

HENRY ALEXANDER PEARCE, representing the Rotorua Boardinghouse-keepers' Association, examined. (No. 16.)

*Witness:* I have heard the evidence of Mr. McLean, and am able to bear him out in most of his objections. The only thing I would propose to touch on is section 27, clause 2: "Such working-hours may be extended to not more than three hours in any one day, nor more than ninety hours in any one year. Written notice of the extended time is to be given to the Inspector within twenty-four hours thereof." We would ask that the limit of ninety hours be eliminated from the Bill. Altogether it works out at a quarter of an hour per day, and we think the workers are protected by our time-book, which shows the hours worked and the overtime each day. We think that is sufficient protection to the workers. We claim that at special times we may have to use the overtime and perhaps exceed the ninety hours. Section 29 says, "In lieu of allowing a half or a whole holiday as provided for in this Act, the occupier of a hotel may, with the previous written consent of the Inspector, require all or any of the assistants to work on the half or whole holiday on not more than one occasion within any period of two months." We consider it is unworkable to obtain the consent of the Inspector, because it is impossible in the country districts to obtain the Inspector's permission. Section 30 states, "In every hotel and restaurant, shall at all times keep an approved holiday-book, a record of the working-day in each week fixed for the half or whole holiday of each assistant. The record shall at all times be open for inspection by any assistant employed by the occupier, or by an Inspector, and shall be signed by each assistant before entering on his half or whole holiday." We ask that the word "fixed" be erased from that section. It is impossible to make a "fixed" day for any one of the staff. We may have to change the holiday at any moment.

1. *To Mr. Pryor.*] We never work overtime unless we are compelled. We are not fond of paying overtime. Overtime is on the basis of 9d. an hour—time and a half. It is impossible to get extra labour to save overtime in the country. You might "fluke" it once in half a dozen times. We think that sufficient without that restriction.

2. *To Mr. Long.*] We may not have to work a dozen hours' overtime in twelve months. If you were to say we do not work six hours I would not contradict you. I do not say because my business does not require it other people's business does not require it. There is no Inspector in many districts. I originally conducted "Thurwell," which had a tariff of 6s. a day, or £1 15s. a week. I have since taken over "Grand Vue," which has a tariff of 8s. and £2 5s.—a better-class house. Have given servants a whole day off at slack times quite a few times. I do not make a practice of letting the staff off in the slack season. During this last ten days we have had five servants doing nothing.

3. Have you given any of them a day off?—I cannot say; I have been away. Since the award we have increased the staff—two at Thurwell House, a porter-kitchenman and a waitress. The present proprietary kept them in busy times.

4. *Mr. Veitch.*] In the event of it being decided that boardinghouses shall come under the Shops Act, can you suggest a better definition than we have here now in section 2?—We have nothing to "sell," as it seems to mean in that clause. We have nothing "exposed for sale." I do not know whether we "offer" anything. The only improvement we suggest is that private hotels and boardinghouses be excluded.

5. *To Mr. Okey.*] I employ ten hands in the summer, and four of these just at occasional times.

6. What extra staff will you require if the Bill is put through?—We run a chef, and kitchenman, and porter. We should require one extra man to work three days a week to take their places. On the other three days he would be doing nothing. We would require two extra girls.

7. What objection is there to an extra man going from place to place?—That would be inadvisable, because he would become conversant with the business arrangements of the different proprietors.

8. *To Mr. Okey.*] There is no dissatisfaction among my employees. I do not know whether they signed the requisition. The petition was brought under my notice last Monday week. They had a notice from town, in view of the sitting of the Committee, to get a petition sent round. The petition was brought by the secretary of the local union. It is really an attempt to upset the employees. They cited us for an award a few months ago, including a half-holiday with no mention of a whole holiday; now they want a whole holiday.

ROBERT BREEN, representing the Otago Hotel, Restaurant, and Boardinghouse Employees' Union and the Otago Trades and Labour Council, examined. (No. 17.)

*Witness:* About five years ago I was instrumental in forming the union in Dunedin. With the exception of the last eighteen months I was secretary of the union. I have been requested by the bodies mentioned to come here and give evidence, and I have prepared this statement. The union desires the inclusion of clubs and public boardinghouses, and also a clearer definition of private hotels. There are three or four clubs in Dunedin, but they are not bound by any award. I do not know personally what hours the employees work, but from information received from time to time am satisfied they are in excess of the hours prescribed in the present Act. The wages paid in some cases are lower than the wages paid under awards for hotels. Application was made to the Arbitration Court to have clubs joined to the award, but the application was refused, so the employees have no protection whatever. There are several large boardinghouses in Dunedin which cater for the travelling public and enter into competition with private hotels which are bound under awards, and they are also outside the provisions of the Shops and Offices