

36. You suggest they have not got anything to complain of as far as the treatment by the A.S.R.S. is concerned, but they want to run their own show?—Yes, that is so.

37. *Mr. Sykes.*] What is the relative number of tradesmen in the Petone Workshops—how many belong to the A.S.R.S. and how many to the Tradesmen's Association?—I could not speak for the Tradesmen's Association, but I know how many belong to the A.S.R.S.—there are 244.

38. With regard to the stop-work meeting at Petone, that meeting was held, I take it, prior to the granting of the war bonus?—Yes.

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MATTHEW JOSEPH MACK further examined. (No. 8.)

1. *Mr. Field.*] I understand you can explain the constitution of the A.S.R.S.?—Yes. The conference delegates are elected in the proportion of two from each branch of the service in each Island—traffic, loco., maintenance, and workshops. The election is confined to each particular branch. When they meet at conference there are four representatives from the workshops, four from the traffic department, four from the maintenance, and four from the loco. department. At the conference they cut themselves down to eight, equally represented—that is, the workshops have one from the North Island and one from the South Island, the traffic have one from the North and one from the South. They have what we call equal and direct departmental representation. In one instance only, and that was the case of Mr. Carlyle, who was a machinist elected to the executive council from the workshops, and with the exception of Mr. Veitch, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Walker, the president of the society has always been a tradesman.

2. *Mr. Veitch.*] You have stated that the workshops representatives are elected by the workshops men only?—Yes, that is so.

3. You have also stated that the workshops men are not all tradesmen?—Yes.

4. And that there are a large number of other men in the workshops who vote on the question?—Yes.

5. You have stated also that it is possible for a man who is not a tradesman to come along to the conference as a delegate?—Yes, that is so.

6. And, further, it is possible that no tradesman at all may be sent along?—Yes, that is quite so.

7. You have also said that there are at the present time three tradesmen on the executive?—Yes, that is so.

8. Can that not be clearly taken as an indication that there is prejudice on the part of the other men against the tradesmen?—That is quite so. As a matter of fact, to show you how the position is viewed by the tradesmen, in several appeal cases by tradesmen where they have gone before the Appeal Board for redress they have selected a labourer as their advocate on behalf of the men.

9. *Mr. McDougall.*] You say there are three tradesmen on the executive?—Yes.

10. Is it not always looked upon as a fact that whoever is president of the A.S.R.S. does not represent any particular section or party?—No; but his is the guiding influence, and, if I may so put it, he is the ballast of the ship.

11. But he does not represent any party?—He represents all sections, as a reasonable man ought to.

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JOHN ALEXANDER McDONALD examined. (No. 9.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—I am a coachpainter in the employ of the Railway Department.

2. Will you make your statement to the Committee?—I have been in the Railway service for twenty-six or twenty-seven years. I have been a member of the A.S.R.S. since 1894, having filled various offices, and at the present time I am branch secretary of the Wellington Branch. All business in connection with the branch and dealings with the executive council pass through my hands. I might state in connection with the membership question which came up just now that the membership of the Wellington Branch is at approximately 414. When I say "approximately" I mean this: that we have a balance-sheet made out at the end of every quarter, and in between the periods we cannot tell what the returns are, because there are a certain number of floating members. Members travel from one district to another, while others are transferred from other districts. There are also members leaving the service and others going to the front. Of that 414 members there are 220 tradesmen on the branch-book. I am positive that the Wellington Branch and the executive council have at all times done full justice to all the demands brought before them by all tradesmen or any other branch that it represents. I know of instances in the Wellington Branch where labourers and the lower-paid men have even supported and brought forward cases in favour of tradesmen for the betterment of their position, and I have never known on any occasion in any branch meeting I have attended that it has passed through the books that the lower-paid men have ever attempted to block the advance of the tradesmen. The Tradesmen's Association is at present systematically circulating in the Petone Workshops that the society is pledged not to move for any one particular section of the workers. That was part of the resolution carried the other day at a meeting of fitters. That, sir, is absolutely false. The requests of the tradesmen are generally supported by the lower-paid men. The tradesmen themselves do not take that interest in the society they should, and that is unfortunate. If the tradesmen had put more energy into the A.S.R.S., or the same amount of energy as they are putting into their attempt to secure recognition for their own association, I do not think for one moment there would have been the call for the formation of another association. These men,