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CORRESPONDENCE.

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WAR GRATUITIES

The Editor

Sir,—With regard to Sir James Allen's reply to Mr J. D. Sieve-wright respecting the above matter, and the comparative rates paid by the British and Canadian Governments to officers, warrant officers, non-commissioned officers and men, does it not seem unjust, taking the case of a British officer, that if he served one year, he gets 124 days' pay as gratuity. If he served one year and a month, or even a day, he gets an extra 62 days' pay, as compared with the private who gets £5 for his first year, and if he served a year and a month or day, £5 10s? The officer gets £116 5s, the private £5 10s! The latter's gratuity is less than one-sixth of his daily pay—the officer gets full pay! In the Canadian forces a better system obtains. The gratuity includes dependants too, 'but I suggest that in a democratic country like New Zealand, a flat rate payable to all ranks alike would be the most equitable arrangement, and any schedule on British lines would be deeply resented.

Officers got extra pay and allowances for being officers, whether they were in the front line or not,

but now that peace is signed, why should there be any distinction at all between officers and men?

A man's life was as valuable to himself and dear ones as an officer's. Most of us were volunteers, giving up our professions, businesses, trades and occupations to do our bit. Officers received extra pay and allowances for their additional responsibilities, but in our democratic army, they made no greater sacrifices than many a private. In many cases they never had nor never will have, such "cusby" jobs again. Everyone did his bit, and we established a reputation of which we are justly proud, but it was earned by officers and men alike. Comparisons are odious, so it is to be hoped that, whatever the gratuity may be, a flat rate of so much per day will be paid to officers and men alike, thus avoiding invidious distinctions—I am, etc.,

FOUR YEARS

AWAKINO ROAD

THE FARMERS' UNION

ANOTHER VIEW

The Editor

Sir,—In your issue of August 9th appears the report of a meeting of the Waitomo County Council on August 7th, when a letter from the Pio Pio branch of the Farmers' Union was discussed, and as quite a

wrong impression was conveyed to the councillors present by the chairman, my branch with a view to putting themselves right with the ratepayers and public of this district, have decided to publish a complete record of the minutes of the meeting which led up to this letter being sent; also a copy of the letter itself

This letter was meant simply as an invitation to the Chairman of the council (who is also the member for the riding) to attend a meeting of ratepayers. No complaint against either the chairman or the council as imputed, was made, and the letter was written in a purely friendly spirit—I am, etc.,

R. LIVINGSTON,
Chairman Pio Pio Branch

(Enclosure)

The Chairman, Waitomo County Council,—Dear Sir: At a meeting of the Farmers' Union held at Pio Pio on Friday, 25th, it was resolved to call a meeting of the ratepayers interested in the work now being carried out by the council on the main road. I have been advised to get in touch with you and to find out before calling this meeting what day it would be convenient for you to be present and to call the meeting accordingly. Friday, August 1st, was considered the best day here, but as you have been away, it is doubtful now, even if this day were suitable to you, whether there

would be sufficient time to advertise the meeting

I was also advised to ask you to bring a copy of the specifications of the contract now being carried out by Mr Tait on this road

I shall be glad to hear from you as soon as you can possibly fix a date, when you can come to Pio Pio, so that a meeting may be advertised at once.—Yours faithfully,

R. LIVINGSTON,

Chairman.

Pio Pio, July 28th, 1919

(Copy of Minutes of Meeting)

An ordinary general meeting was held in the Council Chambers on

July 25th, Mr Livingston in the chair. Present—Messrs Livingston, Burrow, J. Johnston, Dr McLeod, C. K. Wilson, M. A. McKenize, Morsensen, Trust, McNae, Hooper and Bevege

Minutes of previous meeting read and confirmed

Mr Livingston opened the question of the main road. He said that a contract had been let early in the winter, a section of the road had been torn up, traffic to a great extent was being held up, and there were rumours of an indignation meeting being held. Personally, he did not think that any good could be gained by holding an indignation meeting. He rather favoured the branch appointing a deputation to wait upon the council to go into the matter

Mr Johnston moved that Messrs Wilson and McNae be appointed a deputation to wait upon the council

Mr Wilson thought that this was not a matter that the union should take up. The union, he said, only represented a small section of the people who were interested in the work now being carried out upon this road, and that it was entirely a matter for the ratepayers to deal with

No one seconded Mr Johnston's motion. It therefore lapsed

Mr McNae thought that the union should meet the council in a friendly manner. He did not blame the

county chairman for what had happened. If the union were to call a meeting of ratepayers and ask the county chairman, who was also the member for the riding, to be present and bring a copy of the specifications in connection with this work, so as to be in a position to throw light on anything that was in doubt, a lot of good could be done. Mr McNae then moved that the Pio Pio branch of the Farmers' Union convene a meeting of the ratepayers interested in the main road on a suitable date; that the county chairman, the member for the Paemako riding, be invited to attend to give any information required, and also that Mr R. Boddy, chairman of the Awakino County Council, and Mr Tolme, member of the Aria riding of the Waitomo County be asked to be present

Seconded by Mr J. Johnston and carried

Owing to the secretary being absent through illness, it was left in the hands of the chairman to write to Mr Wall to try and arrange a meeting

Mr McNae moved and Mr Burrows seconded, that the county chairman be asked to bring specifications and all papers in connection with the loan

Mr P. Tarrant was elected a member

Mr Burrows moved and Mr McNae seconded, that the Pio Pio branch of the Farmers' Union endorse the resolution carried by the Auckland Executive urging the Government to classify the goods carried, essential from non-essential—Carried

Mr Iredale's remit was held over for further information

Mr Bevege moved and Dr McLeod

seconded, that this meeting urgently requests the Railway Committee to communicate with the Minister of Public Works and ask that the Pio Pin-Aria railway district be gazetted; and that this resolution be sent to Mr Jackson—Carried

It was also resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Aria branch of the Farmers' Union and the Auckland Railway League

REPLY TO MR POWER

The Editor

Sir,—In Mr Power's letter which appeared in your last issue, he makes it read as if the School Committee purposely went out of its way to cast a slight on Mr Graham, Deputy-Mayor, and the donors of the pictures to the High School. May I state that as far as casting a slight upon these people was concerned, nothing was so far from the mind of the committee; and at the same time I feel that nothing was further from the minds of the borough representatives than to cast a slight upon the School Committee by ignoring their place in the school arrangements. Now, according to the Education Act, 1914, paragraph 9 (1) which reads: "Subject to the general supervision, and control of the board as herein provided, the committee shall have the management of the school or schools within the school district." This, to me, seems plain that as a committee, we are responsible—(a) to the board, and (b) to the parents and householders for the welfare of the school, not only to provide the necessary teachers' requisites, and the care of the grounds, but if we

have that right, we must also have the right to know what is to be hung in the school as adornments. Now, personally, the first knowledge I had of the presentation was through the Chronicle; and I here state that the committee is grateful to the donors of the pictures and desires to thank them; but the complaint lies in the fact that the committee was absolutely ignored in the matter. The last clause in Mr Power's letter will need to be explained through another medium than the columns of the press; and if Mr Power has complaint against the committee, he has the board to deal with the offenders. We affirm that the School Committee as the governing body was the proper authority to be recognised and not the Borough Council—I am, etc.,

F. M. BEATTIE,
Chairman School Committee