

want the railway pushed on in preference to roads. Population will not come unless there is facility for travel and for getting our products out. The Maruia Plains are well suited for dairying. We would like the Government to assist our dairying industry by placing purebred bulls in different localities. We approached the Government once for two bulls, but were turned down. That was last year. The dairying companies might take charge of the bulls.

NELSON.

MONDAY, 10TH MARCH, 1919.

THOMAS A. TURNBULL, Mining Engineer, examined.

I wish to suggest to the Committee that iron, oil, and coal deposits should be nationalized. Regarding the quality of the iron-ore at Onakaka, I put in a statement showing that Dr. Marshall had nineteen samples, and his percentage of iron is 49.6 as against Dr. Bell's 45. As to the tonnage of the ore there, Dr. Marshall says, "There cannot be less than 22,500,000 tons on 96 acres. The ore extends as far as the outcrop of limestone, beneath which it may continue along the dip of the rocks." The whole of Onakaka can be worked by gravitation. The Onakaka lease is in my name. It has cost me practically £18,000, the last £3,000 being overdraft.

To Mr. Luke: I do not support the proposal to take the ore to Westport. We have bituminous coal within eight miles of Onakaka.

To Mr. Hornsby: There are millions of tons of coal at Marble Creek, Coal Creek, and elsewhere. According to Dr. MacLaurin's report the sulphur in it is only 0.36 per cent. If Government officials and others say there is no coal available in the neighbourhood I say they were too lazy to go over the property. There is not the slightest doubt about the existence of coal. I have seen some of it at the gasworks in Nelson, giving 66 per cent. of coke, which is about the highest of the American. The coal should not cost more than 7s. f.o.b.

To Mr. Craigie: I have a sixty-six years' lease, and I pay about £160 per annum. The coal is suitable for smelting.

To Mr. Sidey: I represent a company, the lease being in my name. It has cost me £18,000 and my friends £10,000. I favour the Government sending to America or England for an expert. The people of New Zealand should develop the deposits as a State enterprise. I have a scheme that I shall lay before the Committee regarding that aspect of the matter. I am not aware whether Mr. Morgan has reported on the coal to which I have referred.

To Mr. Veitch: I have protection during the war only.

To Mr. Luke: I am not in favour of sending Home 500 tons or 1,000 tons of the ore for a test: I think it would be useless expense. The quality of the iron is well known, and for myself I am satisfied of its commercial value.

To the Chairman: My lease will be deprived of protection almost immediately. As to the steps I propose to take—well, I am pretty well sick of it. I would make a sacrifice to quit, as I am too old to bother about it. There are others in the business besides myself, and they would have to be consulted before I could make a definite offer to the Government. I take it that the Government will not deal with us more harshly than with the Parapara Company: we are not looking for profit. We do not ask for money—we would take a *quid pro quo*. If the Government will do anything in the matter we are willing that it should have the chance. At present an English company is after it, and there is another inquiry. A letter was sent to Sir Thomas Mackenzie in 1915, suggesting a combination of British ironmasters to take up the concern, and his reply was that he was not a commission agent or a company-promoter. We asked for £10,000 in cash and £40,000 to be taken up in shares.

Witness: Regarding oil, I should like to see it nationalized. No bore should be put down without the approval of the Government Engineer. All boring so far has been on lines of fault, with two exceptions. In respect to the Mining Act, I think that provision should be made for free areas up to 50 acres for new discoveries a mile from the workings. Then I should like to see it made a penal offence for any one to make a false declaration, or a statement, or to suppress information. I suggest the utilization of marls as fertilizers, say, on pumice lands. As to paint, the quality of the Parapara material for paint is of excellent quality. I also wish to suggest that before a mine or a lease is abandoned the manager should be obliged to lodge with the Mines Department a plan of all the workings, sworn to as correct. Then I desire to suggest to the Committee that there should be a Minister of Industries, and that any industrial scheme of national importance, such as oil, coal, iron, or any mining, manufacturing, or industrial project, such as would be advantageous to the people of New Zealand, or such as would be profitable to or lead to the greater development of our industries, or the cheapening of the cost of living, or saving in cost to the Government, may be taken in hand by the Minister of Industries, who shall obtain reports upon such schemes, &c., from competent persons and submit the same for approval to the House of Representatives, which shall duly consider the matter and hear any petitioner in its favour or who is likely to suffer thereby. If the project is approved by the House of Representatives the Government to guarantee interest upon the capital invested in such an approved scheme at the rate of 5 per cent., paid yearly. The project shall then be submitted to the public for subscription. After successful subscription directors to be elected. The chief accountant shall be a Government appointee approved by the directors. The Government shall be represented on the Board of Directors. The first charge upon the profits of any proposition floated shall be cost of flotation and the recouping to the Government of all interest paid and cash expenses incurred. All net earnings after providing for the 5-per-cent. interest shall be