

estimate given by the Prime Minister at the last conference. We will only have two millions and a half left on the 1st December. I have here a statement with regard to the overseas steamers now in New Zealand and to arrive up to the middle of September. [Statement handed in.]

9. What about wool?—Well, wool is not doing so well. There is any amount of space, and will be up to the end of September, but there is very little wool going to London. It is not required. They do not wish wool to go Home in the quantities we have been sending.

10. *The Chairman.*] Can you tell us anything about tallow: is that going forward?—All the tallow will be lifted by the end of September.

11. Who allots the space on the steamers?—The Overseas Shipowners' Committee.

12. Some shippers do not seem to be able to get the space which they believe they are entitled to?—The space is allocated on a strictly *pro rata* basis. The Imperial Government Supplies Department supplies the Overseas Shipping Committee with information as to what space is required for Government cargo, and the balance of cargo-space is free. There is a local committee set up in every centre. The intending shipper sends his application to the local committee, and the local committees send in their lists weekly to the head committee in Wellington. Then every four weeks the Shipowners' Committee in Wellington make an allotment on the ships in sight. The ships in sight are allotted according to the cargo that is offering. The allotment is made on a percentage basis. They may allot, say, space for 20 per cent. of all cargo offering to a certain port, and the local committee splits this 20 per cent. up amongst the shippers who have applied for space. I know there have been some complaints because an individual shipper has been unable to get sufficient space. He may be allotted only 20 per cent. of the space he requires. That would leave him with the remaining 80 per cent. to get away later. When the next steamer is loading he might have an increased quantity of cargo to ship, and may even get a smaller allotment, so that he finds it difficult to get his cargo away, and makes complaints. But the allotments of space are made on a perfectly fair proportionate basis.

13. There will be no trouble about lifting all the tallow by the end of September?—No. There is sufficient space offering in the September steamers to lift every ton of free cargo offering in New Zealand.

14. *Mr. Forbes.*] The Imperial Government Supplies Department has now practically closed operations?—We have practically ceased buying. We are taking wool and sheepskins up to the end of September, but at that date we stop. We stopped buying frozen meat on the 30th June. We stopped buying butter on the 31st July, and cheese on the 1st July. We have now practically only wool and sheepskins to deal with.

15. In connection with the meat that you are shipping: is it very old meat?—There are a few freezing-works in New Zealand where there has been difficulty in this respect, and this is caused through the congestion rendering it difficult to get the old meat out from the stores. We do not anticipate that there will be any meat left in the freezing-works of New Zealand, other than this season's, after the end of September.

16. What is done with the bad meat?—The Department of Agriculture, whose officers watch the loading of the steamers, prevents damaged meat being put on board.

17. What do they do with it?—There has been some damage caused by mould and black spot, and this meat has been boiled down.

18. *The Chairman.*] Has there been anything further suggested by the Imperial authorities about boiling down the old meat?—There is very little left to be boiled down. It would be hardly worth while. The matter has been gone into with regard to the comparative cost, and the information has been sent to London, but we have had no reply. They have not gone any further with it.

19. *Hon. Mr. Nosworthy.*] The position is that we are progressing more rapidly than was anticipated?—Yes, there should be no blockage now in getting the meat away.

20. *Mr. Burnett.*] How many freight carcasses are there in store now, approximately?—About five millions and a half in store. The vessels loading now should bring it down to about five millions, and, with the tonnage in sight, that should take approximately five months to lift from the end of October.

21. *Mr. Hamilton.*] Is there any space available for free meat?—That is a matter for the Imperial Government's consent. There is no urgency as yet, because there is very little free meat offering for shipment. There will not be much until about November or December. Frozen sundries have always and are still allowed to be shipped free to the extent of 5 per cent. of the insulated space allotted.

Dr. REAKES re-examined. (No. 4.)

1. *The Chairman.*] We would like, Dr. Reakes, to have a list made out giving particulars of all the refrigerated steamers which are trading to and from New Zealand, with their carrying-capacity: can you supply this?—Yes, I think I can do so.

2. *Mr. Field.*] How many companies are there bound up in the combinations?—The Commonwealth and Dominion Line is amalgamated with the Cunard Line. The New Zealand Shipping Company, the Federal Houlder Line, and the Union Company are amalgamated with the P. and O. Line. The Shire Line, I understand, has just been joined up with the Clan Line.

3. What about the Shaw-Savill?—The Shaw-Savill Line is connected with the White Star Line.

4. Are these combinations working together?—I think at present they are working in harmony with each other, except possibly the Shire Line, which owns only a few refrigerated steamers.

5. But still there are others outside of these combinations?—Not in connection with steamers having insulated space trading to New Zealand.

6. *Mr. Jennings.*] Have the American people insulated vessels likely to be available?—No, not insulated steamers, so far as I know.

7. Apparently the insulation is the trouble?—The insulated tonnage in the world is limited. I would like to say, with regard to contracts, that the Producers' Conference which was held a short time ago appointed a committee which included two freezing companies' representatives, and this committee considered the question of contracts, and they are drawing up a draft contract which will