

the Committee this year to make a most thorough inquiry. Witnesses were brought from the South Island at considerable expense. The Department produced all records and reports asked for by Mr. Sayers, and the Department also arranged for witnesses to be present at Mr. Sayers's request. After a searching inquiry lasting two days, the Committee are of the opinion that none of Mr. Sayers's charges has been substantiated, and that responsible officers of integrity and ability have been slandered. Group Captain the Hon. R. A. Cochrane said that sometime after his arrival in New Zealand he discovered that Mr. Sayers had issued circular letters to all the Members of Parliament, in which he made glaring charges against the Department, and that the correspondence he had maintained was causing people to refer to the charges, and asked that the Committee make a complete statement. The Committee are unanimously of the opinion that the charges existed mainly in the imagination of the petitioner. The Committee congratulate the officers, N.C.O.s, and the men of the Department for the straightforward manner in which they gave their evidence. The Committee wish to place on record that Mr. W. J. Scott, late of the Audit Department, to whom Mr. Sayers had made complaint, but who was not the subsequent investigating officer, and who had commenced by supporting Mr. Sayers, after hearing all the evidence, had assured the Committee that he had completely changed his mind. It is the opinion of the Committee that to Mr. Sayers this matter has become an obsession, and the Committee draw the attention of the House to the fact that a person suffering from a persecution complex or like obsession can continue to repeatedly petition the House, and by making a host of totally unsupported charges and by amending his charges from year to year put a Department to considerable expense to reply. In addition, the effluxion of time and the dispersal of staff make a reply to charges that were immediately disproved more difficult to verbally rebut as the years go by. In the opinion of the Committee, Mr. Sayers, storeman, conceived it to be his duty to be Mr. Sayers in charge of Wigram Aerodrome and in charge of Defence policy generally. This lengthy addendum has been added in fairness to the officers and staff of Wigram Aerodrome, and so that the addendum might be publicly placed on record, as in the view of the Committee the petition may recur annually.

9th December, 1937.

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No. 103.—Petition of W. A. CLINTON and 5 Others (representing the Disabled Soldiers' Welfare Association).

PRAYING for relief in respect of war pensions and other action providing for the general welfare of returned soldiers and their dependants.

I have the honour to report that in the opinion of the Committee the petition should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration. The Committee desires to express its opinion that the cost of administration in relation to the hearing and granting of applications for war pensions and the cost of distribution of general war funds should be investigated by a special parliamentary Committee.

9th December, 1937.

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No. 125.—Petition of F. W. SCHRAMM and 2,356 Others, of Auckland.

PRAYING for a commission to inquire into the report upon the system of selection, training, &c., of horses used by the Volunteer Forces.

I have the honour to report that in the opinion of the Committee the petition should be referred to the Government for consideration.

9th December, 1937.

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No. 73.—Petition of W. MCG. TURNBULL, of Sumner.

PRAYING for compassionate allowance on account of his discharge from the Defence Forces, allegedly due to disabilities contracted while on active service.

I have the honour to report that in the opinion of the Committee the petition should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

17th November, 1937.

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No. 99.—Petition of C. A. B. MARTIN, of Auckland.

PRAYING that he be granted a war pension or compassionate allowance in lieu thereof.

I have the honour to report that the Committee has no recommendation to make.

9th March, 1938.

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No. 151.—Petition of ELSIE M. MATTHEWS, of Auckland.

PRAYING for a pension or such other compassionate allowance as may be considered equitable.

I have the honour to report that in the opinion of the Committee the position should be referred to the Government for favourable consideration.

9th March, 1938.

W. J. LYON, Chairman.