

62. There was something underlying it?—For my part, an export duty on butter could hardly be levied on a certain amount if not on the whole of it, and I am not disposed to uphold that. If there is a means of the farmer getting the price on the London market, it is only asking what I should ask for; but if that happens, then we have the consequences to consider.

63. My reason for asking the question is that we are after information?—Well, I am sorry I cannot put the matter more explicitly.

64. *Mr. Powdrell.*] You appear to favour an export tax?—No; I have repeatedly said that I have only been told to make the statement.

65. I suppose you are aware that if there was an export tax it would have to be paid by the share milker and the farmer in this country?—Certainly. It would keep the price of butter down to the level it is at at present; but, of course, there would be this advantage, that the revenue would go to the Government.

66. If it could be proved to you that the share milkers are earning considerably under 1s. an hour for their labour, would you still think it was a fair thing that there should be an export tax put on their butter, they being part owners in the butter by reason of working on the share system?—Before I would venture an opinion on that matter I would have to know what the share milker was getting.

67. We know because we are farmers; and supposing that was proved, would you still argue that it was a fair thing?—Well, I have not argued that it would be a fair thing at all. I have simply put the matter forward for what it is worth. It is not my suggestion. Some members of the Council thought I should put the matter forward as a point for the Committee to consider.

68. *The Chairman.*] You are merely carrying out an instruction?—That is so.

69. And you do not wish to comment upon it?—No.

70. *Mr. Powdrell.*] You say the wages of the men in the union you are connected with average about £3 a week?—Yes.

71. I suppose you are aware that the wages of carpenters at the present time are £1 a day; the freezing-works hands, 15s. 10d. a day plus overtime, and they are casuals; the men working in the foundries receive a minimum of 3s. an hour and a maximum of 4s. 6d.; so do you not think the dairyman is the lowest-paid in all the industries you know of?—If you are short of men I should be pleased to find plenty at 3s. an hour.

72. *Mr. J. R. Hamilton.*] You say that in your family of five you use 5 lb. of butter a week?—Yes.

73. And that you do not eat meat except once a day?—Yes.

74. Of course, if you are using that quantity of butter you are saving it in the cost of meat?—Yes, it cuts both ways.

75. If a person makes a whole meal on butter they save it in meat, jam, and other things, and that leaves more money to spend on butter?—Yes; but I have already pointed out that the average unskilled worker makes bread and butter his staple food, so the most important increase or decrease to him in any commodity that he puts on his table is in connection with butter.

76. The average consumption in New Zealand is $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. per head per week?—Yes.

77. If you choose to use 1 lb. per head then nobody finds faults with you, but you must admit you are saving it in the other items of food, and therefore you are not any worse off?—Yes; but taking our domestic expenses as they stand, we may be saving on one thing but losing on another. I have already stated that the average worker cannot pay any more than he is paying at present, and an increase in the price of butter would be an increase in the household expenses which he can hardly meet now.

78. You will admit there is a great deal in the economy of housewives: some can make a dish out of very little, while others would take twice as much?—Yes.

79. Which means a good deal in connection with the poorer people?—I expect the poor people have learnt economy when the wealthy people do not need to.

80. I suppose you are aware that in connection with the people on the farms the price of their products is not fixed—they have to take the world's market price or the local market price. One year it may go up on account of circumstances over which nobody has any control, and the next year it may go down below a payable price. Do you not think that if you are going to take a little off him when the price is high, that when the price is below a payable one he is entitled to some protection?—I never questioned his right to protection.

81. Do you not think it cuts both ways?—I simply stated the position, and the remedy I leave in your hands.

82. You have never known of an instance in New Zealand where the farmer has been compensated where he has had to produce an article at below a payable price?—No. I have been thirty-five years in New Zealand, and during the whole of that period I have been used to the farmer telling me that the farm was not paying, and yet they became wealthy. I would not say but what the farmers were speaking the truth, but still I would say that I do not understand it.

83. You say the farmers are wealthy?—No, I do not.

84. Would you believe that only a portion of the farmers are wealthy, and that fully half the farmers in the country are just struggling along?—That has not been my experience.

85. The tradespeople have to sue a great many of them to get their money?—That is the same anywhere, but that is no criterion.

86. Do you not think it is accounted for by this: that there is a certain amount of brains required in all classes of industry and business, and that if one person has a little more it accounts for his making a little more money?—I am not quite clear as to what is understood by brains. I know men who are like blocks of wood and they have been very successful as farmers.

87. You say there is an import duty put on boots for the sake of revenue?—Yes, or for protecting the manufacturers in the country.

88. You said you would not be prepared to suggest anything else until there was some other means of getting that revenue?—Yes, I did say that.

89. Are you not aware that that duty is put on for the protection of the manufacturer here?—I am fully aware of that.

90. Not for the benefit of the manufacturer, but because a lot of people would be thrown out of employment?—Yes, I am fully aware of that.