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Aims of the R.S.A.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY SOUTHLAND M.'SP.

PAY AND ALLOWANCES.

(a)—That the benefits of the Financial Assistance Act which came into force in January, 1917, should be extended to apply over the whole war period, and that the administration of the Act, should be transferred to the Repatriation Department.

(b)—That the increased scale of officers' pay which came into force in April, 1918, should be made uniform over the whole war period.

MEDICAL TREATMENT.

Treatment for war disability will be an important matter to the disabled soldier for the next fifty years. As time passes new cases of illness directly attributable to war service will continually arise. Perhaps also the need will arise for the provision in directions not anticipated. The R.S.A. therefore desires that the Government should at once recognise and define its full responsibility and make the necessary provisions. The following requests of the R.S.A. are among the most urgent, those affecting medical administration:—

(a)—That legislation be introduced at the earliest possible opportunity to make all cases (soldier or civilian) of venereal disease compulsorily notifiable.

(b)—That every soldier suffering from tuberculosis should receive not less than six months' treatment in a sanatorium, and that he should not be discharged even at his own request, until his health has reached a satisfactory condition.

PENSIONS.

(a)—The schedule of pensions, for specific injuries of the War Pensions Act, 1917, and the 2nd schedule thereto be regraded by the addition of plus percentage up to 150 per cent. (that is £3 per week), and the total percentage shall be minimum pension for total permanent disablement, supplementary pensions and attendants' pensions to be over and above such rate, and the dependants' pensions to be at present rate.

(b)—That in the case of a death of an ex-soldier through war disablement, his widow or dependants be eligible in every case for a pension.

CIVIL RE-ESTABLISHMENT.

The following are the main features of the claims of the R.S.A. under this head:—(the guiding principles being that of "pre-war standard of living" as defined in the above.)

(a)—That a definite assurance be given by Parliament that the benefit of the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act and the Repatriation Act will be available so long as they are required by the soldier, and that at least 12 months' notice be given of any intention to terminate them.

(b)—Soldiers' Homes: That the responsibility for buying homes for soldiers be transferred from the Lands Department to the Repatriation Department.

(c)—Immigration: That the satisfactory adjustment of the problem of repatriation shall be a determining factor in deciding an immigration policy, and that the general policy of a White New Zealand be adopted.

LAND.

1.—The breaking up of large estates which are not being utilised to their full productive capacity.

2.—The settlement of bush lands under satisfactory conditions of living and communication.

3.—The prevention of aggregation of land.

The R.S.A. has therefore defined the following general policy:

(a)—That all large estates be at once scheduled and valued with a view to giving owners fair notice of the intention of the Government to resume them for purposes of settlement.

(b)—That beginning with the largest estates of say value of £100,000 and over, and proceeding in order of magnitude until the demand is satisfied, such properties should be taken compulsorily by the Government and subdivided for the purposes of returned soldier settlement, owners having the right to retain land of reasonable value.

(c)—That estates be acquired at a valuation determined on a productivity basis and without recourse to arbitration by a Board constituted as follows:—

One representative of the Government.
Two representatives of the N.Z. R.S.A.
Three representatives of the farming community.

The following resolutions among a large number of desired reforms are deemed of immediate urgency.

(a)—That the loan to settlers on rural lands for building a home (now £250) be increased as under:—

Single man, £250; Man and wife, £400; for each child, £50 extra.

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT THE RECENT SPECIAL DOMINION CONFERENCE.

1.—That this Conference urge upon the Government the necessity for expediting the work in connection with Government Loans under the Discharged Soldiers' Settlement Act.

2.—That no Stamp Duties be charged to soldiers on the first purchase of property or business, these provisions to be made retrospective.

3.—That where soldier farmers who have been assisted in procuring their farms, and who apply for further assistance for the purchasing of stock, implements, etc., the advance be not made a charge on the land as a second mortgage, but be taken over the stock only.

4.—That the lack of capital should not be a bar to soldiers of sufficient experience desirous of taking up land, and that the Minister of Lands be requested to give instructions to Lands Boards, that lack of capital should not prevent any such man taking up land, and that in such cases the provision providing for payment of the half year's rent shall not apply.

5.—That where the lease of grazing leases or pastoral runs expire no renewals be granted provided returned soldiers are prepared to take them up.

6.—That in the cases of outlying blocks, one or more telephones be installed as best for convenience of settlers. The cost of the instalments of such telephones should be put down to public expense, and the cost of same loaded on the settlement.

7.—That in all cases where a settler is placed on land after its productive period of the year, the half year's rent be remitted.

8.—That six weeks' option on the purchase of land and houses be the maximum period of option by the Lands Department.

PENSIONS.

1.—That War Pensions Appeal Board consisting of three members, one to be an S.M., who shall be chairman, and two registered medical practitioners, one to be nominated by the N.Z. R.S.A. Such members to hold office for the term of three years, be constituted. Such Appeal Board to hear and determine any appeals from the decision of the present Pension Board, which shall in every case carry into effect the decision of the Appeal Board.

