

PACKERS WOULD SUPPRESS REPORT

Suggested to Neil and Reynolds That They Should Not Make Any.

BY THEIR REPRESENTATIVE.

Neil Insists That What He and Reynolds Reported is True.

Washington, June 7.—The house committee on agriculture continued its hearing on the Neil-Reynolds meat inspection report today. Thomas H. Wilson, manager for Nelson Morris & Co., and representing the large Chicago packing houses, continued his remarks on the Beveridge amendment providing for meat inspection.

Aside from the objections he had pointed out yesterday, Mr. Wilson said the only other serious objection was the provision placing the cost of inspection on the packers.

Before discussing this objection, Mr. Wilson was questioned closely by Representatives Henry (Conn.) and Haskins (Vt.), about the section intervening between those he found fault with last night and that regarding the cost of inspection.

"Have you been advised since we adjourned yesterday not to make further objections?" asked Mr. Haskins.

"No, sir, it so happens that most of the objections are in the first section," replied Mr. Wilson.

As to cost, Mr. Wilson said the packers had very serious objections to having this expense placed on them.

CONDEMNED ANIMALS.

"We are now under an expense aggregating \$1,000,000 a year for condemnation of animals," he said.

"Neither the retailer nor producer bear any of the loss on condemned stock. It falls on the packers," asserted Mr. Wilson.

Representative Scott (Kan.), suggested that it was generally understood the packers so controlled the meat market that they would be able to recoup themselves the cost of inspection.

"We could not," replied Mr. Wilson. "The large packers kill only 50 percent of the meat supply of the country, and do not control the market."

Representative Henry suggested that the delinquencies of the packers had placed them in the present position, and inquired why should the packers object to paying if the government is to "pull you out of the hole?"

MR. WILSON OBJECTS.

Mr. Wilson objected to this view of the case. It was not the fault of the packers, he said. The packers had sent men into every hamlet of the world to create a market. The packers were willing to compete with any new requirements, but they were now losing money on their English market, but were carrying it to develop trade.

"But we feel this to be an unjust burden and one we ought not to be called on to bear," he added.

Chairman Wadsworth asked if any complaint had ever been made as to the quality of the goods shipped abroad.

"Well," replied Mr. Wilson, "I could not say no to that question. Occasionally we have a case of goods sent back, but we always try to get hold of the goods that are the subject of complaint."

"What is the result on your foreign trade of the present agitation?" asked Mr. Wadsworth.

KILLING FOREIGN DEMAND.

"The result is very disastrous," replied the witness. "Our foreign demand for fresh meats and manufactured products has been practically cut in two. Our foreign competitors are all making the most of this and are getting the benefit of agitation, and we are standing the loss."

"Naturally," suggested Mr. Wadsworth, "if your foreign demand falls off your purchases of livestock will be less?"

"I do not see where we are to find markets if our foreign trade is cut off," answered Mr. Wilson.

"Well," continued Mr. Wadsworth, "you will not have to buy the stock. No, but cattle raisers are accustomed to ship their stock to Chicago and get their money for it. If this should stop I don't see how we are to avoid a terrible calamity in the west," responded Mr. Wilson.

"If," he said, "the packers are required to pay for this inspection it would be a reasonable position for the packers to take that they would not buy the stock that has been condemned."

Under the Beveridge amendment, Mr. Wilson said, it would be possible for the secretary of agriculture to put an inspector at the elbow of every packer and charge the cost to the packer.

Representative Lorimer (Ill.) suggested that the Beveridge amendment could put out of business thousands of slaughterers doing an interstate business, and would result in creating a "beef trust" in reality.

NUMBER OF INSPECTORS.

Dr. Melvin, chief of bureau of animal industry, was asked incidentally to state the number of government inspectors in Chicago. He answered, 72 veterinary, 39 examiners and 55 labors, making 166 in all. In the whole service, he said, there are 731.

Representative Henry of Connecticut complimented Mr. Wilson for the showing he had made, saying: "I do not think the Chicago packers made any mistake in the selection of the representative they did so plausibly present a somewhat dubious case."

Mr. Neil was then put on the stand. He said he had worked for a Chicago packing house for six months in a university settlement.

"You are a specialist along economic lines?"

"Modesty forbids me to say," replied Mr. Neil.

He said he was and had been for a year and a half commissioner of labor.

Mr. Neil then related a porting interview with Mr. Dyson, consulting veterinarian in Chicago, representing the packers. Mr. Dyson, he said, had suggested that Neil and Reynolds go to Washington, make a report, but inform the packers of the conditions found and suggestions for remedies, then to wait 30 days and come back and see if conditions had not been bettered. This, he indicated, was to prevent injury to the trade.

NO TRADE OR DEAL.

