

the House, nothing about the country. Some people pointed out to them that this Bill increased their working-hours, and, though I am sorry to say this is right in one part, there was no mention of the full meaning of the Bill, which is to give one day in seven. Now as to the Bill itself, sir: in clause 1 April is too long; the 1st January, I think, is a reasonable date for the Bill to come into force. Still, that has been dealt with by other speakers, and I do not intend enlarging on that matter. In regard to clause 2, here, under the definition of "hotel," a private boardinghouse is included—that is desirable, very desirable. I want particular note taken of this point. So far as private boardinghouses are concerned, I believe that it is absolutely essential to have some limitation to the number of hands employed. There must be something like that—either two or three. I do say that this provision should not apply to anything that may be deemed a private hotel or licensed hotel. Then we have the resurrection of the widow, and we know that some people keep boarders (perhaps widows), and they may be forced to keep a girl. Really *bona fide* widows should be given every consideration, and this, I believe, is the proper place to draw the line; but so far as the hotels are concerned, I do not see any justification, for they are out on a commercial business pure and simple. I may as well deal with a matter that comes under section 2—the interpretation clause, under the heading "Office." You will here note that any clerk employed in a shop does not come under the Shops and Offices Act. Now, under section 26, subsection (2), the clerk is provided for, and it is provided there that the clerk is not to come under the provisions of this Bill—that is to say, that you have an employee who under no consideration is to be provided for. That is the complaint I have to make here: that there is no justification for stating this matter in section 26, subsection (2). Under this Bill you eliminate this class of clerk by every possible means from any beneficial legislation. There seems to be something against the clerk. We want that subsection struck out altogether. We can deal with the engineers ourselves through his own union, but the clerk, there is no provision for him; he can be worked all the hours that God sends. We do not want that; it is not right. In regard to workers in offices, there are so many restrictions, there are so many protections for the employer that the Act at the present time is no use at all to the employee. Clause 4 has been dealt with by Mr. Long. There is one point here that I may in fairness to the employer state is going to make it very awkward. Section (b) of clause 4 says, "the kind of work on which he is from time to time employed." We have men in Christchurch acting at one time in the course of a day as a printer, another time as a waiter, another time as a porter—you cannot deal with that man under this. You would have to fill out what he was employed at from time to time. What is wanted is the word "substantially." In regard to the condition here, "The entry of the particulars hereinbefore referred to shall be signed by the assistant at the time of the payment of his wages," that is where the employee signs the wages-book. I may say that this is a usual thing in Christchurch at the present moment. There is no objection raised to it in Christchurch, but this goes too far. We suggest that they stop at "payment"—that is to say, that the signature shall be a receipt for the payment of the money, and that the following words be deleted—"but also as a certificate of the correctness of the particulars entered with respect to that assistant"—because my experience has been that many girls are flustered and will sign anything, particularly in a new place. The first week or two they will sign anything at all. We have lost cases in Court where we knew that they were not getting the wages due, but they had signed the book. I admit it is absolutely essential that there should be a receipt for the money received. With regard to the time-table, I may say that in Christchurch we do not work under an award at all. We are working under an industrial agreement come to by the parties, and it has never been submitted to the Court other than once. Judge Sim then said, "I will make this award, but I do not think we will make this preference clause into an award," and the thing was withdrawn. Now, this is what we have under an industrial agreement: Clause 2—"A time-table showing the hours of work of each employee shall be exhibited in the staff's dining-room, or such place or places as shall be convenient to the employee and accessible at all times." We have that in Christchurch; it works to the benefit of the employer and to the benefit of the employee. There is the time-table: he works to that time and there is no trouble. If he works overtime he submits his statement. We have trouble where hotelkeepers forget to put up a time-sheet, but when it is pointed out to them—when their attention is drawn to it—they recognize it is beneficial to all parties, and conform to the provisions of the agreement. I would suggest that this would be a very useful thing to put into this Bill—useful for the members of the Labour Department when they have to go into a complaint as to hours worked, and if the employer is running on business lines he should have no objection. Clause 21 says, "Ordinary wages or salary of every shop-assistant shall be paid for the weekly half-holiday and for any public holiday." Under this Bill you intend the whole holiday. I would suggest putting in the words "a whole holiday," so that there would be no slip made that a man is getting a whole holiday and is not paid for it. There is a point in this as to what constitutes the wages they are being paid when off on holiday. Our people are being paid 15s., 17s. 6d., and £1 and over, inclusive of meals, but employers who feel a bit sore on this matter sometimes say they will put them out on this holiday and they can get their meals where they like; therefore it should be put in that meals or the equivalent are included. In referring to the clauses that deal particularly with this industry that Mr. Carey, Mr. Long, and myself are connected with as secretaries, I have already dealt with subsection (2) of section 26, and expressed the opinion that it should be eliminated. In dealing with main clauses which affect this particular industry, I endorse what has been said by previous speakers relative to the proposed increase of hours. There should be no attempt in this country under any considerations to increase hours. You can have a whole holiday, and you want them then to work their sixty-two hours within six days. It is not fair, and I submit to the Committee that they should consider, at any rate, the cutting-out of the two in sixty-two, making sixty. Cutting the six out of fifty-