

giving personal service. You will find the influence of the parent is the cause of many of those lads who refuse to register and take the oath.

54. Are you of the opinion that it is those who do not want to serve, or the employers, who throw the greatest number of obstacles in the way?—I think the employer is playing up very well indeed. I think that really the employer deserves a great deal of credit, and there are very few indeed who are either against the Defence Act or are doing anything to throw obstacles in the way. I really think the employers of this country have played the game. On the other hand, I must say this: that he gets better young men in years to come. He knows that he will get a better class of young men to deal with under the influences of discipline; he will make a better employee—that I am certain of.

55. Are these young men in constant employment?—I am not prepared to say.

56. Do you know of the occupations of any of them?—I know some of them were young men who, to render it impossible that their wages should be garnisheed, went away and lived in a camp so that they should have no wages to be attached.

57. *A Member.*] What about these single cells?—The only place I know of where we have single cells is here, in the Alexandra Barracks. At Ripa Island we have no single cells; they are double cells.

58. *Hon. Mr. Allen.*] There is a point which does not concern what we are dealing with now, but will show you how unfounded a good many of these grievances are—a letter from a man named Burns, as follows: “13th September, 1913.—To the Honourable Minister of Defence.—Sir,—I, the undersigned, wish to bring before your notice the fact that young men are being released from Ripa Island and forced to undergo that long and tedious journey (fifteen hours) from Lyttelton to Greymouth, and are only supplied with a cold lunch of six small sandwiches to eat *en route* (sandwiches forwarded with this letter for inspection). Now, honourable sir, I submit that, seeing that the young men are travelling from 6.45 a.m. to 9.30 p.m. over one of the coldest and roughest journeys in New Zealand, such treatment is unhumanitarian and criminal, and I trust that when these facts are placed before you you will take immediate action and have this barbarious treatment remedied.—I am, thanking you in anticipation, one of the sufferers, HENRY F. P. BURNS.” To which was replied: “I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 15th instant. I have seen the sandwiches, and think that when they were given to you they were excellent and quite sufficient for the journey.” These are the sandwiches which were given to the man. They have been in my keeping nearly ten days, and they have got a bit mildewy now. There is butter and ham between them. I myself have lived many a day in my life on far less than that. Most of these grievances are nonsense.

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WEDNESDAY, 8TH OCTOBER, 1913.

Witnesses Mackie, Worrall, and Williams were called in and the petition was read, also Colonel Heard's report and the regulations.

C. R. N. MACKIE examined. (No. 2.)

1. *The Chairman.*] Mr. Mackie, will you give us your evidence—will you now make a statement to the Committee? What is your full name?—Charles Robert Norris Mackie. I propose to read out the statement that I sent to the Secretary of this Committee as being our case in this particular instance; I presume it has not been before you.

*The Chairman:* That statement has been read. Would any one like to hear it again?

*Hon. Mr. Anstey:* I think it would be better that it should be read now.

*Statement of the Case in connection with the Ripa Island Detention Barracks concerning which a Petition was presented to Parliament by C. R. N. Mackie, on behalf of the National Peace Council of New Zealand.*

*First Case.*—That on the 18th June, 1913, Edward Hannan, Walter James Hooper, Thomas Nuttall, Harold D. Thackwell, Reginald Williams, and James Kirkwood Worrall, all of Christchurch, who were in military detention under the Defence Act, were ordered to unload and carry coal from the Ripa Island Fort wharf. The coal was contained in sacks and weighed about 1½ cwt. to a sack. The lads refused to carry and unload the coal, and as a punishment for this refusal the officer commanding the fort ordered the said lads to be placed in solitary confinement in cells measuring about 8 ft. by 10 ft., and containing two or more fixed wooden bunks. The exercising-space was about 4 ft. by 10 ft. The lads were put on “short rations,” consisting of one small slice of bread for breakfast and a similar slice for tea, and a piece of meat and some potatoes for dinner. At each meal one half-pint of tea was supplied. The weather was bitterly cold during the two days of confinement, and there was no means of heating the cells, consequently the lads felt the cold intensely. Half-an-hour's exercise in the yard was given in the morning, and half-an-hour's exercise in the afternoon. No blankets were permitted during the daytime. The windows of the cells were tightly fastened, so preventing the ingress of fresh air. The officer commanding the fort informed the lads that he had no power to punish them. According to section 8, subsection (2), of the Defence Amendment Act, 1912, “Every person who while in military custody as aforesaid fails or refuses to submit to or perform such military training, discipline, or duties, or to render obedience to any such orders, or is guilty of insolent, disorderly, or insubordinate conduct, shall be guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction before a Magistrate, and may on such conviction be sentenced to a further term of military custody