in existence in the trade, and the times they were made to expire: Auckland hotels award, to expire 15th August, 1913; Gisborne hotels award, 1st July, 1913; Auckland restaurants award, 16th October, 1913; Rotorua hotels award, 31st December, 1914; Auckland country hotels award, 15th May, 1914; Wellington restaurants award, 27th March, 1913; Napier hotels award, 18th September, 1913; Wanganui and Palmerston North hotels award, 1st August, 1913; Christchurch hotels award, 30th April, 1914; Christchurch restaurants award, expired; Timaru restaurants award, 28th February, 1915; Dunedin hotels award, 1st May, 1914; Dunedin restaurants award, 29th May, 1913; Dunedin private hotels award, 1st May, 1914; Rotorua boardinghouses, 13th October, 1915. Thus it happens that if the Act were to come into operation on the 1st January, 1914, as we suggest, of the fifteen awards now operating, the time for which the following eight were made will have expired: Auckland hotels, Gisborne hotels, Wellington restaurants, Napier hotels, Wanganui and Palmerston North hotels, Dunedin restaurants, Christchurch restaurants. The following other four will have expired by the 30th May, 1914: Auckland country hotels, Christchurch hotels, Dunedin hotels, Dunedin private hotels. Leaving these three: Rotorua hotels award, expiring 31st December, 1914; Rotorua boardinghouses award, expiring 25th October, 1915; Timaru hotels award, expiring 28th February, 1915. But there are two other important points: First, by virtue of a clause inserted by the Court itself, of the seven last-named awards and agreements four will cease the moment this Bill operates, leaving only three in operation; second, of the three remaining, Timaru and Christchurch and Rotorua hotels awards, when the Bill is passed, if there is any conflict between the provisions of this Bill and those three awards, then as the Bill is drafted, or with section 31 dropped out as we ask, those awards will carry on for the term for which they were made. That disposes of the argument that the Bill interferes with the awards of the Court. The inclusion of the section (31) in this Bill opens up before this Committee the whole question of labour legislation. The employers and hotelkeepers, in keeping with the policy of their association, will endeavour to persuade the Committee that the fixing of labour-conditions in a trade should be left solely to the Arbitration Court, and that the Legislature should hereafter relegate all such matters to the Court. Our stand on the question is that Parliament should in the matter of labour legislation lay down, in keeping with the country's accepted principles, the maximum hours, the holidays, and other general conditions in regulation of a trade or occupation, leaving the Court to improve on them when necessary, and generally to fix other matters in dispute between the workers and employers in an industry. That is what every Parliament does in every country where the arbitration system obtains. In no country has any Legislature relegated to an outside tribunal the sole right to fix all the labour-conditions of workers. Any other action would mean the handing-over of the powers of the Legislature to, in some cases, a single individual, and the creation in a democracy of an industrial dictator with power to fix the working-conditions of the whole mass of the people. Only in New Zealand of all countries where the arbitration system exists has the Court been given power to override the judgment and decisions of the Legislature. I wish to place before the Committee lengthy evidence as to the facts in that connection. It was never intended that the Arbitration Court should have the power to so override the Legislature; but the legal mind found a loophole, and the Court has frequently imposed hours and conditions in an industry contrary to the general conditions laid down by the Act governing that industry. The result has been for five years past a contest between the Court and the Legislature as to who should be the authority in the end. It has been a remarkable state of affairs. The Arbitration Court created by Parliament has used its legal knowledge to circumvent the decisions and intentions of Parliament. The first contest arose over the "bank to bank" question. The Court was used to prevent the operation of the Mining Act giving effect to that principle, and after lengthy sparring and delay in the end Parliament had to clearly lay down that no matter what the Court awarded the principle must be given effect to. See the Coal-mines Amendment Act, section 2. It reads, "Section 38 [the "bank to bank" clause] is hereby amended by adding to subsection one thereof the following words: 'Such overtime shall be paid at the rate of not less than time and a quarter for all time worked in excess of the said eight hours, and shall be payable notwithstanding the provisions of any award or industrial agreement now or hereafter to be in force.'" Here is a case where Parliament deliberately interfered with an award of the Court. In the shop trades the Court's power to set aside the legislative conditions was again secured through a legal loophole. In the original Shops and Offices Act the hours-of-labour section was made subject to any award of the Arbitration Court. *Hansard* will prove that the intention of this clause was to give the Court power to award *less* hours than the general maximum laid down in the section. It was never intended that the Court should have power to award *more* hours. But despite the intention of Parliament, the Court, in shop trades, prior to the 1910 Act, often awarded hours in excess of the fifty-two provided in the section of the original Act. In our case the Court fixed sixty-five hours for certain of our workers who under the Act were limited to fifty-two hours a week. The butchers were awarded fifty-six, and the grocers and other trades all got award hours in excess of the Act. The result was an agitation by organized labour to prevent the Court so exceeding Act hours. The Court's action meant that workers in a shop trade, by organizing into a union and going to the Court, got worse hours than they had when not organized. Mr. Millar, the Minister of Labour, realized the injustice of the situation. He sought to remedy it by section 74 of the 1908 Arbitration Act; but even that section did not have the effect intended. It only applied to new laws passed, and left the old Acts just as they were, and the Court with the same power. And even though the section had been passed the Court continued to use its power and make awards contrary to the spirit of the Act provisions. Parliament made another attempt in 1910—this time a successful one. In the 1910 amendment to the Shops and Offices Act the words "subject to an award of the Arbitration Court" were struck out. Another section—11—was purposely inserted to circumvent a provision in our