

13. Then a great deal of the volume of your trade is done after the places of amusement come out?—The best part of the day with me is from 10.15 till 11.15.

14. *Mr. Okey.*] A train leaves Auckland every Sunday evening at about 9.30. Would it be an advantage to the travelling public if you could open one hour before the train leaves?—Personally I think it would be an advantage all round. But I am not asking for Sunday trading.

15. *Mr. Pryor.*] I would like you to explain to the Committee a little more clearly the class of business that you do, especially in the evenings. You sell fruit to the people who are going home from the theatres and places of amusement, and also "soft" drinks?—Yes.

16. You do a very large business in that sort of thing?—Yes.

17. People come in by the hundred after a quarter past 10 at night for the goods you sell?—Yes.

18. To what time do the trams run?—Up till 12 o'clock.

19. And the ferry-boats?—All night.

20. What you say is that a considerable volume of business is done by you between the time the places of amusement come out and the time the trams and ferries leave?—The bulk of the trade.

21. Are you aware what hours are provided in the schedule of the present Bill for employing girls in your shops?—Fifty-two.

22. But the time to which you may employ them?—10.30 and 11 on Saturdays.

23. To what hour do you employ your girls?—We are generally clear at about 11.15 or 11.20. We are generally out by 11.30. No girls are employed at night after 6.

24. This schedule has not been put into operation in the past as far as your shops are concerned?—No.

25. What you are asking now is that the schedule should be brought into keeping with the practice of the business: that is about all, is it not?—Yes.

26. You are not asking for something additional to what you have already got?—It has not been enforced.

27. You have been working up till 11.30, and you are asking for that right to be prescribed by law?—Yes.

Mr. Davey. That is 11.30 every night?

Mr. Pryor. Yes.

28. *The Chairman.*] How do you pay the men in your business—by the week?—Yes. They come on at different hours of the day. Two men come on at 6 o'clock.

29. *Mr. Pryor.*] You are not asking for any increase in the hours per week—you are not asking for more than fifty-two hours?—No.

30. *Mr. Davey.*] You said that the Act has never really been brought into force in Auckland as far as the schedule is concerned. Were you ever checked in any way by a Government Inspector for keeping open after hours?—No. There has been no interference whatever in the fruit business.

FRANK MAKIN WHITEHEAD examined. (No. 24.)

1. *The Chairman.*] What are you?—Restaurateur and fruiterer and confectioner.

2. At Auckland?—Yes, Queen Street.

3. Will you state your views as briefly as possible?—In the first place I would like to see the half-holiday made movable. In restaurants it is very awkward. A hand is supposed to get off on a certain day, and something happens—a couple of hands, perhaps, are off sick—and we cannot possibly get a hand on at that particular time. You may have three, four, or five hands away on a particular day, and then you have one or two half-holidays to get through, which is practically impossible. They are making it now, I think, that we must get them off on a certain day. In restaurants we cannot possibly do that. It would be better to say that they must have a half-holiday in the current week. It would give us a better chance.

4. You want to have the choice of the day?—Yes, in the current week. As for females in fruit-shops, 9.30, I think, is in the Bill. I should like to see that extended half an hour, to 10 o'clock. We are not asking for any extension of fifty-two hours a week. Our trade in Auckland is all done at night-time, and we have to take charge of the shop after our hands go off. If we could work our men to suit our business it would make a big difference. With regard to the wages-book, it is provided in this Bill that we are to keep it two years after the book is filled. We think that six months would be ample.

5. There is no difficulty about holding it for two years, is there?—A man might be out of business, but he is still liable.

6. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] It is only a matter of store room, is it not?—You do not know where a man might be.

7. *The Chairman.*] You would not be liable if you were out of the business, would you?—Then why keep the book for more than six months? I think that is a reasonable time. Then, in clause 5, subclause (3), it is provided that the husband, wife, and children are not to be counted in as employees, while in clause 26, subclause (6), the husband is left out of it altogether. I do not know whether it is accidental. As for six days' work a week, as far as restaurants are concerned it is absolutely impossible. For instance, if I have three waitresses in one establishment, I have to employ another waitress to relieve. She relieves the waitresses and the pantry hand perhaps for three days or four days a week. Then she has a day off herself, and then for