered that by saying “some distance away.” How far is it?—From To Aroha Cañon to the river is about seven or eight miles, I think.

77. *Mr. Seddon.*] You have never been up there?—No. I think it would not be so far as from the Kanieri Lake to Ross.

78. *The Chairman.*] You have come here, I understand, as a working miner on the Rimu Flats, and you believe that if this company is floated and the water is brought on to the flats it would mean a great influx of population, and would largely benefit the district?—Yes.

79. Do you know what charge under the regulations the syndicate proposes to make for the water-supply?—The same price as the Government is charging for their water in Kumara—10d. per head per hour to the miners.

80. Do you know the proposed charges to this company—how much per horse-power per annum—for the right to use this water?—No.

81. They propose to charge 3s. per horse-power?—Yes.

82. Do you think it is the duty of the Government, as the owners of a valuable asset such as the water-power of New Zealand, to hand it over to any company that likes to take it up—to hand it over free?—Yes, I do—for mining purposes, because mining will not stand a tax.

83. Then, you think it is right to let the water go free for mining and not for other purposes?—Yes, but only for mining purposes.

84. Do you know how many horse-power this company applied for?—Twenty thousand.

85. And there will be any amount of horse-power left after they have had their 20,000?—Yes.

86. *Hon. Mr. R. McKenzie.*] I heard you say that this water-power should be given free to the mining industry, and not to any other industry?—Yes.

87. Can you tell me why the taxpayers of this country should give the Waihi Company 20,000 horse-power for nothing as against the sawmills on the West Coast?—I consider there is a great difference between quartz-mining and alluvial mining. I do not understand anything about quartz-mining.

88. Supposing we take a quartz-mining claim at the Wilberforce, do you think we should charge the miners there, and give you the water free at Rimu?—No.

89. If we charge them there, we cannot give it to you?—There is not so much uncertainty about quartz-mining as there is about alluvial mining. It is simply alluvial mining that I am interested in.

90. *The Chairman.*] You are aware that under these conditions water can be obtained for mining purposes at half the cost of that for any other purpose?—Yes.

91. *Hon. Mr. R. McKenzie.*] I suppose you know the Crown charges a royalty on coal?—Yes.

92. And I suppose you understand that power generated from coal is used to generate electricity?—Yes.

93. Can you give any good reason why we should give free power to generate it by water and charge for the power and charge a royalty when it is generated by coal?—Yes; when you take the coal out of the ground the coal is gone for ever.

94. We have the ground left?—Yes, but the ground is like gold-mining ground—it is of no use.