

15. I mean, previous to the present regulations?—That was the position.

16. Do you not consider it would have been possible for the Department to deal with those cases of alleged imposition in a businesslike manner?—The Department did deal with them in a businesslike manner.

17. By passing other regulations?—No, by taking the matters up from time to time.

18. When the maximum expenses were charged and the minimum deductions were made, did not the Department inquire into each case?—The Department inquired into each case, and in many cases forced the men to make deductions, and where the men did not do so the Department took them off itself.

19. Then the Department did not suffer?—It did suffer.

20. How?—When a man said, "Very well, I have deducted £1 5s; that is a fair average cost of my living," supposing the Department took off £3, what was going to happen?

21. The Department should take off what they consider is a fair amount?—The Department left it to the men to do the fair and square and honest thing, and the Department was dealing with officers of the Department.

22. And if the Department considered the man did not do the fair and square thing they took off the proper amount?—It stuck up the voucher till he did do something in the direction desired.

23. Then they did not suffer?—Yes, they did.

24. I do not see it. If where a wrong charge was made the Department dealt with it properly and took off a fair amount, then the Department did not suffer?—Every person in this room knows that, notwithstanding any action the Department may take, the wrongdoer will circumvent and beat it in time, and that it will suffer in the long-run.

25. Now, you made certain comparisons, Mr. McVilly, between the position of men in the Railway Department and the position of men in private employ?—Yes.

26. And you stated, I understand, that where men were transferred from one branch to another branch of a private firm the men had to pay their own expenses?—No, I did not. I stated what the general rule was, but I knew there were exceptions.

27. The general rule is, then, that when men are being transferred from one branch to another branch in a private firm they pay their own expenses?—Yes.

28. Can you mention a single firm where that occurs?—I am not going to discuss the business of any individual private firms, but I know that generally it is so.

29. Do you know that is the practice in connection with individual firms?—Yes.

30. In Wellington?—Yes.

31. Are you aware of the provisions made for transfer expenses in other Government Departments?—No, I cannot say I am familiar with all the details. I know the Government pays the transport expenses of their officers subject to certain regulations.

32. Then, if I was to say that in the Postal Department the men are paid their actual outlay, would you deny it?—I have already said I would require the evidence of the Secretary of the Postal Department on any point of Postal practice before I would accept your statement as correct. I am not going to assume your statement is correct.

33. Assuming my statement is correct, then, does it not follow that the transfer expenses paid in other Government Departments are unreasonable?—I am not going to assume anything of the kind. I want direct evidence from the Secretary of the Post Office before I discuss that matter.

34. In your evidence I think you stated that the reason for altering the regulation which existed immediately prior to the present regulation was that the Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones wanted to bring the Railway Department into line with another Department under his control. Which Department was that?—I do not know which Department; it was one of those he had control over.

35. Do I understand that you do not know what the Department was? You said he wished to bring it into line with another Department, and then you say seriously that you do not know which Department it was?—I do not know anything about his other Departments, but I do know the reason the Minister had. He stated in a general way that the officers of other Departments he controlled had to make a deduction, and that would have to be done in the Railway Department.

36. Did you say "another Department" or "other Departments"?—I said "other Departments." Well, I will say "another Department."

37. Well, what other Departments did he control at the time?—That I cannot tell you at the moment.

38. Did he control the Post and Telegraph Department at the time?—I do not know that he did.

39. Will you deny that he did?—I should probably deny that he did at that particular time of which I am speaking.

40. What you say is that it was with the Post and Telegraph Department that the Hon. Mr. Hall-Jones wanted to bring the regulations into line with?—I did not say so, and I do not think it was. I am not sure which Department it was.

41. However, the position is this: that you are quite prepared to compare the expenses paid in the Government Railways with the expenses paid in all parts of Australia, but you do not like to compare them with the transfer expenses paid in other Government Departments?—I am simply quoting them for illustration. You people are complaining of harsh treatment, and I am simply making a comparison with other Railway Departments in other places where the business is exactly the same as the business we are dealing with here. If I had another Railway service here I would compare it. For instance, if the Manawatu Railway Company were now in existence and dealing with the Wellington-Longburn line, I should be very glad to make a comparison there, and I know the comparison would not help your case very much.