

ordinary conditions. If I remember aright they had about three years' wool-clip in Australia, and that did necessitate emergency organization, and I am not criticizing that, but neither do I compare it with the conditions which are sought to be dealt with by this Bill.

11. In regard to meat control, is it not a fact that this year's market—except for beef—is at the highest price of the series?—I believe that it is a fact that mutton and lamb have sold at very gratifying prices, possibly the highest of the series, but I would like to point out that this is quite irrelevant to this consideration, because Australia, without a Meat Board, has had the benefit of the same recovery in prices. That recovery was due to the exercise of economic laws, and to that only, as far as prices are concerned.

12. Are you aware that the Meat Board held back from shipment a million carcasses in order to meet the scarcity that will take place from now on, and that has been the cause of the rise in prices?—I am not fully conversant with the operations of the Meat Board. I do not know whether they did hold back a million carcasses, but if they did it was more or less a voluntary effort, because the compulsory provisions of the Act have not been invoked.

13. It is not. I take it that you will say that it is not necessary to invoke the compulsory clauses of this Bill as long as the suppliers agree to the course taken?—If the suppliers agree they could do it without a Board.

14. No, not necessarily?—I think that voluntary organization would permit of it being done: at any rate, the Bill contains the most drastic provisions, and some of its advocates have expressed their intention of using every one of them, and if that section gets control, then I say, "God help the dairying industry of New Zealand."

15. But you do not suppose that the dairy-suppliers would put in charge of this industry men who would go to such extremes without proper reason for their action?—It becomes a question of judgment, and these powers which it is proposed to invest these people with are greater than should be asked by any one, under the conditions which confront the industry, which have not any of the elements of emergency. As to who would get into power under the proposed method of election there is room for any surprise. It is not a direct franchise.

16. You have very little faith in the people who manage the dairying business, apparently?—Well, I have endeavoured to avoid any personal references, but if you wish me to give views on personalities I hold them fairly strongly and shall be willing to express them.

17. I am speaking more of the judgment of those who will elect these men: do you not think they are capable of electing a Board that will do the business in a businesslike way?—There is the possibility of vote-splitting. Perhaps I might be pardoned, if the Committee wishes me to illustrate my views on this point, for introducing a personal reference.

18. *The Chairman.*] If it is with the object of fully explaining the position it is admissible?—Yes, it is with that object. I would prefer not to mention my own attitude towards other institutions, but, frankly, I was recently urged to stand as a director of the National Dairy Association. It was the result of a spontaneous movement amongst a group of producers. I did not know anything of their wish until they came with the formal request that I should become a candidate. On thinking it over I believed that I could help it along, and I agreed to become a candidate. There were five other candidates out, and I came second instead of first. The retiring man had not nearly a majority, but owing to vote-splitting he finally got back, and that sort of thing makes anything possible.

19. *Mr. Hawken.*] You spoke of shipping: is it not a fact that the Meat Board have secured an actual reduction in freight charges to the extent of £575,000, and that the dairying industry received only a reduction of £80,000? Now, can you account for that?—I do not know that I will attempt to account for it, but I will content myself by drawing the attention of the Committee to the fact that our reduction in meat freights in New Zealand with a Board was not quite equal to what they got in Australia without a Board, and therefore there must have been other reasons for it.

20. If Australia got it and New Zealand got it, why should not the dairymen have got it?—I think that the dairymen should have got a greater reduction.

21. What is your conclusion as to why they did not get it?—I think possibly it was partly due to the inaptitude of the people who did the negotiating. I say "partly" due, and I emphasize the word "partly" because the fact that in other parts of the world the dairying industry has not benefited to the same extent as other lines indicates that there are other reasons which pertain to shipping organization.

22. But does it not point to the fact that the dairying people want a Board of control such as the meat people have?—Well, if giving them a Board is going to enable them in any later adjustment to get nearly as much as they got in Australia without a Board, let us work without a Board too. In other words, the Meat Board, in that respect, I think, has not justified its existence.

23. Is it not a fact that the Meat Board secured a reduction in freights before Australia did?—I do not think so.

24. I think you will find that that is so?—I reckon it was arranged at the same time: there was only a question of a few days in the announcement. You may take the cases of articles like casein and other general cargo, where the negotiations have been undertaken separately and by voluntary negotiation, and you will find that in these cases the reductions have been even greater than in the case of meat.

25. Yes, but the fact remains that the dairy people have been left out?—They have been left out. I have given my reasons as to why we have not done better. In all parts of the world we dairying people are in the same position relatively, and in the case of meat the Board has not justified itself on the question of freight.