

£19 he would have to get a lower wage. In coal-mining, whenever the selling-price of coal is increased 1s. the miner gets 4d. out of that and a minimum hewing-rate is fixed?—I suppose there would have to be an understanding about the selling-price.

51. Could not the same thing be done with regard to flax?—I do not know how it could be done. We say it is wrong that our industry should have to suffer when men are willing to work for us, while Government is sending them to relief-works.

52. Men's necessities compel them to do many things, but the Arbitration Court is set up to see that they get fair conditions of labour. I believe the Committee would be prepared to open the case on general lines, but not to allow you to go outside of the Act; otherwise you would be free to employ whom you liked, pay what you liked, and be absolutely under no control at all?—At any rate, I think some machinery should be provided to meet such cases.

53. I quite agree that there ought to be a means of reopening a case and attempting to deal with such matters, but not to allow employers to go outside the operation of the Act so that they can just fix matters up to suit themselves. I think you would find other industries objecting to be bound by a law which permitted others to be free?—I trust I have made myself clear that we are entitled to some relief. The present position is injuring a lot of people.

54. I think the Committee fully recognise the value of the flax industry to the Dominion as a whole, and do not want to do anything that will cripple it. If we are going to deal with the matter legislatively, it will be contended that if wages are to come down royalties will have to come down?—I have been quoting the cost of green flax on land assessed at Government valuation, and not the actual cost of maintenance.

55. I was informed the other day that £3 per ton was asked for as a royalty on the green leaf?—I have never heard of anything more than £1 2s. 6d.

DANIEL MORIARTY examined. (No. 11.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—President of the Furniture-makers' Union of Wellington.

2. Do you represent your union here?—Yes.

3. You do not come as a representative of the Trades and Labour Council?—No, certainly not.

4. Have you seen the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act Amendment Bill?—Yes.

5. Will you tell us what you think of it in your own way?—I would like to explain the reason why I am here to-day. Our union was practically ousted from the Wellington Trades and Labour Council because we took up a position which showed that we did not consider it represented labour. The Wellington Trades and Labour Council is controlled by about six or seven professional secretaries. Through their actions on the Council, and recognising that they were not representative of labour, we were forced to retire or to secede from the Council.

6. You were dissatisfied, and withdrew?—Yes. It was mainly on account of the Bill of last session. When that Bill came before the Council, one of the professional secretaries moved that a Parliamentary Committee be set up to deal with it, and report to the Council. Instead of doing this and giving members of the Council an opportunity to speak on it, they issued their famous manifesto. We, as a union, knowing that Messrs. Young, McLaren, and party were practically the Trades Council, and that they had summed the Minister of Labour up as a renegade and a parasite for introducing in the Bill certain clauses, and recognising that most of these clauses were what the workers wanted, sent a deputation along to the Minister to express our approval of the same. At the next meeting of the Council we had to go "on the mat" over it. The position of the paid secretaries is that they are trying to get into Parliament by any means, and it does not matter what measures were brought down they would cry out against them, so they moved a motion regretting our action in going to the Minister in connection with the Bill, and Mr. Young went so far as to say outside the Council that we were a blackleg union for doing so. When the nomination of candidates for the election of members of the Arbitration Court came out, the papers were sent direct to our union, and we nominated some one other than Mr. Young, the Trades Council's nominee. This also was reported to the Council, with the result that a motion was passed regretting that any union should be so disloyal as to refuse to accept their nominee. Of course, we explained the position before they passed the motion, and went so far as to tell them that if a Chinaman was standing against Mr. Young we would sooner vote for the Chinaman on principle; but it made no difference—we should have sacrificed principle to suit them. They then passed a further resolution to the effect that any union affiliated to the Trades and Labour Council which did not abide by the decision of the Trades Councils Conference should be expelled.

7. Were you expelled?—No, we drew out before that. They sent a deputation to our union, and Mr. Young, who was present, said there was no use in our going through the Bill at all, as he had given twenty-four pages of foolscap evidence on it himself, and that should have satisfied us.

8. You think the action of the Trades and Labour Council prevented your union expressing its opinion on the Bill?—Yes. The Trades and Labour Council was very anxious for our union to rejoin as they considered it would never do to have a split in the labour ranks, so they sent along the deputation to our meeting; but we pointed out that the resolution passed by them that every union had to obey loyally under fear of expulsion did not suit us. The position is that the paid secretaries have all the voting-power on the Council in their hands. Mr. Young, for instance, is secretary of two unions, with twelve delegates, and unless one agrees to what these secretaries say they will take some means to get them out of the Council, even if it comes to a free fight, or threaten to shoot one, as a friend of one of the secretaries did in my case. With regard to this Bill my union has gone thoroughly through it, and I will state the matters we object to. We object to clause 4 because it does not state that one employer may cause a lockout. We con-