

Armour to give us any assistance that he can, as we are only babies in the game. He wrote to us on 2nd May, 1917, from London: "We have read your articles of association which you were good enough to forward to us. We are surprised to note that they contain a clause in which reference is to be made to us under certain circumstances. We are not interested in any way in your company other than the relationship between buyer and seller, and cannot undertake to act as arbitrators, or in any respect in connection with the organization and conduct of your business. We must ask you, therefore, to delete that clause in your articles which makes mention of this company, and advise us that you have done so."

242. *Mr. Anderson.*] It seems a rather extraordinary position, that he should say you are quite independent of Armour and Co. of Chicago and Armour and Co. of London?

*Mr. Reed:* He did not say "Chicago"—he said "London"?—We are also quite independent of Armour and Co. of Chicago as a company, but not of Mr. J. Ogden Armour, who is the head of that company.

243. *Mr. Anderson.*] If you are independent it seems extraordinary that you should have communicated with these people?—It is perfectly simple. Armour and Co., London, and Armour and Co., Chicago, might be called brother and sister. We are also one of the offspring, as far as that goes.

244. Do you intend to continue doing your business in New Zealand?—Yes, sir.

245. You have made your home here?—Yes.

246. Your business prospects are bound up in New Zealand?—Yes.

247. Do you think it would be possible at any time for this alleged trust, or for any company, to have absolute domination in this country so that it could regulate the price of stock to the farmers?—I do not.

248. Has your company any intention of taking part in any such effort?—No; absolutely none whatever.

249. One of the witnesses told the Committee that he knew of a shipment of New Zealand meat being sent from Auckland to San Francisco and that a man named Spreckles used pressure to prevent any more being sent in the same way?

*Mr. Reed:* He owned the shipping line.

250. *Mr. Anderson.*] You said that America would welcome our trade: was the statement I have mentioned correct or otherwise?—If the statement is correct there must have been some reason at the time why that was done. It would not be done by the American people, but by some individual.

251. By the trust?—Not by the trust. There is no such thing as a trust. It would be done by some individual or by some individual company. Do you not see that with the sheep and cattle country of America being populated more every year the companies that want to do killing are being absolutely wiped away? For instance, my company, we will say, has pushed ahead for the last ten years—I mean the parent company. They have had one or two good years, but they have absolutely lost money. If they cannot see sheep and cattle coming in from all parts of the world, where are they going to get the stuff to continue in business at the end of ten or fifteen years? They must welcome every producing country in the world, and I take it that is what New Zealand is—a producing country. I feel sure, and I can assure you gentlemen, that if we could get New Zealand products into America to-day we would have one of the best markets in the world. We will see that you do get it. We want to help you to get it. Our attitude is not antagonistic to New Zealand in any shape or manner. We are on our own, not connected with any other company, and I am sure that in five or ten years you will look back and see that New Zealand produce and New Zealand farmers have gone ahead from this date.

252. *The Chairman.*] You went to America just about eighteen months ago: what was the object of your visit?—To see my people as much as anything.

253. I mean the business object: was not the business object to arrange for the formation of your company in New Zealand?—No, sir.

254. You never thought of it when you left?—No.

255. Who suggested it?—Mr. Robbins and Mr. A. Hern, of Armour and Co., made a visit out here about two years ago. They suggested it when I was in America.

256. They suggested that a company should be formed in New Zealand, and that it should be a New Zealand company?—Yes—a New Zealand company pure and simple.

257. Entirely supported by Mr. J. O. Armour in matters of finance?—Yes.

258. When the company was floated, why were the shares allotted in this way—3,998 to you, one to Mr. Kingdon, and one to Mr. Alpers—instead of, as they stand to-day, in Mr. Armour's name?—I think that in order to start a company here under New Zealand law a man must reside here.

259. Yes, that is so?—There was no other reason.

260. Then in order to conform with the New Zealand law a company was started on a basis that did not represent the real state of affairs? For example, you did not put in this amount of capital, although the shares were in your name?—The money was advanced to me by Mr. J. O. Armour.

261. This was a method—it may be a perfectly legitimate one—of getting over the New Zealand company law?—Mr. Armour provided a credit to pay for the shares.

262. And as soon as the company had been floated the shares were transferred from you to him?—That is so.

263. Your position in the company is that of a paid officer?—Yes; I draw director's fees.

264. Is the company in New Zealand charged for the guarantee that Mr. Armour gives?—We have to pay interest at the bank on the overdraft.

265. But behind that is the guarantee again?—Yes. We pay nothing for that at all.