

26. Well, it has justified itself as against the dairy freights—that is, they got an advantage?—The Meat Board has not—the meat people have. The meat people in Australia, without a Board, have got the advantage over the dairy people, both in Australia and New Zealand also without a Board. The reason is not the Board, but other factors.

27. Are you not aware that the Australians signed a contract, and that afterwards the Meat Board of New Zealand induced the companies to further reduce the freights, and that then the companies allowed the Australians to come down to the lower freights?—Following contract conditions, and in both cases due to competitive reasons in the Argentine and elsewhere. In the Argentine they are on a better wicket than we are, either in Australia or New Zealand.

28. As to antagonizing customers, you will agree that the same set of conditions would prevail as with meat, in regard to the retailer and the customer at Home?—Under the Bill?

29. Yes?—I do not think that there is any reason to suppose that that is so. The meat organization is different from the dairy-produce organization: at any rate I have understood so; but I confess I am not fully conversant with the meat organization.

30. Well, the product is sold in just the same way, and used in the same way?—Well, I do not think so; but I am not prepared to express a strong view on the question because I have not evidence in support of my view.

31. But you will agree, seeing the prices are so good for meat, that they have not antagonized their customers under the meat control?—It there are ten people wanting to buy what is sufficient for nine people, the price is certain to go up no matter what the antagonism may be. That is what has happened in the meat business. There has been a shortage of lamb and of mutton, and the prices have risen. Unfortunately we are not likely to be confronted with that position in the butter business. I believe the imports into Great Britain for 1923 will exceed those of pre-war days, and if that belief is borne out by fact it will mean that we shall have the reversed position—enough for eleven, and only ten buyers. Therefore the price comes down. It is under those conditions that good will assert itself, and we should cultivate good will and not destroy it.

32. Have you heard any complaint about the people at Home? Have you reason to suppose that there is any antagonism between them and the Meat Board?—No, I have not. That is not applicable as an argument, for the reason that the compulsory provisions of the Meat Control Act have not been invoked.

33. Have you any reason to suppose that Tooley Street would be antagonistic to the Board?—I have reason to know, because Tooley Street have expressed it, that they would be antagonistic to the proposals as outlined by what I have designated the extreme faction.

34. That is, if the extreme measures were taken?—If the extreme measures were taken, and they sought to market independently of Tooley Street, Tooley Street would be driven to other channels of business, and those channels of business would become rivals of ours, instead of being our channels.

35. Whom are you representing now?—I am representing the Taikorea Co-operative Dairy Company, of which I am a director.

36. Are you connected with any other concern?—I am connected with the Cheltenham Co-operative Dairy Company; I am connected with the Glaxo-manufacturing Company; I am connected with Joseph Nathan and Co.; and I am carrying on a farming enterprise of my own, and am therefore very much interested as a producer, so much so that if prices should go down very much, if the business should become disorganized, I should be unable to carry on my farm, and should be financially embarrassed, if not, indeed, *non est* financially.

37. But you would still have something to go on with?—If I were forced into bankruptcy as a result of the operations on this farm I should have to go on just the same as other people who are confronted with the same unfortunate situation. There would be a good many of us, I am afraid.

38. *Mr. Masters.*] Early in your evidence you stated that there was a great deal of delay in the shipment of produce, due to the fact that the boats were calling at different ports round New Zealand, instead of loading at the centres. Do you favour the loading of produce in all the centres—say, the four centres?—I think it is desirable to reduce the number of loading-centres. I think it is unnecessary to send boats to so many. It should not be necessary to load butter at Auckland and the Bluff and at some six or eight places in between. Certain ports might be allotted to certain boats.

39. Do you think it is possible to get regular shipments—or, rather, prompt shipments—by calling at these small ports as is being done now?—I think it is inevitable that the despatch of the boat will be delayed by calling at so many of the small ports.

40. *Mr. Hawken* asked you if you had not failed in the judgment of the dairy-farmer in the election of the Board that will have to control the industry under this Bill. Is it not a fact now that some of the members of the Board in their support of this Bill have not the confidence of their shareholders and their directors?—It is certain that several members of the present Control Council have taken actions which have been repudiated by their directors and shareholders.

41. So that some better scheme of election of the Board would be necessary before you could get the real mind of the farmer himself?—Surely.

42. Now, with regard to the questions put by *Mr. Hawken* in relation to the Meat Board, he asked you if it were not a fact that the Australian Government obtained a reduction in their freights after the arrangement had been made with the Meat Control Board in New Zealand. Do you know that a statement was made in Parliament on the 19th October setting out the reductions in the meat freights from New Zealand; that the same day I made inquiries from the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company in Wellington, and that the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company in Wellington were able to tell me that the reductions had been made in Australia, which necessarily must have been made before they were announced in New Zealand?—I should not be surprised at that at all: it is what I should expect.