

speculation in land-values, which means that when improved land is high in price it is practically impossible to farm it at a decent rent at all? Then, in another paragraph he says, "The union considers that this position is upon us at the present time, and that the prevalent unemployment is in part due to inflated and inelastic money rates of wages." Does not Mr. Polson think that when people are not selected at Home but are allowed to come out here indiscriminately from England and other places, to the tune of ten thousand or eleven thousand a year, that that is more responsible for the unemployment than, say, the drift to the towns as mentioned in another paragraph? I agree with Mr. Polson that if there were a proper selection of migrants in England it would be to the benefit of all concerned. But I am merely concerned with the two questions I have put.

*Mr. Fulton*: I would ask Mr. Polson to deal with this question: Dealing with the several awards in the farming industry, there is provision made for piecework; and piecework is actually being worked in those industries, and it is working well. Is Mr. Polson of opinion that this has brought industrial peace in those industries where piecework is actually in force?

*Mr. O'Byrne*: Mr. Polson referred to strikes, and he also wishes that the dairy industry should be cut off from the Arbitration Court. I wish to ask if he knows of any strike that has occurred in the dairy industry in Southland or Otago during the past seventeen years, during which period unions have been formed in that district. I also ask if he knows of a case where the unions have brought the dairy suppliers before the Court even for a breach of the award, notwithstanding that the men working under the award are working sixty-five hours in the week, and the managers are working seventy hours a week.

*A Delegate*: When do they sleep?

*Mr. O'Byrne*: When they can: in their clothes. My friend Mr. Fisher will tell you that. If this industry is cut out from the Arbitration Court, conditions will go back to the old state of affairs before the formation of a union under the Act, when the men worked in the factories considerably longer hours—up to eighty—and had to fetch their wives and families into the factories in order to help them to make a decent living-wage. Those were the conditions prior to the formation of the union under the Act, and evidently some of the farmers—I know that all do not want it—wish to go back to the same condition of affairs again. I can assert that the farmers from the period of the formation of the union in Southland and Otago had a more prosperous time since the union has been in existence than before. Does Mr. Polson know of any strike, or breaches of award? If not, why cut them out from the Arbitration Court?

*Mr. Polson*: In regard to my reply, it is quite obvious that it is impossible for me to reply to questions asked me at this stage—in fact, I cannot remember all the questions that were asked, let alone reply to the several subjects mentioned. The very learned professorial staff were given the option of considering their replies. The questions I have been asked are being asked seriously, and I want to take them seriously and to give a considered opinion, and answer those that I can reply to. Some of them are in detail, and I will not be able to answer them. I shall have to consult in some cases the dairy representatives here, who are as much entitled to discuss them with me as any one else in the Conference. Under these circumstances, I suggest that the questions be put in writing, so that I can have a chance to understand them, and I hope to be given a further opportunity of dealing with the subjects mentioned to-morrow morning.

*Mr. Roberts*: Surely we are not going to allow the Conference arrangements to be upset now. The questions have been asked Mr. Polson, and if he cannot answer them now possibly he can do so later; but I think that any delegate giving a paper should be able to reply to any questions asked. I have prepared a paper, and am prepared to reply to questions at the conclusion of the paper. Otherwise, I would not put my views in writing. I think the idea of the Conference is to obtain an explanation of the matters contained in the papers as we go along.

*Mr. Purtell*: To answer all the questions will take a long time, and I think, in fairness to Mr. Polson, they should be put into writing in proper form, and they could then be answered to-morrow morning. I do not think Mr. Polson has had time to take them down.

*Mr. Bishop*: I move that the Standing Orders be suspended in this case to give Mr. Polson an opportunity to reply to the questions at the end of the reading of the next paper, or to-morrow morning, whichever is preferable. I do not expect that there will be so many questions asked in connection with later papers. I have not seen all the papers on this side, but I am told that they are all very much shorter than those that have been read. Another point is, that many of the questions addressed to Mr. Polson would have been very much better dealt with if they had been kept back and addressed to the speakers on this side who are representing particular sections of the farming industry. Several questions have been asked with regard to dairy factories. We have dairy-farmers here who will presently read papers bearing on that industry, and they will be in a much better position than Mr. Polson to answer questions on the subject. I ask that Mr. Polson be given an opportunity to reply, say, after the reading of the next paper, or to-morrow morning.

*Mr. Brechin*: I second that motion. It seems to me, speaking as a dairy-farmer representative, that a number of the questions asked Mr. Polson are of vital importance, and that they should be answered, but after consideration.

*Mr. Roberts*: I thought the idea was to finish to-morrow night for the present, and I am afraid that this motion is an instance of "going slow." I think the papers being read now should be answered at the conclusion of the reading. We have not time to give Mr. Polson two hours to-morrow morning to answer the questions. Even from the farmers' point of view, I think the questions can be answered at once and finished with, but if Mr. Polson does not wish to answer them now we cannot help it. If this concession is given to Mr. Polson, naturally the next delegate who reads a paper can ask for a similar concession, and would have to get it; and so on until the end of the papers, and we shall be sitting here until May on the papers alone. I think that the questions should be answered now or