

the employers believed that they had gone down rather badly. Last year the union did not ask for a whole holiday in the week. My association wishes to lodge an objection on these grounds: Boardinghouse-keepers are of opinion that no hard-and-fast Act of Parliament can possibly meet the whole of the conditions of locality, circumstances, and different conditions pertaining to the trade. Our suggestion is that the Arbitration Court would make full inquiries and give an award on the merits of each case. We are asking that private boardinghouses should be exempted from the provisions of this Bill, or, failing exemption, that the Rotorua boardinghouses shall be exempted during currency of present award. We think the interpretation of clause 2, in which it is provided that a hotel or private boardinghouse in which three persons are employed is included in the Act, is unfair, both as regards the employer and the employee, because in two houses catering for the same class of trade the employer of three or more persons is at a disadvantage compared with his neighbour who employs two. A man with a couple of daughters would have four hands and yet be exempt from the provisions of the Bill. There are two or three cases in Rotorua where daughters are engaged in housework, and where two or three servants are also employed. I say from the business point of view the whole-holiday proposal is unworkable and impracticable.

2. You have made an estimate as to the loss that would be entailed if the Bill comes into law!—It is only an estimate, and I would emphasize this point: that wages are only one aspect of the question, because the inconvenience and disabilities we would have to work under, and the trouble we would have in keeping staffs together, would be a disadvantage that no amount of pounds shillings and pence can compensate for. In my own case it will mean an increase of £270 17s. 6d., and twelve houses on the same footing as myself will pay £3,000 to £3,330. One house, larger than the others, will pay from £450 to £500 extra; nine smaller houses about £900; or a total increase in wages under favourable conditions of £4,700, or between £4,500 and £5,000. That is on the assumption that it is workable. Our contention is that it is not workable. Boardinghouse-keepers who have been twenty years in our little town are not able to find any solution of the difficulty of the full holiday. The lowest number employed in a house that can be affected by the Bill (full holiday clause) would be four, probably a cook, a kitchen hand and porter combined, and two girls. Say a cook's holiday is on a Monday: he leaves his work on Sunday and does not return till Tuesday morning. I put the question, Who is going to do the cooking on Monday? The kitchenman has no time to do it. If he had the time he has no ability, so he is out of the question. The two girls are fully occupied with their own work, and a thousand chances to one no ability, and if they had the ability they would not do it. It may be said, "Get in casual labour." In the country districts casual labour is out of the question. It is hard to get permanent hands at high wages. The only other solution is to put on extra hands permanently. Then we would be up against this trouble: it might be suggested that one permanent extra hand could do the work. I say one permanent extra hand cannot be found to do the work. A permanent cook will not do the kitchenman's work on the latter's holiday. It would take two permanent extra hands, one for the kitchen and an extra girl. That means two extra hands on a staff of four, or 50 per cent. increase on the wages. It means that for four days of the week two of the extra permanent hands are walking about the house doing nothing. It is suggested in the Bill that by having cumulative holidays the difficulty may be got over. This provision is also unworkable. In a house where six were employed you would have one going away every fortnight and one coming back. The Act says these arrangements can be made only by mutual consent. It is not worth the paper it is written on. What about giving more time for a cumulative holiday than would be given for separate holidays? That is quite against common usage. As far as Rotorua is concerned, when a servant went away for a cumulative holiday we should never see him again. We say that if this Act applies to boardinghouse-keepers it should apply to domestics privately employed and other domestic servants, otherwise it is class legislation which gives benefits to a certain class of workers and denies them to workers similarly employed. The matter should be held over till a comprehensive Bill is introduced dealing with people in all occupations where work has to be done on seven days per week. It will probably be suggested that we can recoup ourselves by putting on an extra tariff. That is not practicable at Rotorua. The extra cost on the estimate I have made is based on the most favourable conditions—almost ideal conditions. We say that even if these figures are right they are dependable on circumstances which are not even practicable. Although Auckland and other places have increased their tariffs, Rotorua boardinghouse-keepers have been loth to do so because it is a risky thing to do. Present circumstances are compelling us to raise our tariff for next season even without the proposition now facing us, and we think our trade may be very seriously affected. We have introduced most people to Rotorua by the reasonableness of our tariff, and to increase the expense is likely to seriously interfere with the trade.

3. *Mr. Long.* You informed the Committee that there were twenty-five boardinghouses at Rotorua: how many boardinghouses are covered by the award of the Arbitration Court?—After consulting the award I find there are thirty-one. I control two of these houses; Mrs. Constant controls two, reducing the number of proprietors to twenty-nine. The Waihi house is closed, reducing it to twenty-eight; the Montrose house is closed, reducing it to twenty-seven.

4. You are not in favour of exemptions for boardinghouse-keepers under the Shops and Offices Act?—I have already pointed out the injustice of exemptions. It would be unfair to other boardinghouse-keepers. Comparatively small boardinghouses would be in an unfair position compared with the one a little bit smaller which did not come under the Act. I have given some of my staff a day off in slack times. I have never given my chef a day off. When I had a permanent chef I gave him a fortnight's holiday every year. I have never made a practice of giving a day off. It was never the practice to give the servants a holiday prior to the first award. I last increased my tariff about five years ago—1s. a day and 5s. a week. Sixty-five hours per week are provided in the award, and the limit per day is twelve hours for both male and female servants. My servants work about sixty-two, sixty-three, or sixty-five hours per week. It depends