Mr. Neil said he replied that he was not authorized to make any trade or deal, that he did not know what the president's plan was, but believed it was to secure adequate legislation. Mr. Neil followed this statement with a letter he had received from Mr. Dyson.

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in which it was suggested a sanitary committee be appointed and that it be given 30 days to accomplish improvements, pending which no reports should be made.

Mr. Neil rather discouraged a visit to the committee to Chicago at this time, as many of the conditions complained of were due to negligence and could have been remedied immediately. Mr. Neil denied the statement of Mr. Wilson that the floors were scrubbed daily. The dirt in some of the rooms was washed on the floor and had not been washed for weeks.

DIRTY FLOORS COMMON.

Mr. Neil said he at first began making notes of the conditions, but after several days, seeing no change in conditions from day to day he abandoned the practice. He felt justified in saying that the dirty floors was a common condition. There were some dirty and some clean rooms, but a clean room seemed to be accidental and gave the impression that sanitation was not a matter that was looked after in these plants.

This included all the large plants. Again Mr. Neil was asked: "You take direct issue with Mr. Wilson on the fact that these rooms were not cleaned?"

"Yes, sir, I do. There were floors there that were black. There was no ventilation. These rooms were not ventilated. These, without exception, were the most satisfactory of the plants and no fault could be found," said Mr. Neil.

But you did not mention anything creditable in your report," remarked Mr. Wadsworth. "Were you there simply to find fault?"

NEILL'S OBJECT.

"No, we understood that we were to ascertain conditions that needed legislative remedies," answered Mr. Neil. Representative Haugen of Iowa wanted to know the objection to artificial light.

"We are working right here in this room with artificial light and have 50 others right in this Capitol," said Mr. Neil.

"My opinion is," replied Mr. Neil, "that no one should be required to work eight hours a day by artificial light."

Mr. Neil said he remembered in particular one cooking room was dirty and he remembered walls, particularly in the entrances, that were sticky with dirt and a pillar that you could scrape dirt from with your knife. There were rooms with rafters from ceilings which had not been whitewashed for months.

Mr. Lorimer asked a number of questions to find out if Mr. Neil saw meat in trash from curing cuts to the cooking vat. But Mr. Neil would not answer this directly.

"I did not follow the meat in that way," he said. "We saw meat in all stages, not knowing where it came from or where it was going."

IN THE BOXING ROOM.

In the boxing room Mr. Neil said he had seen dirt. In this connection he took issue with Mr. Wilson's statement yesterday. In the Nelson Morris house, he saw one of the men who had just finished his boxing walk over the dirt floor to a pile of meat on the floor, climb on the pile with his feet, knees and hands, pick up a piece and throw it 12 feet on the floor to his bench, and as the dinner signal sounded at that time he saw men climb upon their tables, get their lunches and sit down on their tables to eat. This, he said, was directly under the eye of the superintendent.

Mr. Neil said the papers heralded their arrival in Chicago and their presence in the packing houses was known daily.

Asked again about the bone conveyer, or by Mr. Lorimer, Mr. Neil said the conveyer was covered with grease black with dirt. He was not prepared to say that that particular conveyer was used in a particular place.

MEAT IN ROTTEN BOXES.

Chairman Wadsworth took up the statement in the report "we saw meat shoveled from dirty floors into rotten boxes and pushed from room to room."

"How do you know they were rotten?" Did you test them?

"We felt them," and smell them. "There are floors there," he continued, "which all the seas could not wash the dirt off."

The shuffling of a hog into a privy was made the subject of a colloquy between the witness and Representative Brooks of Colorado.

Mr. Neil said he saw the hog fall, and identified a picture of the privy. The hog was not on the rack, and he believed the hog was never cleaned.

Chairman Wadsworth persisted that the witness might "believe" the hog was not cleaned, but he did not "know."

At this point Mr. Wilson was allowed to state that there were men scraping and cleaning hogs and that none was allowed in the cooling room that was not perfectly clean.

"This was not a case for scraping. It was one for cleaning with an antiseptic fluid," replied Mr. Neil.

THE HOG CASE.

Chairman Wadsworth persisted that the hog case contained the essence of the whole report. The statement was technically made in the report that the hog was not cleaned. He said when as a matter of fact Mr. Neil had admitted he had not followed the hog to ascertain the fact that he had stated.

TUBERCULOSIS SPIT.

Going back to the statement regarding the tuberculosis spit on the floor, Mr. Wadsworth insisted that Mr. Neil did not know as a fact that the workers had tuberculosis.

"The fact was established in my mind," protested Mr. Neil. "I can only say that I believe it."

"Oh, well, there is a difference between belief and knowledge," said Mr. Lorimer.

"Well, I know it," replied Mr. Neil, "did you examine them?"

"I observed them."

