

I also produce a statement showing the number of ewes and lambs shipped in five steamers, and I will just run over the particulars to give the Committee an idea. The statement is as follows:— No. 1 boat: 21,047 carcasses mutton (wethers), 4,905 carcasses mutton (ewes), 41,385 carcasses lamb, 2,311 quarters beef: f.o.b. value, excluding storage, being £76,196. No. 2 boat: 13,750 carcasses mutton (wethers), 10,993 carcasses mutton (ewes), 19,915 carcasses lamb, 4,251 quarters beef, 1,000 carcasses pork: f.o.b. value, excluding storage, being £64,394. No. 3 boat: 20,796 carcasses mutton (wethers), 4,678 carcasses mutton (ewes), 43,033 carcasses lamb, 3,945 quarters beef, 6 packages beef: f.o.b. value, excluding storage, being £82,063. No. 4 boat: 33,462 carcasses mutton (wethers), 24,404 carcasses mutton (ewes), 28,995 carcasses lamb, 13,902 quarters beef, 532 packages beef, 998 carcasses pork: f.o.b. value, excluding storage, being £149,396. No. 5 boat: 25,383 carcasses mutton (wethers), 17,111 carcasses mutton (ewes), 19,870 carcasses lamb, 16,711 quarters beef, 713 packages beef: f.o.b. value, excluding storage, being £123,963. [Vide Appendix B.]

At the time these boats left there were 628,538 carcasses of wether mutton and 557,640 quarters of beef in store awaiting shipment in New Zealand, and also, as far as can be ascertained, not one of the works which made these shipments of ewes and lambs was so full that they required to make their shipments in order to prevent them stopping in accordance with the directions of the Imperial authorities. All these are regular boats trading to New Zealand, and are not any of the boats the New Zealand Shipowners Committee state were temporary boats and had to be loaded at one port. Those were five regular boats that went Home carrying more prohibited meat from New Zealand than Army and Navy meat. You are only entitled to ship ewes and lambs if your works were so full that you could not carry on, and the records show that none of those works which shipped were so situated. Therefore I say it was actually prohibited meat, and we were prohibited at the time from sending.

3. *Mr. Pearce.*] Do you suggest that those unauthorized shipments are going to the Meat Trust?—Yes, I do suggest that.

4. Have you any proof of that?—No, the only proof I have is that I could take one district where we find that 29,000 lambs went out, and 19,000 went out from one of the works supposed to be owned by the Meat Trust.

5. What works were those?—The Hawke's Bay works—Borthwick and Co.'s works. I cannot state it as definite, but so far as rumour has it they were bought by Armour and Co.

6. *Mr. Witty.*] That is, actually slaughtered for Armour and Co. at Borthwick and Co.'s works?—Yes. I went to Nelson Bros., and they told me they had shipped no lambs up to that period, nor had the Hawke's Bay Farmers, another works in that district. That 29,000 clearly came from the Hawke's Bay works. We know that the North British works, another works in Hawke's Bay, and were supposed to have shipped 10,000, are practically ship-owned, and you cannot tell where the shipowner starts and where the meatowner starts—they are so mixed up.

7. Whom do you blame for that?—I blame the influence of the supreme authorities for allowing the interested parties to control it.

8. The influence of the trust on whom?—On the Shipowners Committee.

9. When was that?—The five shipments were in April of this year. One lot went on the 23rd April, another on the 5th April, another lot on the 7th, a further lot on the 7th, and another lot on the 21st. The names of the ships were the "Corinthic," "Waiwera," "Arawa," "Devon," and "Leitrim." [Vide Appendix B.]

10. *Mr. H. H. Field.*] And they went from the various ports of New Zealand?—So far as we know. I cannot give that data. That is a question I asked the Minister of Agriculture. I said to him, "I suggest to you this: you find out what freezing-works shipped this quantity of meat, who was the owner of the meat when shipped, and who was nominated at the other end." I said, "In my opinion if you trace that out you will find that the bulk of that meat will be finding its way to the trust."

11. *Mr. Pearce.*] The Agricultural Department, or Dr. Reakes, ought to be able to give you that information?—I have not got it.

12. *Mr. Talbot.*] All the lamb in those shipments would be nominated?—Yes, and all the ewes. I have here a printed statement from the Agricultural Department—H.-38, 1917—which shows Wellington as exporting 402,350 lambs in 1916-17, while we were prohibited from shipping one. Gisborne is shown as shipping 10,673, but I have reason for saying—although I have not checked it—that that includes some of our previous year's shipment, shipped in November of the previous year. Auckland is shown as 13,617; Tokomaru Bay, nil; Whangarei, nil; Napier, 11,697; Lyttelton, 289,000.

13. *Mr. Pearce.*] You say there were 400,000 lambs shipped from Wellington. There are only two freezing companies here, and the evidence we have is that they will not deal with the Meat Trust. How can you say this meat is nominated to the Meat Trust?—You must remember that Longburn is in Wellington, also Taihape, and other works down the line.

14. *Mr. Talbot.*] Wellington is the last port of call, and that would account for it?—They do say that is so, but that would not account for that huge quantity. You must bear in mind that in that table it shows mutton, and included in that mutton is a large amount of ewes, which are prohibited. It would be very interesting if the Committee could get the data in reference to those ewes.

15. *Mr. Witty.*] Can you tell us whether wethers have been kept back and lambs and ewes sent forward?—Yes, I can say that definitely, because the official figures show what I have stated, that at that time, of the five shipments referred to they were holding back 628,538 carcasses of wether mutton and 557,640 quarters of beef.

16. Is that for the whole of New Zealand?—Yes; and if you ask for the figures showing what meat was in the freezing-stores at the time and what was the capacity of those stores, you