

*Meat-rationing.*—I am in general agreement with the majority report on this subject, but am of the opinion that a more detailed report should have been presented in view of the evidence submitted, even though counter statistical evidence of savings made under rationing was not complete for presentation by the administering authority, and I therefore add the following points :—

- (1) Attention was drawn to the heavy increase in the consumption of unrationed offals and small-goods which tends to offset any saving of rationed meats. It has been pointed out that such offals are eagerly sought after by the consumer public of the United Kingdom as a welcome change in the monotony of their diet.
- (2) It was pointed out that the system of granting manufacturing permits to larger firms has prevented the smaller trader from operating on the same basis as he did prior to rationing. The allowance for manufacturing purposes of 4 per cent. of carcass-supplies does not permit the smaller trader to provide a sufficient quantity of small-goods to meet the requirements of his customers. The result must be that he loses custom to the larger firm or, by manufacturing additional small-goods from what should be coupon-returning meat to meet consumer demand, he must deteriorate in coupon bankings and ultimately be penalized by the Office of the Rationing Controller.
- (3) It has been indicated that rationing has created a greater demand from consumers for smaller joints of meat, which in turn has compelled the butcher to purchase lighter-weight carcasses, resulting in a greater demand on the available supplies of this class of stock, which tends to create higher market values. This consequently raises the purchase-price of the carcass which is the butcher's first cost and thereby creates further difficulties for the retail meat trade while it is subject to retail-price control.
- (4) It was also given in evidence by the master butchers that the time factor involved in the carrying-out of the requirements of the rationing system has been a source of annoyance, also of hardship to them, as such traders who do not employ clerical staff must of necessity carry out the duties of compilation of returns, counting, and packaging of coupons during the week-end preparatory to banking them on the following working day.

Complementary to these duties performed outside of business hours there is the time and labour factor necessitated by the collection of coupons for meat sold by shop-assistants which was stated to be an unrecoverable sales cost.

It is apparent that this strictly enforced system of rationing has required a staff of considerable numbers to administer the regulations, also provision of additional monetary expenses attendant upon the administration of the scheme, such as remuneration to banking houses for their services, publicity, printing costs of ration books, &c., also salaries and travelling-expenses of the staff.

I would endorse the concluding paragraph of the majority report on this subject, but would add that, in my opinion, the expense of administering the system should be taken into account when the quantity of meat saved by the system is investigated, and should the expense be such as would outweigh the value of any saving of meat the system should be abolished without delay and the meat-retailer relieved of such added costs as are caused by the rationing system.

*General.*—I am in agreement with this section of the majority report, but would comment on the closing phrases of the second paragraph as, in my opinion, if economic stabilization is to be applied to an industry it should not be partial control only which may react adversely on any one section of industry, but if applied should be applied equally over all sections of such industry.