

29. You will admit it is the selling-value that gets the price, and he can only get that selling-value, and he has to pay the charges to the land agent above that?—Yes; but in fixing what he will sell at he must take into consideration what it is going to cost him. Supposing it would pay him to sell at £47 10s. an acre, and he knew that the charges altogether would run to £2 10s. per acre, he would fix the price at £50.

30. Do you consider it a fair and right thing to ask the struggling dairy-farmer—because there are very many of them—to supply butter at below actual value to the wealthy class of the community?—I do not think it is right to ask any man to do anything of that description, but the point that appears to me to be an important factor is this: that when you rise the price of a commodity like this you do not finally and ultimately assist the man you are describing, but assist the man who is farming the farmer, and that is the man who has got something.

31. If you pay the farmer 2s. 6d. per pound you will assist him?—You are paying the man farming the farmer who is behind him.

32. *Mr. Hawken.*] You have told us a good deal about land. You admit, of course, that the price of land has nothing to do with the price of butter?—No, I do not.

33. I mean to say that if land is £200 an acre, or even if a man has it for nothing at all, he still gets the same price for his butter?—Yes, if I understand you rightly.

34. He gets the market price for his butter?—Yes.

35. And it is not fixed by the price of the land at all?—I say that the price of the products determines the price of land finally.

36. And the land has nothing to do with the price of the butter?—Well, I gave my statement.

37. Do you think there are any substitutes that can be used reasonably instead of butter?—No, I do not—not without injury to the health and well-being of the people. I think the worker is equally entitled to the best. It is good enough for him. Those who perform useful service should get the best.

38. You find that in practice no substitutes are satisfactorily used in New Zealand?—I do not think so. In my opinion there is no substitute to equal it.

39. I mean there are no substitutes used in New Zealand?—Not that I know of, except that many people have to do without it and substitute half a pound where they ought to have a pound, or substitute mutton-fat for butter; but I do not think there has been any use of margarine like there has been in the older countries.

40. In regard to the question of the ration tickets, do you think it would be a good thing for the man with a family with butter at the present price—do you think he would take advantage of it? Take a man with a family who does not pay income-tax, do you think he would use such a ticket if it was supplied to him?—Force of circumstances might compel him to, but side by side with that would be a reduction in his manhood and self-respect. If you are aiming at the wealthy man who is able to pay it, then tax him.

41. The point is this: that an increase of 1d. per pound means £100,000, and 10d. increase means £1,000,000—that is, if we lowered the price on what we use in New Zealand. We could help the family man to a very large extent by, say, allocating half a million for that purpose, but it would go a very little way when spread over the whole of the population. All we could do would probably amount to 3d. or 4d. per pound; but if it was allocated to one class of men on whom the cost of living is pressing very heavily, the man with the family, he would get very substantial help?—You do not propose to give it to him whether he is in a position to buy it or not; you are not rationing in the way that every man should get what he needs, but he must be able to purchase it.

42. You do not think it is right?—No. Get at the other person in some other way. I say the system of rationing is degrading to the manhood of a man. Help him to keep up his self-respect.

43. *Mr. McCombs.*] You do not want charity?—No.

44. *Mr. Hawken.*] The only way would be to raise a man's wages or reduce the price of butter?—That does not operate fairly. It operates fairly in the case of those in a union which keeps wages up by means of the Arbitration Court, but there are thousands of people who are not in a union and who do not get any benefit, such as old-age pensioners and salaried people. You do not help them by that. You are only helping the people who can go to the Court.

45. Your only solution is to decrease the price of butter?—I say you should keep the price of butter down to the same price as it is at present, and that you are not justified in taking advantage of the world's conditions and famine prices in the Old Country and Europe.

46. *Mr. Poland.*] You do not suggest that the dairy-farmer who is producing the butter should be the man selected amongst all the farmers in New Zealand to bear this burden of keeping the price of butter down in order to assist the whole community, and that the dairy-farmer who is supplying cheese should escape scot-free, or that the wealthy farmer who is not going to be bothered with the labour of producing butter or cheese and goes in for the growing of wool and fat beef should also escape? You do not think the one dairy-farmer who is producing butter should be selected?—No. I suggested there was one of three ways—to take in the whole of the farmers, the man who grows wheat, mutton, cheese, or butter—each pays his share towards it.

47. That is general taxation?—Yes, on the land.

48. Then one of your suggestions is that it should be met by a general increase in land taxation?—Yes.

49. But you would not advocate that the butter-producer should be selected as the man who should make the sacrifice for the benefit purely of the other people of the community?—No; one of the suggestions was that you tax the whole lot.

50. You also made the suggestion that the price of butter should be kept down to its present price?—Yes.

51. Would not that involve a sacrifice on the part of a special class who are producing the butter?—It, of course, depends upon how you interpret the word "sacrifice."