

77. *Mr. Reed.*] Do you know who bought the machinery for these works at Darwin?—The purchasing department of the Union Cold Storage in London bought the machinery. It is the same machinery as that supplied for the Westfield works, made for the Linde Company by Davy Paxman, of Colchester, in England. I think the question has reference to a rumour that the machinery is American. The rumour arises from the fact that one or two of the generators which had to be bought after the war began had to be bought in the United States because they were not then procurable in England. That purchased in the United States would be bought by the purchasing department of the Union Cold Storage in America.

78. You have a big grazing property in Australia called the Wave Hill property, have you not?—I have not heard much of it. I have understood that they had to take up some large stations in the Northern Territory to make sure that there would be a sufficient supply of stock for the works. I think that all this is evidence of the breadth and versatility of these people with British capital. They do not stick to the meat trade, but they will tackle anything in order to make a success of what they have in hand. In Darwin they have had to take up land in order to be sure that they will be able to carry out their agreement with the Commonwealth Government.

79. Do you label all your meat going from here either for Weddel's or Fletcher's?—It is all labelled with the ordinary brand of the works, with the name of the works and the grade of the meat. We do not label it to any particular firm.

80. You can label it at the other end for any person to whom you are selling?—We do not label meat at all except with the brand of the works. I understand that meat has left New Zealand branded "Armour and Co.", but previously I have never heard of any other firm having done this. The works have simply put their own brands on the meat, and I think this is a very desirable thing.

*Mr. Witty:* It should be compulsory.

*Witness:* It should unquestionably be compulsory. At present all the meat is pooled, and when it is allocated in England for distribution companies get each other's meat, and we may be forced to advertise Armour's through our shops in Britain. I have heard that meat branded "Armour" has gone out of works alongside of us in Auckland.

81. *The Chairman.*] Which works?—The Southdown works. Our people, I may say, are afraid that they may be accused of belonging to the trust because of Armour's meat being found in our shops in England, and because of our meat being found in Armour's shops.

82. *Mr. Anstey.*] You say that Vestey's have interests in the United States, in England, in Australia, and in New Zealand?—Yes.

83. Have they any interests in Argentine?—Yes; in conjunction with other British interests there they have recently put up works in the Argentine.

84. And also in Australia?—Yes.

85. What is the reason for establishing all these works: is it to get a supply of beef to mix with the lamb and mutton?—As far as I know it is just to ensure a steady flow of business.

86. Do you require mixed varieties of meat in order to keep your trade?—Yes. A person could not establish a business in Canterbury lamb alone, because that is a *de luxe* article. People will come into your shops asking for cheaper meat, and you must keep the Argentine meat to supply them.

87. You said that Vestey's had transferred to America in order to avoid payment of the British war taxation?—Yes, to avoid payment of the double income-tax. They have transferred only their foreign interests, those which would have had to bear the burden of double taxation. No British interests in the business have been transferred to America.

88. You say that the American people avoid paying the British income-tax?—Yes.

89. Can you suggest any way in which American businesses can be taxed in England and in New Zealand in order to put them on the basis of the local capital?—No, I do not know.

90. Do you think the establishment of the American Meat Trust is a menace to our trade?—Undoubtedly.

91. Do you think it would be any worse than a British company getting a monopoly?—There has never been a British monopoly in the trade here.

92. Supposing we had a British monopoly in the London market?—Yes, that would be bad.

93. As bad as the other?—Perhaps so.

94. You refused to freeze for Armour and Co. because they were members of the Meat Trust?—Certainly.

95. Did you refuse to freeze for Sims-Cooper?—It did not come to a refusal. They approached me, and we discussed the matter, and they did not pursue the question further; they did not again approach me with a definite proposal. You can take it this way: that it was a bid or an inquiry on their part and a polite refusal on ours.

96. Are the New Zealand Refrigerating Company operating in your district?—Yes.

97. Did you refuse to freeze for them?—They have never approached me, but they are trying to get stock there for the Imlay works.

98. Did they buy there before the establishment of the Imlay works?—No.

99. But after you had refused to freeze for the New Zealand Refrigerating Company and Sims-Cooper, would there be anything wrong in their taking the stock where they could get it frozen?—Nothing wrong at all; it is purely a matter of business.

100. And you did not think it is wrong for them to take stock from your district?—No. It is up to us to meet this competition—it is quite legitimate competition.

101. You have two companies with works costing three or four hundred thousand pounds, and you have only a thousand pounds of capital in each?—Yes.

102. You also buy large quantities of meat?—Yes.

103. Where do you get all the money to buy all this meat?—It comes from London.