

To His Excellency Sir Bernard Freyberg, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George; Knight Commander of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath; Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire; Companion of the Most Distinguished Service Order; Lieutenant-General upon whom has been conferred the decoration of the Victoria Cross; Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Dominion of New Zealand and its dependencies.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

Your Excellency's Commission, dated the 21st of April, 1948, with which you were pleased to favour us directed us to inquire into and report upon the following matters:—

1. Whether the supplies of fresh meat available for the New Zealand retail market are adequate at all times of the year.
2. If your findings on the matter aforesaid be in the negative, whether steps should be taken under the regulations specified in the Schedule to the Supply Regulations Act, 1947, or otherwise, to make so available at certain times of the year additional quantities of fresh meat or (if this be not thought possible) chilled or frozen meat.
3. Whether it is practicable to provide for butchers to purchase meat for local consumption by means of a schedule similar to that adopted for the export trade; and, if so, what margin (if any) should be paid over and above the export schedule price.
4. If the purchase of meat for the local market on a schedule basis is deemed desirable and practicable, whether the auction system of disposing of stock for the local market should be continued; and, if so, to what extent.
5. Whether, in the event of the auction system being continued, it is desirable to encourage the practice of group buying by butchers.
6. Whether the extension of the practice on the part of freezing companies of entering into the wholesale and retail butchery trade is desirable, and to what extent this practice affects the operations of abattoirs maintained by local authorities under the Meat Act, 1939.

And generally upon other matters affecting producers, wholesalers, retailers and consumers of meat, or affecting one or more of such classes of persons as may come to your notice in the course of your inquiries and which you consider should be the subject of opinions expressed by you in your report.

Your Excellency's further warrants dated respectively the 19th May, 1948, and 23rd of June, 1948, extended the time within which we were required to report to the 31st day of July, 1948.

The procedure adopted by the Commission was to invite by public advertisement all interested persons and organizations who desired to give evidence to advise the Secretary to the Commission. Public sittings for the purpose of taking evidence were then held in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin, and a great number of witnesses, appearing either as individuals or on behalf of organizations, were examined.

The Commission regrets that it has not been possible to reach a unanimous decision on all the matters raised in its inquiry. Four members are in agreement on all matters and submit a majority report. Mr. J. W. Perry finds that he is unable to agree with the majority, and he accordingly submits a minority report.

The sixth member of the Commission, Mr. W. G. Simpson, was required to proceed to London on official duty early in June, and he is therefore not a party to the present report.