"You saw other diseased persons also, what other diseases?"

"Well, doctor," said Mr. Lorimer, "you have made these statements to the world in a report which has done incalculable injury to this industry, and we want to know the facts."

STANDS BY REPORT.

"I have made this report, and am willing to stand on it," replied Mr. Neil. "There were smells of medicine on these men that you get in dispensary notes for certain diseases."

When other questions to draw out details were asked, Mr. Neil, he remarked: "If you will examine me, I think you, Mr. chairman, and Mr. Lorimer are quibbling."

"Oh, no, we are not quibbling," came from both gentlemen.

Representative Haugen (Iowa) protested that the witness was being put in the attitude of a defendant under cross-examination.

"The witness can take care of himself," said the chairman.

Well," retorted Mr. Boske, "I think I have the right to make this statement."

WILL QUESTION WITNESS.

Mr. Lorimer asserted that he had not been discredited. He said, "a witness," he said, "is the author of a report, and I shall, until the committee passes a rule that the witness ought not to be questioned, endeavor to ascertain the facts."

Mr. Neil here asked permission to make a statement. He said that it was six weeks ago that he was in Chicago.

He saw hundreds of things that did not go into his report. As to the rubbish that went into the report he did not specify "rubbish," a nail, rubbish, a piece of rope.

As to the tendency of the work in the packing houses to lower the morals, Mr. Neil said he believed that is the case.

TENDS TO IMMORALITY.

"An instance," he said, "a young girl 16 or 17 years old went to walk across a long room filled with men to get into a water closet. This does not tend to morality, especially when some of those men are of the lowest type—I will not say the workers are immoral."

When Mr. Lorimer asked the witness as to his treatment of the treatment of the witness (Mr. Wilson), yesterday by certain members of the committee and his treatment of himself today by the same members was strikingly different, especially when the testimony of Mr. Wilson tended to raise a direct question of veracity between himself and Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Wilson.

"That's just what I think, too," asserted Representative Lamb (Va.) warmly.

CAME FROM PRESIDENT.

At this point Mr. Henry (Conn.) declared that this report came directly from the president, who is responsible for it, and stands sponsor for it. In view of this it is, he believed, highly discreditable to question it.

Mr. Neil added, "Some of the questions have been asked in an attempt to lead me into statements which I absolutely do not make to make."

Mr. Neil denied that the girls sit down.

"They may have permission but there is nothing for them to sit on," he asserted.

NEILL'S INSTRUCTIONS.

Asked to go into details of his instructions from the president, by Representative Cromer (Ind.), Mr. Neil replied that he was not told to go anywhere except Chicago. However, he should refuse to go into this subject further, as he might be compelled to refuse to answer some questions.

Reverting to his inspection in Chicago, he referred to a room for girl workers poorly ventilated.

"Did you have any objection to the manner in which the men were handled in this room?" asked Mr. Lorimer.

"I must say," after a pause, replied Mr. Neil, "that I was so interested in observing the condition of the workers in that room that I did not take notice of the manner in which they were handled."

Mr. Neil commended the government inspection, but would not commit himself on the state inspection.

PACKING HOUSES NOT OPEN.

It was a mistake to state, as Mr. Wilson did yesterday, he said, that the packing houses are open to the public. He then described the hog-sticking process, and said:

"One man sticking hogs was nearly as clean as I am; another was covered with blood." He described one room where girls were packing dried beef, in which the girls looked well and clean. The fault in this room, and this applied almost universally, was that the water closet ventilated into the room. The closets were flushed automatically.

Every suggestion made to correct the "absolute brutal indifference" with which the employees, especially the young girls, were treated, he said, was met by the statement, "Oh, they don't mind that."

The committee then adjourned until 10:30 o'clock tomorrow.

TO PREVENT TUBERCULOSIS.

Boston, June 7.—In the convention of the American Medical Association today tuberculosis received attention before the section of hygiene and sanitary science. In a paper on "Some Ways to Prevent the Spread of Tuberculosis," which was read in the absence of the author, Dr. William N. Rogers of Denver, he advocated the development of educational influences. The first of these, he held, should be legislation. Anti-tuberculosis societies were cited as of great advantage, as well as "the possible influence of the lay press."

"Of the greatest potential power is the public school. We have scarcely begun to exploit its possibilities. Systematic and correct instruction might be given in courses extending throughout all grades, giving the rising generation a ground-work of practical hygiene which would prove of much greater value to the nation than many of the branches to which much attention is now given. It would be not only the rising generation which would profit by this, but also the present generation. What the school boys and girls carry home they impart to their parents, particularly in branches which the child recognizes as applying to all of the family."

GERMANY'S DEBT HUGE.

Berlin, June 7.—The Berlin statistical office has issued a monograph on the finances of the German states and empire.

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