

7. That vigorous steps be taken to develop the fishing industry throughout the Dominion, with a view to obtaining a cheap and plentiful supply of fish for the community.

8. That, the question of overseas and local shipping being of paramount importance, the Government should take into consideration the advisability of establishing a State-controlled co-operative line of steamers for the carriage of the imports and exports of the Dominion, and for meeting the requirements of the inter-coastal and islands trade.

9. That, in order to check more effectively any cases of unfair increase of rents over pre-war rates, the provisions of Part I of the War Legislation Amendment Act, 1916, be amended, and that in cases where rents have been increased in contravention of the terms of the Act a duty shall be cast upon the Labour Department to investigate, and where necessary bring such cases before the Court for adjustment. Further, the Committee is of opinion that the curtailment of the suburban train services has been a factor in increasing the rents in the cities, and urges the reinstatement of such services as will enable suburban residents to attend to their occupations and reach their homes without serious difficulty.

The Committee is of opinion that the special powers to be vested in the Food Controller should include, *inter alia*, the following:—

- (a.) To effectually prevent increase in prices in any case where such proposed increase is not justified to his satisfaction, and, where necessary, to fix from time to time maximum wholesale and retail prices of goods throughout New Zealand.
- (b.) To make arrangements for the elimination as far as possible of the present unnecessary and wasteful cost of distribution.
- (c.) To eliminate middlemen's profits, wherever possible, by bringing the consumer more nearly into contact with the producer.
- (d.) To take the necessary steps to ensure the efficient carrying-out of the "through booking" scheme for perishable foodstuffs and of the "fruit by post" scheme.
- (e.) To fix and otherwise deal with rents of dwellinghouses under powers similar to those under which he may deal with prices of goods.

24th October, 1917:

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SPECIAL REPORT.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Cost of Living Committee desires to place upon record its thanks for and appreciation of the services rendered to the Committee during its deliberations by the clerk, Mr. M. A. Rowlands, and the official reporter, Mr. H. E. Le Grove; and that this resolution be recorded in the minutes and reported to the House.

24th October, 1917.

CHAS. E. STATHAM, Chairman.

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SPECIAL REPORT.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Cost of Living Committee desires to place upon record its hearty appreciation of the efficient, painstaking, and impartial manner in which the Chairman, Mr. Statham, has presided over the deliberations of the Committee; and that this resolution be recorded in the minutes and reported to the House.

24th October, 1917.

T. K. SIDNEY,  
Member of the Committee.

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