

It was proposed by Mr. H. Brown (representing the Taranaki Sawmillers' Association), seconded by Mr. W. J. Parker (representing the Auckland Sawmillers' Association), and carried:—

"That this Conference earnestly deprecates any export duty being placed on sawn or dressed New Zealand timber."

It was proposed by Mr. Walter Bailey (representing the Manawatu Timber Company), seconded by Mr. P. Bartholomew (representing the Wairarapa Sawmillers' Association), and carried:—

"That, in view of the present tariff, a recommendation be made to the Government that the railway freight on white-pine for export to Australia shall in no case exceed 1s. per 100 ft. to the nearest port."

It was proposed by Mr. W. J. White (representing the Auckland Sawmillers' Association), seconded by Mr. W. J. Reilly (representing the Nelson Sawmillers), and carried:—

"That, not anticipating any adverse legislation from the Australian Commonwealth, the northern companies have committed themselves to large contracts for log-supplies for the purpose of keeping their mills running full time; and, as the Federal tariff is likely to lead to a restricted demand, the Government be urged to give favourable consideration to any application for an extension of time allowed for clearing bushes held under short Government leases."

It was proposed by Mr. W. Booth (representing the Wairarapa Sawmillers' Association), seconded by Mr. W. Chalmers (representing the Wellington Steam Cooperage), and carried:—

"That this Conference is of opinion that it is not possible to save for any length of time bush—especially kauri bush—which is surrounded and encroached upon by ever-advancing settlement. That the timber which can and should be conserved is mostly in the hands of the Government, and should be, when sold, carefully guarded, and cut under judicious regulations."

It was resolved, on the motion of the Chairman:—

"That the differences which exist in the matter of the Commonwealth and New Zealand tariffs should be made the subject of friendly negotiation between the two Governments with as little delay as possible."

APPENDIX B.

DEAR SIR,—

Auckland, 21st October, 1901.

I duly received your memo. by wire, dated the 15th instant, *re* Federal tariff. I, in common with other sawmillers, desire to thank you for the action taken by you in calling this Conference. I regret that I shall be unable to attend personally, but Mr. D. Goldie and Mr. T. H. White are authorised to represent us.

The opinion is, I think, unanimous that an export duty should be put upon logs—round or balk—shipped out of the country. I may here mention that, in company with Messrs. William and Joseph Butler, late of Kokiri, Greymouth, operations have just been begun by us to erect a mill at Tokatoka, Kaipara, to cut a large white-pine bush lately acquired from Government. However, on receipt of Federal tariff, we decided to stop all work on mill until the tariff question is decided. Should nothing be done in the matter of an export duty, it is probable that we may be compelled to erect our mill either in Sydney or Melbourne and ship the logs instead of the sawn timber. This we should very much regret, as we are all straight-out New-Zealanders, and prefer to help advance our own country. The conditions under which we have the right to cut this timber compel us to remove not less than 4,000,000 ft. annually, and as there is absolutely no local market in Kaipara we shall be forced to export the timber. I mention these facts so that you may understand the difficult position in which we find ourselves.

I would respectfully draw your attention to what seems to me an unwise policy which has for a long time been pursued by the Government in respect to our New Zealand forests. In the first place, when timber is sold by Government the time usually allowed for its removal is far too short to allow of its being done profitably. Sawmillers have repeatedly protested against this practice, and it is hard to understand why it should be continued. Very much of the timber land in the North is of little value after the timber is removed, while it is universally admitted that the standing forests are of great benefit to the country. The heavy taxation on standing bush by the Government and local bodies tends to the speedy denudation of our forests as well as to deter private concerns from reforestation. Companies in which I am interested desire to not only conserve present forests, but to enter upon a system of reforestation, but are much handicapped in the former, and fear to undertake the latter because of the taxation.

I trust you will pardon me troubling you with these matters, but sincerely hope you will give them your able consideration.

I have, &c.,

L. J. BAGNALL,

Bagnall Bros. and Co. (Limited).

Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, Wellington.

Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, Wellington.

Tokatoka, 28th October, 1901.

REGRET, owing to absence in country and unavoidable short notice given for Conference, was unable to attend, but, representing company having extensive white-pine interests here, beg to suggest Government imposing export duty on log and hewn balk, but all longitudinally sawn timber free provided end area does not exceed 400 square inches. Consider this would conserve country's best interest by providing maximum labour here with minimum duty under Federal tariff. Deprecate retaliation, but suggest above as best means retaining Australian trade with least loss to New Zealand. In our case, holding timber-right with Government conditions com-