

that the Imperial Government authorities require preference to be given to beef and wether mutton over lamb and ewe mutton when making a shipment on their behalf. I have not received any instructions to let you know when this company cannot fill its allotment without shipping lambs." Do you say that notwithstanding that letter of refusal to take your lambs they were taking lambs for the benefit of the trust?—For the benefit of the big buyers, including the trust.

72. You say that is so?—Yes.

73. That was on the 11th January, 1917?—I have no definite evidence of that.

74. You say they refused to take your lambs on the ground that they were taking beef and mutton—that they were giving priority to beef and mutton?—Yes, that is so.

75. Do you say that at that time they were giving priority to other shippers of lamb in the interests of the trust?—I cannot say at that time: it was a month or two later when I discovered that they were allowing other people to ship ewe mutton and lamb.

76. *Mr. Forbes.*] What ship was this in?—I have mentioned five ships.

77. But what particular ship are you referring to in this case?—The "Port Chalmers." Mr. Triggs has stated that the Shipowners Committee did not interest themselves in what was put on board the ships, but I say that letter shows that they did.

78. You say they interested themselves in the interests of beef and wether mutton as against ewe mutton and lamb?—Yes.

79. That is quite a proper thing?—Yes, quite a proper thing, and if that system were carried out in the case of all freezing-works in the Dominion we would not trouble about it at all; but the question is that others have not been treated in the same way as we have.

80. *Mr. Talbot.*] And do you suggest that the others you refer to are getting more of the trust meat?—Yes. It is mainly the big buyers who are working with the trust who are getting the meat away.

81. *Mr. W. H. Field.*] Do you consider that in the United States, owing to the operations of the Meat Trust, the position of the producer and consumer is largely that of hopeless slavery?—That is the result of it; they are both groaning under the disadvantages.

82. And the United States Government, although they desire to do it, cannot see their way to prevent it?—The matter has gone too far. The pastoralist is crushed and has had to get out of the business, while in many instances the trust has got his property.

83. And the same in the Argentine?—Yes.

84. And what about Australia?—They have not got a great hold there yet—they are just going to Australia the same as in New Zealand.

85. Do you not think we ought to try and combine with the Australian and Imperial Governments in order to handle the situation?—I think it would be a very good thing. Of course, you have to bear in mind that Australian interests are very much smaller than New Zealand's.

86. It would not be necessary to get the co-operation of any other part of the Empire?—No, except perhaps Cape Town.

87. Are you satisfied that the scheme you have put before the Committee would effectually affect the position?—I would not say "effectually," but what I suggest are remedial measures. When you get further on you may have to do other things. The measures I suggest are the most simple in the meantime, but they will help the position. Some of the suggestions may act harshly, but they are necessary.

88. You would suggest that the men who are in charge of our meat market be above all suspicion of dishonesty?—Yes.

89. I understand you to say that you have no confidence in the British Board of Trade?—None whatever.

90. Can you say who they are?—The report I have handed in gives the names of some. The Press of England attacked them, and claimed that they were impartial to the interests of the Empire.

91. Do you suggest that they are under the influence or in the pay of the trust?—I do not say "in the pay," but I say their sympathies are more with them than they are with us and the consumers.

92. Then there is the other Committee that has control of our meat at Home, composed of Sir Thomas Robinson, Sir Montague Nelson, and Sir Thomas Mackenzie—have you no faith in them?—In the High Commissioner I have faith, but I think it is a mistake for him to be on that Committee. I think he has tied his hands in a way which is very detrimental to this Dominion. He has not been able to be a free lance and criticize that Committee. Sir Montague Nelson is also interested in buying and selling meat.

93. Do you think there are satisfactory men whose services could be secured to protect our interests?—Yes, no doubt; but you must get men not associated with shipping or with meat. If you have men connected with either you will get trouble at once.

94. Do you suggest that we should co-operate with the Imperial Government for the purpose of controlling our meat right from the farmer or the freezing-works here to the consumer, or retailer, or wholesaler at Home?—I should say to the retailer at Home.

95. It is absolutely necessary, you think, to go past the wholesaler?—Yes, absolutely, and no half-measures.

96. Do you think our products are insufficiently advertised at Home?—They are not advertised at all. The identity of our butter and meat absolutely disappears.

97. Are other parts of the Empire advertising their products?—Yes. You can see the Canadian cheese advertised in the shops at Home, but not the New Zealand, except in a few cases more recently. The bulk of our meat is sold at Home as fresh English meat.

98. I understand that South Australia is advertising her products extensively?—Yes.