2.—That pensions granted to children of deceased soldiers should in all cases be paid until such children attain the age of eighteen years.

3.—That the allowance of 5s per diem as paid by the Defence Department to limless men whilst attending the limless repair factory is inadequate, and that this allowance at least be double.

4.—That the wife and children of partially disabled men shall receive the same percentage of pension as the husband.

MISCELLANEOUS.

1.—That April 25 (Anzac Day), be a statutory holiday as a day of commemoration.

2.—Stringent anti-profiteering legislation be brought forward and passed by Parliament.

3.—That the period soldiers are in hospital in New Zealand should be included for gratuity purposes in their period of active service.

4.—That the Royal Commission to inquire into the administration and disposal of the war funds of the Dominion which the Association has previously pressed for, be set up without delay.

1914-1915 STAR.

Defence headquarters has notified N.Z. R.S.A. headquarters that many men entitled to the 1914-15 star have not replied as to whether they want this medal posted or presented at a public parade. A large number of these medals are lying at Defence headquarters on this account, therefore men entitled to them are asked to fill in the certificate and send it to Defence headquarters.

It may not be true that all men are liars, but—well look at the number of Birdwood stories.

R. S. A.

OTAGO DISTRICT.

MINUTES OF MEETING OF DISTRICT COUNCIL.

A meeting of the Otago District Council was held in the rooms of the Dunedin Association, Dowling street, Dunedin, on 26th May, 1920.

Present.—Dr. T. Harrison (chairman), Messrs J. McCrae and R. P. Jones (Dunedin), L. S. Graham and A. Glass (Invercargill), A. C. Laing (Balclutha), W. J. Gawne (Oamaru), T. Miller (Mosgiel), and G. M. Smith, hon. secretary (Dunedin).

Apology.—An apology for absence was received from Mr C. R. McLean.

Minutes.—The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed on the motion of Mr Miller, seconded by Mr Laing.

Clutha R.S.A.—Mr A. C. Laing, in moving the following motion, notice of which had been given at the previous meeting, desired to withdraw the first part dealing with the name. It was moved by Mr Laing, seconded by Mr Miller, and carried: "That the Clutha Association be allowed to embrace the area as suggested, with the consent of the sub-associations concerned."

Finance.—The following report of the sub-committee was adopted, on the motion of Mr Jones, seconded by Mr Gawne:—"That the organisation system as at present be abolished." "That the capitation be on the basis of 2s per member, 6d to go to general headquarters funds, and 1s 6d to Otago District Funds." "That a secretary be appointed for the District Association at a retaining fee not exceeding £250 per annum, such secretary to supply his own typiste and office." It was moved by Mr Miller, seconded by Mr Graham, and carried:—"That the whole matter be held in abeyance until the special meeting to be held immediately after the annual conference."

Honorary Members' Badge.—The matter of registration of the Honorary Members' Badge was held over in the meantime, the secretary to enquire the cost.

New Constitution.—The matter of the new constitution was held over until the special meeting after the Dominion conference.

Clifton Estate.—Report of the Organiser and letter from the Clutha Association were received. It was moved by Mr Graham, seconded by Mr Jones and carried:—"That the letter be endorsed, and forwarded to the Minister of Lands. It was also resolved that a copy be forwarded to the local Lands Board."

Pensions Examiner.—A reply from the Minister of Defence was received. It was moved by Mr Graham, seconded by Mr Gawne, and carried:—"That the Minister of Defence be again written to pointing out that his letter is not satisfactory, and requesting that a returned medical officer be appointed forthwith."

Headquarters' Levy.—A reply from headquarters was received.

Meetings.—It was moved by Mr Graham, seconded by Mr Laing and carried:—"That all future meetings of the Council be held of an evening."

Balance-Sheet.—The balance-sheet for year ended May 26th, was on the motion of Mr McCrae, seconded by Mr Laing, adopted, subject to audit. It was resolved that the president and secretary approach headquarters and inquire the position re the district finance. It was moved by Mr Glass, seconded by Mr Laing and carried:—"That secretaries of local associations be requested to forward details of remittances forwarded to headquarters since April, 1920."

Conference.—It was moved by Mr Graham, seconded by Mr Gawne, and carried:—"That the Organiser be instructed to proceed to the Dominion Conference." It was moved by Mr McCrae, seconded by Mr Gawne, and carried:—"That the Organiser be allowed 25s per day expenses whilst attending the Dominion Conference in Wellington."

Land.—It was moved by Mr Gawne, seconded by Mr Miller:—"That this Council protest to the Minister of Lands against the non-representation of the North Otago District on the Otago Lands Purchase Board." It was moved by Mr McCrae, seconded by Miller:—"That the Minister be asked to appoint a Lands Purchase Board for the North Otago District." The motion was then withdrawn in favour of the amendment, and the amendment was carried. Mr Gawne, then moved his withdrawn motion as an amendment. The amendment was lost.

Presentation.—The secretary was directed to circulate Associations requesting that they appoint delegates on the same basis as for conference, and that the special meeting be called by the first meeting of this Council.

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