

ration, and during the Court trial the non-commissioned officer in charge read out the rations we were supposed to have, and what we were supposed to have was in excess of what we did have.

97. You say that the doctor's ration was less?—Of course, I am taking your statement as correct about the doctor. Assuming that the doctor laid down one ration, I say that we received less than we were entitled to.

98. You objected to carrying coal because it was military work?—I admit there is no particular hardship for a strong man to carry the coal, but the position is this: it was military work. The summonses issued later to three other boys had on them "for refusing to do military fatigue-work": that is my reason for objecting to carry the coal.

99. You decided to go on hunger strike before?—The hunger strike was during our confinement, for refusing to drill: that was the second time.

100. I have a little pamphlet report, "Rumour reached us of some coal, and it was decided that when it arrived we should strike"?—To strike is not hunger strike.

101. Oh, I see; you had a strike and a hunger strike. I would like you to answer this question: you do not believe in the Defence Act?—No, I do not.

102. And you personally do not want it amended, you want it repealed?—Yes, I want the present Act repealed.

103. You see, the position is this: this Committee was set up to see, among other things, how the Act could be amended if it is pressing unduly?—No, there are several members on this Committee who have different reasons. I would be quite prepared at another meeting, but I came up here to-day to give evidence on the illegalities. I am out for the repeal of the Act.

104. *Hon. Mr. Anstey.*] You said you were committed for refusing to register?—Yes.

105. Your objection to register, was it conscientious or religious—your objection to the military system altogether?—I have conscientious objections, and I do not believe in the military authority. My opinion is that if I register I bring myself under the military authorities.

106. That conscientious objection, of course, would not apply to the obedience to the ordinary civil law. If you had committed a civil offence and then was committed to Ripa Island would you then have defied the law?—No.

107. Your objection is to the military law?—Yes.

108. You would have no objection to a system that was voluntary?—No, but that does not mean that I would not work to educate the people to realize that militarism is better done away with.

109. Well, I understand that you are willing to obey the civil law?—Yes.

110. You do not know that the Defence Act is a civil Act?—In what way?

111. It is simply the law of the country?—I would not obey civil law that would bring me under the military law.

112. If alternative service is provided for would you not agree?—No.

113. Even if the alternative service is placed under civil jurisdiction?—Yes, I would refuse alternative service to military drill.

114. *Hon. Mr. Allen.*] Look and see if you can recognize this letter?—No, I cannot remember it; and, what is more, it is a typewritten copy.

115. Is your name James?—Yes.

116. What is the J. McTaggart—is he a James or what?—I believe it is Jack.

117. Nuttall—is he a James or Jack?—He is James.

118. Do you know whether this letter was written by you or Nuttall?—I do not know whether I wrote it or not, and as it is a typewritten copy I cannot say whether I did write it.

119. *Mr. Russell.*] Your objection to the Defence Act is the compulsory clause. If the country had a Defence Act without the compulsory clause, have you any objection to that as a citizen of New Zealand—have you any objection to that provided the clauses are not compulsory?—No, I have not.

120. *Hon. Mr. Allen.*] Would you serve as a Volunteer?—That remains to be seen.

121. You refuse to answer?—I cannot answer that.

122. Would you volunteer to serve?—That remains to be seen when the Volunteer Act comes into force.

123. When it was a voluntary service were you a Volunteer?—At that time I was attending four nights a week at a night school; I knocked off at the end of the year and intended to join the Royal Engineers.

124. You did serve then?—I said that I knocked off the night-work to serve.

125. Did you serve?—No, I did not.

126. Why did you knock off the night-work at the finish of the school-work to join an Engineer corps and then not join?—Because the present Defence Act came into force just after I had knocked off the school, and then I decided not to join them.

127. You were under age at that time?—Yes.

128. *Mr. Veitch.*] You have already stated that you attended the Engineers?—I said I was going to join, but now I have been educated to a different standpoint, and, as I said before, I do not now believe in it personally. I do not object to a voluntary Defence Act at the present time, but I do not say I would serve.

E. R. WILLIAMS examined. (No. 4.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your full name?—Edward Reginald Williams.

2. You come from Christchurch?—Yes.

3. What is your occupation?—I am a printer.

4. What is your age?—Twenty-one. I was taken to Ripa Island on the 16th June, and was detained there until the 19th July. During that time several events took place, and illegal pro-