

11. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] How would the clause read if you scratched out only those words?—"The wife or husband of that person, as the case may be, shall, while the shop is opened for business, be deemed to be a shop-assistant."

12. But are not these others included in the clause in order to render the Act operative in regard to them in spite of its restrictions?—No. I understand that this clause exempts the wife and the husband and the members of the family. I said that it was not an exempting clause, but I am led to understand that it is. I thought that it was the original clause that Mr. Seddon brought in some years ago, and all the dispute was over, but they tell me it is not—that it exempts these people.

13. *Hon. Mr. Massey.*] That is so, but it is the law now. We are not altering anything here?—That is so. We simply ask that "and the members of his or her family" be struck out. Now, with regard to clause 7, we wish to have added here, "Provided that no shop-assistant shall be called upon to work two late nights in one week." Should New Year's Eve or Christmas Day fall on Monday and the late night be observed on the Saturday preceding "till 11 p.m.," then on the Monday the assistants should get away at 6 p.m., otherwise they are compelled to work two late nights in the one week, with only Sunday in between. I think the Committee will see that this is a pretty stiff stretch, especially for females. They work up till 11 o'clock on the Saturday night preceding Christmas Eve. They get away for Sunday. On the Monday they work again till 11 o'clock at night, and they get no overtime—no compensation at all for these extra hours. And they work till 11 o'clock again the following Saturday.

14. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] If they had worked late on the Monday would they?—Yes. Here is the position: If Monday is Christmas Eve, on the Saturday before the Monday they work till 11 o'clock. Then they work on the Monday as well till 11 o'clock.

15. But they work late on the following Saturday?—Yes, till 11 o'clock; it is the Saturday before New Year's Day. Then they work on New Year's Eve till 11 o'clock. We say that it is an injustice to these men and women shop-assistants that they should be called upon to work two late nights till 11 o'clock. The employers get all the benefit of the extra trade; they do not want the assistants there except to do the extra volume of business. The assistants get no overtime for it.

16. *Hon. Mr. Massey.*] You start with Christmas Day: that is a holiday, is it not?—Yes.

17. And Boxing Day is a holiday?—Yes.

18. And is not the day after Boxing Day a holiday as well?—No.

19. You are speaking of Wellington. I think it is a holiday in Auckland?—We tried very hard to get the day following Boxing Day and the day following New Year's Day. The Wanganui Union agreed with the drapery employers to work on the Saturday preceding Christmas Eve till 11 o'clock, provided the employers would give them the day after New Year's Day off, and they did so; but we could not get it here. We got nothing extra here at all.

20. I am pretty certain that they get the day after New Year's Day in Auckland?—I am sure they do.

21. *Mr. Davey.*] There is no law on the subject?—No. It is custom. If the Committee do not think fit to alter this and they put in the extra holidays, we have no objection to the extra holidays, but at the same time we consider that if our people are called upon to work extra time, which means extra gain for the shopkeeper, we ought surely to get some recompense for it.

22. *Mr. Anderson.*] Would this extra day meet all your requirements?—I think so, if the Committee would give us an extra holiday. We want to be fair with the shopkeepers. We know there are special occasions when a shopkeeper can get more money in, and we want to help him then; but we want to get something in return for it. At the present time we get nothing. Now I come to clause 8, subclause (a): "For more than fifty-two hours, excluding meal-times, in any one week." We are sent here to ask, as I said before, for the abolition of the long night and for 12-o'clock closing on the half-holiday. If the Committee are unable to see their way to recommend the reductions we would suggest that fifty hours be inserted in place of fifty-two. In support of this we would point out that in most of the Australian awards the hours have all been reduced to fifty and less. These awards cover drapers, clothiers, ironmongers, boot and shoe shops. Those are the ones I am sure of. The reducing of the hours could be brought about by 12-o'clock closing on the half-holiday and by closing at 8 p.m. on the late night, or by giving those assistants who work fifty-two hours an extra half-hour per day off during some portion of the day. We would much prefer to see 12-o'clock closing brought into force and 8 o'clock fixed as the hour on the late night. Clause 8, subclause (3): We prefer the clause in the old Act relating to overtime, and do not consider it a fair proposal that an assistant should be called back without notice, as in many cases arrangements have previously been made to go out for the evening, and so on.

23. *Mr. Hindmarsh.*] They can bring the assistants back for thirty days, I see?—The present Act provides that they have to apply to the Labour Department and get the written consent of the Inspector. That consent has to be obtained before 4 p.m., which means that we get two hours' notice. It means that we get notice at 4 o'clock or before 4 o'clock that we shall be required back that night.

24. How often do they stock-take in these places?—Twice in the year in some houses, once in others. The Court has gone so far as to award that twelve hours' notice shall be given, or in lieu thereof 1s. tea-money. I am referring to the tailoresses' award. I may say that the employers' assessors in the drapery-trade dispute in this city agreed in the Conciliation Council to give their employees two hours' notice at the very least. This was an agreement with the employers when our dispute was before the Conciliation Council. We asked for twenty-four hours' notice of overtime. They agreed that they would give us two hours. The reason for that was that they had to inform the Labour Department before 4 o'clock, and they said they would willingly let us know so that we might send messages home if we had made appointments.