

13. But we are not considering the forest policy, but whether the railway would be warranted from the point of view of paying its way?—I cannot see why you should differentiate in these two points of view. One is necessary to complete the investment of the Government, but it is ultimately going to prove very profitable for the railway.

14. Your point is that while it may not pay as a railway proposition, it might make up for it as a forestry proposition. We will get that evidence from the transport expert, but I wanted to get your view as to whether you know anything about it. It is one thing to tell the Committee about these thinnings, and quite another to say that if these thinnings were carried they would be carried at a loss?—Most of the evidence was given to the Commission, and those figures can be depended upon. I am not sure upon that point. Speaking from memory, I think it was definitely proved that the railway would at least pay expenses.

15. Now, you reckon there are about 300,000 acres of land tributary to the proposed line—and “tributary,” according to you, is about twenty-five miles on either side of the line. Do you know that it is not considered practicable to consider any area lying outside fifteen miles from the railway. I think that it will be found that the Commission laid that down emphatically. What effect would that have upon your evidence, if you knew that instead of twenty-five miles it was reduced to fifteen miles?—Well, knowing something about the methods of getting out the timber, I am satisfied that if the Government put in subsidiary tram-lines from Waitapu, ten miles out from the oldest part of their forest, they would continue that tram-line farther on.

16. That is a subsidiary matter. That is, if they put in another tram-line. Assuming that they are not going to construct the railway, what is going to happen—the material would have to be disposed of in another way?—Excuse me, but I think you have mistaken me. The land to which I referred as being 300,000 acres is that east of the proposed line. I made the point that I was not including any land used for forestry purposes on or near the Putaruru route.

17. That does not include anything on the western side?—Not as far as I know. There is no land occupied which could be considered tributary. All the area which is earmarked for forestry purposes is on the east side.

18. You said there are 16,000 acres already planted that requires thinning, and that it would be a considerable expense to the State to do that thinning. It would probably be a greater expense to the State if they had a railway, because the railway might have to carry it at a loss. You are not prepared to say whether it would be carried at a loss or otherwise?—I would like to know how we are going to get rid of that stuff without a railway.

19. You said there were about 320,000 cords of this material available, which requires a railway to dispose of it. It is important to know not only whether this vast amount of material is available and is accumulating, and requires a railway to dispose of it, but the question is whether, if that railway is built, do you think that this business would warrant the building of that railway?—Yes, I think so—and considering the settlement of the country as well.

20. You spoke of superficial feet of timber: would you define that term for the Committee? You do not mean running feet?—A superficial foot is the common measurement in New Zealand—it is 12 in. by 12 in. by 1 in.

21. That is, as opposed to the running foot, which is the length of a piece of timber apart from its width?—Yes.

22. *Mr. Makitanara.*] Where trees have been growing since they were planted, from now onwards how many years do you suggest it will take this timber before it is ready for milling purposes?—Do you mean for final cutting?

23. I mean as a profitable crop?—About thirty-five years altogether.

24. From now?—No, not from now. All that I can say is that the oldest-planted trees will be ready in ten years.

25. And the bulk of it will be ready when?—That is very difficult to say, because planting has been going on from year to year.

26. Say fifteen years at the outside?—Yes, sawn timber will come out of there in fifteen years, and will continue to come out annually in increasing quantities.

27. *Mr. Kyle.*] You gave us a figure of 10s. per 100 ft. for fifty miles of carting at the rate of 1,200 ft. per load. There was an interjection by the Chairman that the idea of the departmental officers was that it would cost 10s. railage. What would be tonnage carried by an ordinary train?

*Mr. Roussell* (Railway Department): An ordinary train coming over that country would be running on a grade of 1 in 50, and that would limit the load to 200 tons gross.

*Mr. Kyle:* That would be £100 per train-load at 10s. per ton.

*Mr. Roussell:* But we would give that particular part of the line the full credit: say it was being hauled 180 miles, and 30 miles of that was on the extension line, we would credit it with 30–180ths of the 10s.

28. *Mr. Kyle.*] You said, Mr. Goudie, that it will be fifteen years before those plantations will be fit for cutting for milling purposes. You reckon that at the present time there are 16,000 acres which it is absolutely imperative to thin?—Yes.

29. Would that go on continuously from now—that is, the thinning over the whole area?—Yes.

30. So that it would not be only for one year?—No.

31. Really that thinning would go on continuously until the time when the main crop would be ripe for milling purposes?—Yes, that is so.

*Mr. Hanson:* As Mr. Goudie has said, we have about 16,000 acres to-day that can be operated on to-day, but the remaining 300,000 acres will not come in within twenty-five or thirty years.

32. *Mr. Kyle.*] Mr. Goudie, what was the original idea of the Government in going on with these plantations—was it to produce trees, or only to give access to the place?—We have always regarded the building of the line as necessary for the plantations.