

52. They wanted to see you in a body?—Yes. I said that they could appoint one of their number as spokesman.

53. Did you see one of them and speak to him?—Yes, I saw Worrall, the man who came here the other day.

54. What was his demeanour to you?—Very much what it was here.

55. What happened when you were leaving Ripa Island?—When I was going away they all crowded to the window and began to sing some chorus. I do not remember the words. They also shouted, "Go back to the dogs that sent you." I might say that the Officer Commanding the District was with me.

56. Was the "dog that sent you" the Minister of Defence or the G.O.C.?—I do not know.

57. Do you think they were given fair treatment down there by Lieutenant MacDonald and his men?—Yes; my impression is that if they had submitted to the regulations they would have been perfectly contented. They brought all this trouble upon themselves. They complain that they were kept for twenty-two hours out of the twenty-four shut up in rooms, but if they had been at work they would not have been shut up for anything like that time.

58. In regard to the rooms, in the old days were those rooms occupied by Volunteer officers and non-commissioned officers?—I was informed so.

59. The officer commanding the artillery slept in one of those rooms?—Yes.

60. Do you think a room that is good enough for the Coast-defence Commander is good enough for one of these men?—Possibly, yes.

61. *Hon. Mr. Callan.*] I have here a short extract of what these men complained of. They complained of solitary confinement, short rations, and so on. Do you say that these men were confined in cells for twenty-three hours at a stretch?—They say so. They were confined when they were not carrying out the routine laid down. As they declined to carry out their daily routine they had to be shut up. We could not have them loafing about doing nothing.

62. Could you say how long at a stretch they were confined in the cells?—No, I am afraid I could not. I think they had two half-hours' exercise.

63. I want to draw your attention to the fourth regulation, in regard to detention, where it states that they will not be separately confined in the daytime except in case of insubordination. You see these men complain of certain things done to them?—They were not under those regulations at the time.

64. Can you say that the first regulations justified the people in authority in keeping these men so long confined as they say they were confined?—I do not see what else was to be done with them.

65. We have to examine into that?—There was no solitary confinement. There was one odd room over, and that was a semi-detached room. It had a window and a partition which came nearly opposite to the window.

66. In regard to the short rations, I think you said they were put on short rations because they were not doing any work, and that the doctor thought it was necessary for their health that they should not get so much food as they did when working?—I think what exactly happened was something like this: that the officer commanding the barracks said to the doctor, "Surely the men who are idle and doing no work should not receive the same amount of food as the men who are doing their allotted tasks?" and the doctor in his report has said it was not necessary for them to have so much food—in fact, would improve in weight on short rations.

67. And then they went on a hunger strike?—Yes, I think they did.

68. Is it a fact that after the hunger strike the lads were put back on ordinary rations, although they were doing no work?—Yes, I think that was done because we had orders to do so. (NOTE.—The Hon. Minister of Defence mentioned that this was ordered as a result of the Cabinet meeting.)

69. Another complaint made by these men is that no legal assistance was permitted when they were brought before Magistrate Bailey, although asked for?—Well, that is not borne out by Lieutenant MacDonald's report of the 7th July. I think he says there that they did not ask for any.

70. Lieutenant MacDonald would be able to answer that?—Yes.

71. They say also that the cells were not certified to as being suitable by the medical officer, but you will put in a certificate of the medical officer to show that they were certified to?—I have just seen the medical officer's certificate on the file to the effect that he saw them in July and pronounced them as suitable.

72. Of course, Lieutenant MacDonald was down there before the men arrived?—Yes. They were suitable, at all events, for the R.N.Z.A.

73. You cannot answer those questions except from hearsay?—Yes, that is all.

74. *Hon. Mr. Rigg.*] I understood you to say you were satisfied that the regulations were legal, although not gazetted?—Yes.

75. You were referring to the first set of regulations?—Yes.

76. On what do you base that opinion?—On the Crown Law Officer's opinion. He says exactly in those terms that it is not necessary to gazette them.

77. Do you understand from that opinion that it is not necessary to gazette any regulations made in accordance with the provisions of the Defence Act?—They need not all be gazetted. I think there is a distinction.

78. Would you be kind enough to tell us what the distinction is?—Section 8 of the Defence Amendment Act says, "Every person who is in military custody as aforesaid shall be subject to such military training, discipline, and duties as the Commandant of the Defence Forces, with the approval of the Minister, from time to time prescribes." I take it that the prescribing is done under section 97 of the principal Act, which says, "All orders relating to any particular