

45. Are there any meat-freezing works that you know of connected with the trust?—I do not know anything about that at all—I have heard rumours. What you must do is to protect the interests of the grower here, and also the interests of the English consumer at the other end. This country is more interested in the wants of its brothers in England than in Americans.

46. *The Chairman.*] There is a return showing that the New Zealand Refrigerating Company have been paid £3,312,348, and that Sims, Cooper, and Co. have been paid £437,981 [*Vide Appendix D.*] From your knowledge of the business with Sims, Cooper, and Co., do you think those figures can represent their business?—No.

47. *Mr. Witty.*] Have you any idea what Armour and Co. are doing?—They did a little business, but they are going very slowly. Armour and Co. are one of the trust.

48. Do you think the amount of £74,000 might be correct in the case of Armour and Co.?—Yes.

49. Has there been any alteration in the directorate of the New Zealand Refrigerating Company since it was started?—I do not think so. I have had nothing to do with that company in the past. Latterly they have refused to do any freezing for farmers. They say they will, but when you apply for space they are full.

50. *Mr. Scott.*] Do you think Borthwick and Sons have any connection with the Meat Trust?—No.

51. Do you think Armour and Co. have any connection with the Meat Trust?—Undoubtedly they are part and parcel of the whole thing.

52. But you do not think Sims, Cooper, and Co. have any connection with the trust?—No.

53. They may be forming a trust of their own?—I think they are financed by very powerful people, and they are able to operate on a very large scale. As far as the Meat Trust is concerned, it is only a trust at the other end now.

54. They would be in open competition against each other out here?—Yes, ostensibly in opposition to each other out here.

55. I suppose you have no knowledge of their systems of buying at the present time. It has been stated by witnesses that Sims, Cooper, and Co.'s buyers were in active opposition against Armour and Co.'s buyers?—Apparently.

56. And in consequence of that have raised the prices considerably: have you any knowledge of that?—No, I have not seen Sims, Cooper, and Co.'s buyers and Armour and Co.'s buyers competing. I have generally seen the Americans chasing Borthwick's buyers one at a time.

57. Do you think there is strong competition between the buyers of Sims, Cooper, and Co. and Armour and Co., and the New Zealand Refrigerating Company?—No.

EDWARD JOHN ARLOW examined. (No. 17.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What is your position?—I am New Zealand manager for S. V. Nevanas and Co. Proprietary (Limited).

2. What is their business?—Frozen-meat exporters, and buyers and shippers of everything in connection with our primary products.

3. You know that the object of setting up this Committee is to inquire into the operations of the American Meat Trust?—Yes.

4. Could you make any general statement upon the matter?—I have already supplied a lot of information to one of the members of this Committee privately. That information could only be given privately because if it comes out publicly it would affect our company detrimentally in England.

5. Have you any suggestions to put before the Committee as a means for combating the operations of the Meat Trust?—Yes. The first suggestion is, prevent elimination of competition in New Zealand by protecting the free exporter and the grower. We want protection for the free exporter and free grower by providing that they be consulted in regard to the disposal of the stuff of which they are the actual owners. In the past all negotiations have been conducted purely through freezing companies, about fourteen out of twenty-six of which did not own any of the stuff which they had disposed of. They are not competing in the outside markets for the securing of the stuff; and the remaining twelve constitutes our opponents in the districts where we are situated. In the case of Auckland, at the conferences between the Government and the authorities there was present Mr. Rowlands, representing Fletcher and Co., who is our biggest competitor there. In the case of Gisborne there was Mr. Warren, representing Nelson Bros., and so on. I am giving you examples of how the exporter is badly treated. In all the arrangements made our opponents have prior knowledge of details, and yet we, although owners, cannot get that information.

6. Why?—Because the Government Requisitions Committee wrote to us saying that the process had been established whereby all information was to be obtained from the freezing companies, and implying that they could not recognize any free exporters or persons outside freezing companies. Where the freezing companies have got the information they will not go out of their way to tell us. There are certain items which would be of value to us to know, but voluntarily they will not tell us. For example, at the last conference of freezing companies there was a cable read out in regard to slipe wools. The freezing companies had suggested to the authorities that an all-round advance of 1s. 3d. per pound be made on slipe wools. The Imperial authorities replied that they considered the price should be 1s. 2d. per pound. When we buy live-stock we must estimate the value of the wool, and if we are 1d. out we lose by it. I calculated last year that all wools