Right Hon. R. J. Seddon: Yes. Then, we ought to have the output last year of the articles that were manufactured in the colony. Then, we want to have the price that each of these articles was sold for last year. We want also to find out what implements and articles have been dropped already through the operations of the trust. Then, the Deering machine was sold at £35, but is now £40. We want to know how many of these machines were sold last year at £35, and what the difference will be to the farmers on account of the increase of £5 per machine. We want to see the effect of the five-pound rise upon the farmers.

The Chairman: I think this is the best plan: if Messrs. Mitchell and Willis will secure this information I will call a meeting of the Committee for Monday or Tuesday. The remainder of the witnesses can return to their homes, but these two gentlemen can remain and be present at the meeting.

106. *Mr. Kirkbride* (to Mr. Mitchell).] Do you know whether the Massey-Harris Company have joined the Harvester Trust? Are they included in it?—We have no definite information on that point. The only thing we can do is to arrive at conclusions from the attitude of the manager of the Massey-Harris Company when giving evidence before the Royal Commission set up in Victoria. His answers were not such as to leave the impression that they were not under the sway of the trust. He would not make any definite statement on the point. He would not definitely state that they were not under the control of the trust when pressed to answer the question. The inference is that they are at least associated with the trust.

107. (To Mr. Barr): I understood you to say that you looked upon the imposition of this duty of 40 per cent. as a temporary arrangement—a palliative—and that you and those with you really intend to ask for the nationalising of the manufacture of all these implements. Am I not right?—There is a probability that that might occur.

108. I understood you to say that that was what you were working up to. You said it would probably be in the dim and distant future, but I understood you to say that in effect this was a stepping-stone?—I said that that might be asked for in the future—in the dim and distant future—but that in the meantime we could only deal with what happened meanwhile, and that this duty is what is wanted.

109. You look on the nationalising of the manufacture of these implements as a goal to be aimed at?—Yes.

110. Are the employers with you in this idea of nationalising?—When we have got past this step and go on to the next perhaps the employers might see further than they do at present.

111. I think you also said that the home market was the best market. Did I understand you to say that as applying to farm-produce?—It has always proved so, as far as my experience goes.

112. What would be the condition of the farmer if he had to depend on the home market in New Zealand?—It depends on the extent of the home market. If the farmers encouraged the trades in the colony it would naturally increase the home market.

113. You would not like to say that the home market—that is, the New Zealand market—could possibly consume all the farmers' produce?—Not at the present time; but to encourage the home market would always be to the advantage of the farmer.

114. (To Mr. Mitchell): Are there many American double-furrow ploughs imported into this colony at the present time?—There are a number; but American double-furrow ploughs are invariably made with cast legs, and are admittedly not so suitable to New Zealand requirements as the heavy forged ploughs supplied by the New Zealand manufacturers. One local manufacturer specialised a disc harrow; but it has been taken to America and manufactured there, and actually landed in New Zealand duty-free to compete with the local article. Were it not for some slight difference in the painting you could not tell one implement from the other.

115. Did I understand you to say that the total output of drills manufactured in the colony was forty-three?—That was for one month—the busiest month—as against fifty of the trust drills sent to one station alone.

116. How do the prices of the locally-manufactured drills compare with those of the American drills?—The American drill, I understand, is slightly cheaper; and, of course, the trust's four-years terms make the business they do more extensive.

Mr. Laurenson: I would like to suggest that when Mr. Mitchell is getting together the statistical information he might, if he can, get any further information following on what was said by Mr. Willis as to the retail price of agricultural implements to the farmers in America, where the trust has complete control, compared with the retail price of similar implements in New Zealand, where the trust has not got control.

117. *Sir W. R. Russell* (to Mr. Willis).] I should like a little more information about the guarantee of the manufacturers. I do not quite understand how it can be of any commercial value. Can you tell us what is to be the nature of it?—I understand the manufacturers are prepared to enter into a legal bond.

118. But one knows that circumstances may prevent one carrying out a legal bond?—That is so. They are prepared to risk those circumstances.

119. If they give a bond and matters prove adverse to them, how is the country going to recoup itself for their failure to carry out their bond?—You would simply have to retaliate, I presume, by removing the duty.

120. Who are the manufacturers that would join in this bond?—Messrs. P. and D. Duncan, Andrews and Beaven, Reid and Gray, Cooper and Duncan, and Booth, McDonald, and Co., and, in fact, every manufacturer in New Zealand.

121. Then, suppose that the day after the bond is signed two or three other gentlemen combine together to start another factory, what is to prevent them?—Nothing.

122. They cannot be compelled to join in that bond?—Certainly not.

123. Then, would you imagine that commercially the bond would be of much value?—I do.