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R.S.A. CONFERENCE.**"WHITE NEW ZEALAND" ADVOCATED.****IMMIGRATION POLICY.**

The question of immigration was considered at the sitting of the conference of the New Zealand Returned Soldiers' Association on June 2, when the Repatriation Committee submitted the following resolutions:—(a) That conference draw the attention of the Government to the increasing number of Hindus that are arriving in New Zealand, and request that the Immigration Restriction Act be amended to stop without further delay the immigration of Hindus and Chinese, and affirm the principle of a "white New Zealand," and that all associations throughout New Zealand be requested to convene public meetings in their districts prior to the meeting of Parliament to protest against the unrestricted influx of Hindus and Chinese. (b) That the immigration policy should be controlled by and be entirely secondary to the repatriation policy. (c) That the policy of permitting and encouraging the immigration of ex-Imperial soldiers' widows with young families, or any other persons who are likely to become a charge on the taxpayers of the Dominion or upon patriotic societies' funds, is strongly objected to. The report was agreed to.

The report of the Repatriation Committee dealing with the admission of incapacitated men into all State services was submitted to the conference. The committee found that many soldiers had been refused employment by the State on account of war injuries. It urged:—(a) That employment at a wage comparable with what they would have been receiving had they not enlisted should be found for them, and that men who resigned their positions in order to enlist should be reinstated in the same way as if leave had been granted to them. (b) That a separate superannuation fund, subsidised by the Government, should be established in order to remove any difficulty in connection with superannuation. (c) That no soldier so re-employed shall lose by reason of his war service any annual increment to which he would otherwise have been entitled. (d) That the Association demand preference for returned soldiers, sailors, and nurses when public appointments are made, and recommend that preference be given by private employers also.—The report was adopted.

Dissatisfaction with the administration of the High Commissioner's Office in regard to immigration matters was expressed by the conference. The following recommendation was submitted by the Repatriation Committee: "In order to encourage the most desirable type of immigrant to the Dominion, the benefits of the Repatriation Act should be extended to all Imperial soldiers who served in the Great War and who settle in New Zealand."

In moving the adoption of the recommendation, Mr C. W. Batten, convener of the committee, said that no fault was to be found insofar as nominated immigrants were concerned. The High Commissioner's Office in London was not taking sufficient care to see that suitable immigrants were sent out to New Zealand.—The recommendation was adopted.

The Repatriation Committee's report strongly emphasised the following resolution, and particularly in view of the grave concern which the position of land settlement is to-day causing returned soldiers, asked that the pledge given by Mr Massey to the last conference be endorsed by Parliament:—"That the Association ask the Government and Parliament for a pledge that land settlement and repatriation benefits generally shall not be rendered inoperative until such time as every soldier has had ample opportunity to train himself or to otherwise arrange his affairs in order to allow him to take full advantage of the said benefits." The committee also made recommendations as to the training of soldiers, including apprentices and subsidised workers, as well as fit men.—The report was adopted.

The election of officers resulted as follows:—President, Dr Boxer; treasurer, Mr C. W. Batten; vice-presidents, Messrs B. Blackwell (Canterbury), P. Watts (Auckland), D. S. Smith (Wellington), and Dr M. Harrison (Dunedin); executive, Messrs W. E. Leadley, T. E. Y. Seddon, M.P., and L. M. Ingles (Canterbury), T. Long, E. F. Andrews, and N. A. Ching (Auckland), T. E. Graham, A. Y. Glass, and C. Laing (Otago), J. D. Harper, J. S. Hanna, N. Vercoe, and J. A. Cowles (Wellington). The Auckland and Otago delegates intimated that their representatives on the executive would retire in the event of the district conferences deciding on fresh nominations.

MORE BIRDWOOD YARNS.

The following was told about at Wyt-schaeta in the '17-18 winter. Birdie was "visiting"—just going around, talking to all he met, taking no lunch, as usual, and making his A.D.C. pinch cheese and biscuits from battalion cookhouses.

Scene 1: Morning. Enter Digger. "Ha; good morning. What's your battalion?"—"The umpteenth, sir."—"Good battalion. Were you with me in Gallipoli?"—"Yes, sir."—"Good man."—"What sort of a time are you having now?" (Dubiously but politely): "Pretty fair, sir."—"Getting good news from home lately?"—"Oh, yes, sir."—"How's your father?"—"Very well, sir."—"How's your mother?"—"Mother's dead, sir."—"Ah, I am sorry to hear that. Well, hope you have a good time. Good-bye!"

Scene 2: Afternoon. Enter Digger. (Hush! Same bird!) "Ha! good afternoon. What's your battalion?"—"The umpteenth, sir."—"Good battalion? Were you with me in Gallipoli?"—"Yes, sir."—"Good man! What sort of time are you having now?"—"Dubiously but politely": "Pretty fair, sir."—"Getting good news from home lately?"—"Oh, yes, sir."—"How's your father?"—"Very well, sir."—"How's your mother?"—"Still dead, sir."

