

decisions may possibly have been antagonistic to the Bill. Naturally some of the branches are small, and a lot of the members of such branches may not be very familiar with matters appertaining to this Control Bill. They did not really understand the position. Well, these decisions were sent to the provincial executives, and they discussed the matters with the representatives from the branches, and when certain clauses that they did not comprehend were explained to them they unanimously came to the decision that the principle of the Bill was a good thing to affirm.

33. You presume they are speaking for the whole of their members?—I am quite safe in saying that.

34. Do you think that everything that is passed at a conference is approved by all the individual members of the union? Are there not remits passed at conferences in a hasty way that are really not supported by the individual members?—That is so, but I hardly think that that could apply to such an important matter as this.

35. Well, where does the opposition come from? We have had a good deal of evidence given by the factories against the Bill?—I may say that the Dairy-farmers' Union have not been operating in Taranaki.

36. Where do they operate?—Mainly in the Waikato and the whole of the Auckland Province, and down through the Manawatu and Rangitikei.

37. They do not embrace the whole of the dairy industry?—Not the Taranaki district and the Wairarapa, but there are a large number of members in the Wairarapa district.

38. That is where the opposition is coming from largely, from those parts?—I presume it is coming from Taranaki.

39. Do you cover the whole of the Wairarapa?—No, not the whole of the Wairarapa. The Wairarapa has not been fully worked.

40. I have a paper here that states that nineteen factories voted for the Bill, and twenty-nine voted against the Bill. What happened to those twenty-nine factories that are against the Bill?—Where are the twenty-nine factories, Mr. Forbes?

41. In Auckland. You represent the Dairy-farmers' Union in that district, and you say that they are unanimously in favour of the Bill?—That is so.

42. Do not you think yourself it would be as well to have a vote—to give each individual dairy farmer a vote on the subject of this Bill? Then you could settle conclusively whether the suppliers are really for it or against it. Surely your union would not object to a vote being taken?—Oh, no.

43. If you say that you are representing a union faithfully you would not object to a vote being taken?—We have taken a vote at our union meetings and conferences.

44. Among the delegates, yes, but the complaint is that the delegates do not always represent the views of the individual members. The attendance at the meetings may be small. It is very difficult to tell what the real opinion is?—(No answer.)

45. There is another thing. Do you think there is any parallel between the Meat Control Board and this proposed Dairy-produce Control Board?—In what way?

46. Do you think the circumstances are parallel? Is it not a fact that the meat industry was practically unanimous in asking for the Meat Control Board? There was no division of opinion; there was no opposition. Now, with respect to this Bill you must recognize that there is a considerable body of dairy-farmers who are opposed to it. Do you not think that the rights of that minority should at any rate receive consideration?—Well, of course, in parliamentary life, for instance, that is the position: the minority does not receive any consideration. It is the majority that rules.

47. You think you would apply that principle to the dairy industry—that this minority should not have any consideration at all in regard to their views?—I can only apply that example. That is the experience of life. I suppose we have to put up with it. It is impossible to get absolute unanimity in such a matter.

48. You believe in compulsion to make a man join your union? You believe in compulsion being brought to bear on him?—Well, that is an extreme way of putting it.

49. If a dairy-farmer wishes to stand out, you would compel him to come in under this Bill?—I believe in majority rule, and if this parliamentary Committee is satisfied that the majority of the dairy-farmers want this Bill I believe that the Bill should be passed into law. You would get nothing done in this country if there had to be a unanimous decision. How many Bills would you get through the House in such a case?

50. You practically believe in compulsory unionism?—I am not dealing with unionism.

*The Chairman:* That is outside the question.

51. *Mr. Forbes.*] It is practically a form of united control. Do you not think that it should be a matter of voluntary association?—No, I do not.

52. You believe in compulsion?—I do not want to be drawn into any personal opinion. I think the union I represent recognizes that such a decision cannot be unanimous, and that there will be a certain number of people not in favour of it. I do not see how you can in everyday life avoid that.

53. You think that you are justified in forcing others to come in and abide by what is done?—I think the majority must rule.

54. *Mr. Langstone.*] I suppose, Mr. Cobbe, you realize that the economic law is a compulsory law and not a voluntary law?—I hardly like to deal with the economic aspect of the question.

55. A farmer is compelled to sell his butter to somebody?—I am afraid I cannot deal with that aspect of the question.