

of bringing these cases forward to improve our conditions we are entitled to unconditional preference. With regard to the forty-four-hours week, we ask for that to be inserted in the new Act—that is, eight hours on five days a week and four hours on the recognised half-holiday.

11. *The Chairman* (to Mr. Whiting).] Would you make that apply to all unions?—Yes.

12. *Hon. Mr. Millar*.] You have told us that we ought to maintain the Act: do you think the Act is going to remain on the statute-book if strikes are going to take place when the awards do not suit?—I think so. We have had a number of breaches of awards by the employers ever since the inception of the Act.

13. I have a telegram in my hand stating that, if no settlement is come to, nine thousand coal-miners working under awards of the Court are coming out. If men desire to make their own conditions of labour they can, but they cannot possibly remain under the Arbitration Act and strike, and this Parliament will not dissolve until that matter is settled. We can amend the Act to provide that as soon as a strike takes place registration under the Act will cease, and the award will cease to exist. That appears to me to be the only successful penalty that can be enforced. If men wish to keep outside the Act, no law should compel them to keep inside of it?—You can place whatever you wish in the Act, but it is not going to prevent strikes if the men are inclined that way. We say you can lessen strikes in the way we have mentioned.

14. Do you think it is right for a union to take advantage of the Act and then, whenever it does not suit them, to strike and expect to go back to the same award again?—We do not. We contend the workers should be punished in the same way as the employers are punished under the Act. As Mr. Young has shown to the Committee to-day, although we have gained nothing since the Act came into force, we have stood loyally by it and to the decisions of the Court.

15. Did you notice that the Trades and Labour Council of Christchurch said they were prepared to take steps to prevent the handling of flour?—I am not responsible for what was said.

16. Is it any use trying to keep the Act or to amend it if that is the feeling of unionists?—Personally, I think there has been more made out of the strikes that have taken place in the country than should have been.

17. *Mr. Arnold*.] The evidence has been very clear, but I would like you to make yourself clearer with regard to preference to unionists: I understand that one of the chief reasons why your federation asks for preference to unionists is that you consider those outside the union should have the same advantages as those in the union who do the fighting, find the funds, and undergo all the disabilities consequent on what they do?—Yes, that is so.

18. Do I understand that you have withdrawn your request for preference to unionists, and that you will be satisfied if you can compel those outside the union to subscribe equally with the members to the funds of the union, or that, in consequence of not being able to get preference to unionists you will accept the other alternative in the meantime?—No. What we advocated last year we advocate this year. Last year's Bill contained proposals headed "Contributions to Unions." That proposal we strongly objected to, and we stated that we had no wish or desire to take any person's money: what we wanted was unconditional statutory preference to unionists, and we stand in the same position to-day. Unionists are put to great expense and have a great deal of work to do, and all the time they are fighting for the benefit of the men standing outside their union.

19. Do you still object to the clause in last year's Bill?—Yes.

20. With regard to experts in the Court: I suppose you are aware that when experts sit with the Court they have no right to express an opinion unless they are asked for it; that they cannot cross-examine witnesses; and that when the Court is sitting *in camera* they are not allowed to speak without being asked to do so? Do you not think it is right that these men should have full privileges—equal privileges with the other members of the Court in every way?—Yes. I should say the federation would be quite willing to have that in preference to the present practice, and would like the assessors to be able to examine or cross-examine any witnesses.

21. *The Chairman*.] That applies to assessors proposed to be appointed under clause 60?—Yes.

22. *Mr. EU* (to Mr. Young).] You are in favour of a law in regard to enforcement against any person striking?—Yes, as in the present Act.

23. Are you aware whether the majority of the workers are in favour of the retention of the Arbitration Act?—Yes, I do not think there is any doubt about that. Because a certain number like to override an award it does not follow that any one believes in strikes. No one believes in strikes that I know of.

24. You are aware that some of the unions claim the right to strike?—I am aware that some say they have been unjustly treated by the Arbitration Court, and consequently have struck.

25. You are in favour of inflicting fines for striking?—Yes.

26. And if the fines prove ineffective would you advocate anything more drastic?—The only thing I could suggest after that would be for the State to take control of all these industries.

27. You would have a revolt in connection with the wages paid by the Government?—I have heard of members of Parliament doing that before to-day.

28. *Mr. Poole* (to Mr. Whiting).] You believe that the delays, intentional or unintentional, are the cause of the unrest among unionists: do you think it would be better to make the agreement of the Conciliation Board stand as an award until the Court sat?—That is what we are asking for. We are asking for the Boards to be given power to make their recommendations binding until the Court sits, giving, of course, the right to either of the parties to appeal.

29. Do you think there has been any intention on the part of any one, acting on legal advice, to perpetuate delay?—I do not say it has been done intentionally.