Birdie was in the firing line, and he met several Diggers starting out over "No Man's Land" armed to the teeth. "Where to boys?" inquired Birdie. "To capture a strong post, sir," replied one. "Good!" exclaimed Birdie. "Where is the N.C.O. in charge?"—"Here, sir," replied a burly lance-private. "Good!" exclaimed Birdie, eyeing him with approval. "Right, go on. Give it to the Huns! But be careful." "Splendid boys," murmured Birdie, as he watched them wriggle away. He met the party later, and inquired of their exploit. "A wonderful success, sir," replied one. "We captured the post." "Did you kill any Huns?" asked Birdie. "Oh, yes, a dozen or so but that was not what we were after. We can kill them any day, sir. We captured a cellar of champagne—you can't get that every day." Two months later he met a Digger whose face seemed familiar, and he stopped him. "How do you do, my boy? Your name is ——" "Sloggins, sir," replied the Digger, as Birdie paused. "Ah, of course! Glad to see you, Sloggins!" and his eyes rested approvingly on the M.M. ribbon the Digger was wearing. "Let me see, you got the M.M. for ——" "Capturing the most champagne in the battalion, sir," replied Sloggins, with a twinkle in his eyes.

It was early winter (1916) at Codford, Salisbury Plain, England. The battalion order was out for parade and address by General Birdwood in the afternoon, so everyone knew it meant a heavy morning's work on training ground as a preliminary. But as luck would have it, that morning the cook's bacon ran short, and about thirty men—nearly all in one hut—had no breakfast. The result of this was loud complaints to the O.C. when "fall in" sounded. To overcome the difficulty and restore harmony, the O.C. went along to arrange breakfast for the thirty who had come a "gutzer," and left the sergeant-major in charge with orders to send the sufferers along.

"Shon!" shouted the sergeant-major to the four platoons. "All men without breakfast this morning fall out in front!" To his consternation, at least 150 men fell out. Looking up and down the new line, he noticed a couple of men who he knew had had breakfast, and challenged them on the point, when another one immediately chipped in:

"We are here in sympathy, sir." "Shun!" immediately shouted the sergeant-major again. "Those only in sympathy fall back into your proper ranks." So he got his thirty men.

To a Digger who complained of sand in his tucker, General Birdwood said: "What have you come to fight for—your country or not?" The Digger replied, "I came to fight for it; not to eat it."

Our Artillery Division was out for a spell, said spell consisting of hard work—viz., performing open action manoeuvres. The quartermaster's position was in the rear of the Battery for the purpose of maintaining the line of communication between the guns and the ammunition waggon. Being very green at the game, and greatly flustered on account of the General's presence, he was making a horrible mess of things, thereby calling down the wrath of the Most High upon his inexperienced head. "Quartermaster! Quartermaster!" the Battery O.C. yelled distractedly "where in the devil's name are your lines of communication?" The unfortunate Q.M., not knowing the difference between lines of communication and a set of drag ropes, frantically scratched his head, and came back with "Curse me if I know, sir—unless the sergeant loaded 'em on one of the gun limbers!"

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STOPPAGE OF ADVANCES.**RETURNED MEN MEET MINISTERS.****AN UNSATISFACTORY REPLY.**

A deputation, consisting of the whole of the delegates to the Returned Soldiers' Association's Conference, waited on the Prime Minister and the Minister of Lands (the Hon. D. H. Guthrie) to-day to lay before them matters in connection with the stoppage of loans under the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act. They asked that instructions be given to land boards to receive applications in respect of commitments entered into before April 22.

The Minister of Lands said that the soldiers themselves could not be more enthusiastic than the members of the Cabinet in regard to providing for the soldiers on the land. Unfortunately, the demands which had come in were so great that the provision proved inadequate. At the first opportunity he had sounded a note of warning. From April, 1919, to March, 1920, the total amount expended was £12,610,000, or £110,000 more than had been authorised. In April of this year £385,000 had been spent. Mr Guthrie referred to the fact that even the little cessation which had taken place had had a steady effect on the inflation of land values. The Cabinet's decision was not to cut off the supply, but to steady it, or, if possible, to give up buying houses because that was not increasing the supply of houses. Clause 2 of the Act had been inserted to meet the needs of disabled and injured men who could not take land requiring strenuous working, and the Government thought the time had arrived when they should ease up on the one-man one-farm proposition, especially when it had 61 improved estates and Crown land totalling 700,000 acres available for settlement.

In reply to a question, Mr Guthrie said that applications would be received by the Land Board, and each would be considered on its merits. There was a sum of £382,000 in hand for stocking and improvements, and the Minister of Finance had given authority to go to £500,000 a month until Parliament met and decided the question.

The Prime Minister said that he had promised to find £500,000, and instead he had found £3,000,000. That was no breach of promise. What had been done was necessary from a financial point of view, and also for the good of the country, as the purchasing of land was helping to create a boom. The financial position was what they were up against, but, consistent with keeping the finances in a sound condition, everything possible would be done to place the soldiers on the land. He advised the men to go on part of the large area of Crown land which was being made available, so that they could get experience gradually instead of starting on land at £25 to £50 an acre. Mr Massey read the actual Cabinet minute on the subject as follows:—"Effort to be concentrated on the settlement of land already purchased and Crown land available. Operations under Section 2 of the 1917 Act to be tapered off. No more houses in the centres to be purchased unless for special reasons."

Mr Massey said that a contract entered into before Cabinet came to a decision would be regarded as a reason for special consideration. A resolution was subsequently carried by the conference expressing general dissatisfaction with the Prime Minister's reply, and appointing a sub-committee to draw up a resolution covering the various issues raised by the deputation.

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