

(5.) If the prayer of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union be granted, it would almost inevitably be followed in course of time by similar applications from other branches of the service, and would be the beginning of the disintegration of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants; and that would be detrimental to the interests of all Railway servants.

(6.) No section of Railway servants has ever had any reason to complain of their treatment by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants, or that their interests have been neglected by the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. Least of all have the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners any ground of complaint, inasmuch as their interests have always been protected, and they have always had more than their share of representation on the executive council of the society. At the present time the president, vice-president, and three councillors are engine-drivers, so that the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners have a representation of no fewer than five out of a total of nine members of the council.

(7.) From the point of view of the Railway Department as well as of the Railway servants as a whole it is submitted that it is much preferable that there should be one organization to represent the men than that there should be two or a number of different organizations. It is submitted that a division of the Railway servants into more than one society is only likely to lead to confusion, to difficulty, and probably to inharmonious relations between the different sections of the men and also between the servants and the Department. If the petition of the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union be granted, similar petitions by other sections of the men could not well be refused, and the greater the number of societies the greater the confusion, the difficulty, and the probability of inharmonious relations arising.

(8.) When the Engine-drivers, Firemen, and Cleaners' Union was formed, one of its objects was expressed to be to strengthen the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. Its method of assisting the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants appears to be to attempt to break up the society altogether.

(9.) It is not correct to say, as the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners imply in their petitions, that they are compelled now to approach the Government "through another organization." They approach the Government through the executive council of the organization of which they form a part, and the executive council has always comprised at least a fair proportion of engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners. It is submitted therefore that they do approach the Government directly and in the same way as any other section of the Railway service approach the Government.

(10.) Nearly every branch of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants throughout New Zealand has passed a resolution strongly protesting against any alteration of section 121 of "The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1908," and impliedly therefore protests against what the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners are asking for, the ground being that any such alteration would be detrimental to the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants and contrary to the best interests of the railwaymen as a whole. Resolutions to this effect have been passed by the following branches: Frankton Junction, Nelson, Otago, Wanganui, Greymouth, Upper Hutt, Hawera, Timaru, Picton, New Plymouth, Masterton, Palmerston, Waipukurau, Napier, Dannevirke, Helensville, Oamaru, Paeroa, Auckland, Wellington, and Thorndon. Furthermore a large number of enginemen, firemen, and cleaners have voluntarily signed a request that only the Amalgamated Society shall represent them.

(11.) The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants asks the Committee to come to the conclusion and report to the House not only that the locomotive-men have not made out a case in support of their petition, and that therefore the Committee have no recommendation to make, but that the Committee should affirmatively report in addition that the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants has made out a case to the contrary, and that it would be detrimental to the interests of Railway servants as a whole to grant the petition of the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners. The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants asks this, in the event of its making out such an affirmative case to the satisfaction of the Committee, in order to have the question disposed of once and for all this year, and to avoid the recurrence of the question from year to year.

(12.) The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants in no way disputes the importance both to life and property, referred to in the petitions, of the occupations of the engine-drivers, firemen, and cleaners, but it must be pointed out that the same observation applies to every branch of the Railway service, and it certainly does not follow that that is a reason for the special and separate recognition of any particular section of the service as a separate society.

Those are the objections we have against your granting the prayer of the petitioners, and we ask that your Committee will give them careful consideration. It is quite evident from the statements made by your petitioners that they desire to upset existing arrangements not only by agitating throughout the country, but by legislation. I know that personal reference has been made to myself. I do not propose to say anything about that. The statement is there, and I admit all responsibility in connection with the matter. The question the Committee has to deal with is whether this organization shall or shall not be officially recognised, and as to whether we have done our duty towards them.

1. *Mr. Arnold.*] I should just like to ask you what method is adopted when electing your executive?—First of all the delegates are elected for the conference. Each branch which has up to 300 members sends one delegate, and if over 300 members it can send two. Every member has a right to vote. The delegates attend the conference, and the conference from amongst themselves elect the executive council according to rules and regulations which provide that the various