

prosperous. Two have bought an extra hotel. Others have sold out and gone into licensed hotels. The definition includes commercial boardinghouses. This is a very fair proposition. We have never asked that the small domestic boardinghouses should be covered by legislative restriction. It covers commercial boardinghouses that do exactly the same business as a licensed hotel, except that liquor is not sold. I will give the Committee an instance. There is Mrs. Malcolm's boardinghouse on the Terrace. The Judges of the Court stay there. Mr. Allen and Mr. Herries stay there during the session. The tariff is 10s. a day. About seven workers are employed there, and yet there is no regulation of hours and holidays. The place competes with the hotels of the city for accommodation of visitors to Wellington. Large boardinghouses are covered by the Act in Victoria. I do not think the Committee can draw the line in a better way than the Bill proposes—that is, by excluding all boardinghouses where less than three workers are employed. The point that the clause does not go far enough in is in respect to clubs. We ask for the inclusion of clubs in the "hotel" definition. The Wellington Club does the same business as the Grand Hotel. The Working-men's Club lives by the retail of liquor. Workers in these places should be granted the same protection as workers in hotels doing similar business. I would just like to add that the Factories Act has been extended in Victoria so as to permit of boardinghouses accommodating thirty or more boarders being governed by a Wages Board under the Act, and clubs are also included. We want an alteration in the definition of "shop-assistant" in clause 2. At present it is not comprehensive enough. We suggest the addition of the words, after "includes," in the last line of page 2, "and all workers in hotels and restaurants." As the clause stands it might afterwards be held that a housemaid or cook is not an assistant because she is not engaged in selling or delivering goods. It has already been held under the old Act that only waiters and waitresses actually engaged in selling goods were shop-assistants, and that cooks and housemaids were not within the Act. We want the position made clear. Clause 4 is the next clause that affects us. It does not go far enough. This is a matter that the Factory Inspectors can give better evidence on than I can. We suggest, first, that subclause (c) shall be made to read, "The daily hours of his employment during each week, together with the time of starting and finishing work in any one day." We suggest further the following additions: A time-sheet to be posted up in each department in every shop showing the daily working-hours of each worker employed. We ask for the deletion of the end of subclause (2), which takes the onus off the employer of maintaining the correctness of the working record of the hours worked. For all practical purposes the clause goes no further than the existing Act. And here is what happens under the existing law: The record-book is written up in stereotyped form. Any Inspector will verify that. At the end of her first week's employment the girl is asked to sign for her wages. If she questioned her hours she would get the "sack." We have had instances of it. Only a few weeks ago at the Masonic Hotel all the girls complained of having to work hours greatly in excess of the Act. The employer's answer was that they had signed for fifty-two. In the subsequent Court case the girls testified to excessive hours on oath, but the Magistrate accepted their signatures. The girl who made the first objection to signing for fifty-two hours got the "sack" immediately. Any girl protesting against signing the hours entered up by her employer in the first week of her employment would get the "sack." It has been our experience. The time-sheet would remedy matters. Each girl should be told her hours, and they should be posted up. Then there could be no "faking" the books. The time-sheet and wage-book would have to correspond. Clause 26, subclause (2): We ask for the deletion of this subclause. Clerks in other shops are not exempted: why give a special privilege to hotelkeepers? Clause 27, hours of labour: This is the most retrograde clause in the Bill. It is an apostasy on the boasted eight-hours principle supposed to be given general effect to in New Zealand. Moreover, it proposes to increase the hours of women workers in private hotels by six per week. No Parliament has ever yet legislated to increase the hours of women workers. This is what this Bill does. In places like the Windsor, the Bristol, the People's Palace, and other large private hotels now doing a restaurant business the working-week is fifty-two hours. If this Bill passes the girls' working-week will be increased to fifty-eight hours. No wonder, when that was pointed out to the girls in the Bristol, that they signed the petition put in as an exhibit by certain employers. I wish to refer the Committee to the Bill introduced in 1909 and passed in 1910, fixing the present hours of the private-hotel and restaurant workers. That Bill originally proposed a working-week of fifty-six hours for women in private hotels. As soon as we pointed out to Mr. Millar that it would mean four hours extra work for certain girls already granted fifty-two hours by Act of Parliament he immediately altered the Bill so as to fix the hours at fifty-two. Surely this Labour Bills Committee is not going to recommend that the already long working-week of fifty-two hours shall be increased by another six hours! It will be an action unprecedented in any Parliament of the world. Mr. Millar, then Minister of Labour, said that no Parliament in New Zealand would ever agree to a Bill increasing the hours of women workers in this country. I am certain this Committee will not recommend that it should be done now that I have pointed out what is proposed. Otherwise the hours proposed in the Bill, sixty-two and fifty-eight for men and women in hotels, and sixty-two and fifty-two for men and women in restaurants, are the same as in the existing statute. The only alteration is to limit the daily hours to eleven instead of ten. I will deal with that later. Why should we be asked to work longer hours than other shop-assistants? The succeeding sections propose to extend the holidays, but this section says that we must still do our sixty-two and fifty-eight hours, or, as I have stated, instead of sixty-two hours in six days and a half the sixty-two hours are to be worked in six days. What sort of a holiday concession is that? If we are to have an extra half-holiday why not make it a real one by lessening the hours? We are here to ask the Committee to fix the working-week in hotels and restaurants alike at fifty-six for men and fifty for women. Many trades work a forty-five-hours week; some only forty-two, and others forty-eight hours weekly.