

8. And are you satisfied that if legislation were passed on the lines suggested in your resolution it would meet the position as far as the farmers of New Zealand are concerned?—The whole of us who have consulted on this matter are absolutely satisfied that an elected Board, which we could turn out of office, will have the complete and absolute confidence of the whole of the industry, and that no factory would hesitate to give them all the powers required.

9. And you feel that the disadvantages that do exist, as far as marketing is concerned, are due to the unsatisfactory conditions *re* shipping?—Due mostly to the failure of the dairy associations.

10. In other words, a lot of the dairy-farmers' troubles would disappear if you had better facilities for shipment?—And a better body to represent us to obtain it.

11. You feel that in the past the National Dairy Association has not done much good in bringing about satisfactory shipment?—That is my conviction.

12. In reference to the position in Taranaki, you are absolutely convinced that the growth of feeling in Taranaki is opposed to the present Bill?—I have been through the whole campaign—the co-operative wholesale societies—last year and this, and I assert positively, without any reservation, that the support of the Bill there is daily decreasing, and has very largely decreased. The more that is known of the measure the more it is detested.

13. Regarding the meeting held at Stratford, where the resolution was passed, the reason for holding that meeting was mainly so that all the factories should call meetings of their shareholders and give the opinions of the farmers themselves, and not those of the directors of the factories?—No. What happened was that it was decided that a poll should be taken, and one voting-paper only was sent to each factory, and some of the factories did not get their voting-papers.

14. Was it not the opinion of the meeting that the dairy factories should have the meeting and discuss the question of the Bill so that the individual farmers should have an opportunity of expressing their opinions?—That was the idea.

15. Now, is it not a fact that a large number of the factories in Taranaki have not called meetings for that purpose—Kaupokonui and Eltham, for instance?—That is so.

16. *Hon. Mr. Ngata.*] Supposing the constitution of the Board, as proposed in the Bill, were altered to fit in with your ideas, what difference would that make in the attitude of your party towards the measure?—None. We say that this Bill has been promoted by people who do not satisfy the dairy-producers, that under the programme they are the ones that will carry it out. Mr. Hawken, the Chairman of the Committee last year, put the position exactly when he asked, "Are you not satisfied with these men who have been in the forefront of the industry all these years?" Our answer is that we are not satisfied; neither will we have a measure under which there is any likelihood of these men getting on the Board.

17. But supposing you had a Board selected in the way you propose?—To do so there must be an entirely new measure. This is a Dairy Control Bill.

18. I am not speaking of the powers of the Board, but of the constitution of it—how is it to be elected: supposing the constitution of the Board were exactly as you propose, and elected as you propose, would your objection to a Board disappear?—My objection to the Bill would not be altered.

19. But to the Board I mean?—Any Board elected in that way, and with a definite term of office, so that it could be turned out, would be far superior to the Board proposed in the Bill; but we cannot subscribe to anything in the Bill. We will not agree to the passage of the Bill if we can possibly prevent its passage. There is too much bound up in the measure that we absolutely abhor. There will be endless trouble. The present agitation has gone on since 1907.

20. You do not seem to be opposed to some measure of control?—Yes.

21. Entirely to control?—We want a Producers Board, separately elected by us, to carry out what we desire.

22. What powers do you propose to give to your Board?—We are not following in the footsteps of the Council by rushing in rashly to put forward details. We have put forward a broad principle, and based upon that broad principle we hope that legislation will be immediately put forward. We hope we will be consulted in regard to the details. That is all I have to say on that point. We have not gone into the matter sufficiently to suggest the actual details of a Bill, but the Board must be a Producers Board. It must be elected by the actual producers themselves, terminable in three years, and our desire is that it shall be a body to represent us in all matters pertaining to shipping. The actual details as to how it shall be carried out we have not suggested.

23. Shipping only?—Shipping and investigation—business intelligence in marketing.

24. You have not gone into the details of how the Board is to be maintained?—Very large meetings have taken place to deal with the matter. They have to a certain extent discussed it; but it has been discussed by a limited number as compared with the whole of the producers. They have discussed the various phases, and that phase has been dealt with—but by only forty men.

25. You have no ideas yourself?—My idea is that it shall be maintained on the lines of the National Dairy Association, with a levy on each factory by the Producers Board—if my idea was adopted—according to tonnage.

Eventually it would be a levy on the produce?—A levy paid by each of the factories to our Board, on a tonnage basis.

27. In arranging shipping, is it proposed that your Board shall have power to commit the industry in regard to shipping contracts?—We conceive that to be effective they will have to obtain considerable power, if not almost complete power. As to exactly how that will be obtained I cannot say. My own definite opinion is that if the Board is constituted there is nothing to prevent the whole of the industry having complete confidence in it. Every factory would make the Board its authorized shipping agent.