

member said, "Let us provide that the trade shall be conducted on lines that are fair to all," but now in the most inconsistent fashion he asks us to do the very reverse. If we are to do justice to all men we must vote with the member for West Perth, but if we would do an injustice deliberately and malignly we must vote for the clause as it stands. Unless we vote for the amendment we shall be pushing the small man down the hill. It would be monstrous that the court should say to a man who employs labour, "You can start when you like," but that it should say to the man who does not employ labour, "We will restrict your trading."

Mr. SAMPSON: I see that to maintain the argument I brought forward earlier would be to act with inequity. In an endeavour to support legislation that will make for equity on the part of those who are engaged in the industry, I shall support the member for West Perth.

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	15
Noes	20

Majority against .. 5

AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Brown	Mr. North
Mr. Davy	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Ferguson	Mr. J. M. Smith
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Taylor
Mr. E. B. Johnston	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Latham	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Lindsay	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Chesson	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Collier	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Troy
Mr. Heron	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Miss Holman	Mr. Willcock
Mr. W. D. Johnson	Mr. Withers
Mr. Kenneally	Mr. Pantou
Mr. Kennedy	(Teller.)
Mr. Marshall	

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 9.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 1st September, 1927.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—LAND SELECTION.

Withdrawal of Areas.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Have the Government withdrawn from selection all Crown lands in the South-West, Eucla, and Eastern Divisions of this State situated more than 12½ miles from an existing railway? 2, Is the Minister aware that applications for surveyed and classified agricultural lands are being refused as a result of this notice? 3, What is the reason for this stoppage of the policy of land settlement? 4, How long is this embargo to continue?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes, temporarily, but it is stated in the "Government Gazette" that any piece or parcel of land which has been specially gazetted as available for selection is not withdrawn. 2, No: surveyed blocks already thrown open are still available. (See answer to No. 1). 3, There is no stoppage of the policy of land settlement, but it is necessary to prevent the eyes of the country being picked out by selection, and for the department to be able to carry out a comprehensive scheme of classification and survey. 4, As sufficient blocks are surveyed, they will be available for disposal. It is the desire of the Government to avoid the expense and disappointment caused delay to applicants for land who have to compete in large numbers before Land Boards.

QUESTION—ABORIGINE MISSIONS, SUBSIDIES.

Mr. COVERLEY asked the Hon. H. Millington (Honorary Minister): What is the amount of annual subsidy granted to Forrest River, Drysdale, Pt. George, Sunday

Island, and Beagle Bay missions, separately?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON replied: For 1926-27: Forrest River Mission, £214 8s. 1d.; Drysdale River Mission, £60; Port George IV., £170 8s. 8d.; Sunday Island Mission, £258 7s.; Beagle Bay Mission, £231 9s. Records of previous years' payments will be found in the annual reports of the Chief Protector of Aborigines, laid on the Table of the House.

QUESTION—TRAFFIC ACT.

Routes Advisory Committee.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Works: 1, Is he satisfied that the Routes Advisory Committee is sufficiently responsive to the requirements of the travelling public? 2, Has he any objection to the Press being admitted to the meetings of this committee? 3, Has he any objection to its being re-constituted so as to include adequate representation of the local authorities responsible for the construction and maintenance of the routes affected? 4, Has he any objection to the committee, after selecting a given route, submitting it to the motor proprietors concerned with a view to gauging its commercial aspect? 5, Does he construe the Traffic Act to mean that in the metropolitan area a local authority for all purposes means the Commissioner of Police?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1 to 4, Under the Traffic Act the Minister is responsible for deciding routes. The Routes Advisory Committee was created as one means of informing the Minister on certain questions. The representation on the committee is considered adequate. 5, Yes.

QUESTION—MIGRATION, MR. SHEPHERD'S STATEMENTS.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Premier: 1, Has his attention been drawn to a paragraph in yesterday's "West Australian" giving the views of Mr. M. L. Shepherd, lately Official Secretary at Australia House, on migration? 2, If so, is the latter portion correct, "That we are catering only for migrants without capital"? 3, Will he take steps to see that our Agent General in London gives such information as will ensure this State securing these hundreds of desir-

able men with capital of from a few hundreds pounds to six and seven thousand pounds?

The PREMIER replied: 1 to 3, No.

BILL—SUPPLY (No. 2), £831,000.

Standing Orders Suspension.

THE PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.37]: I move:

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committees of Supply and Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day.

Question put and passed.

Message.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

In Committee of Supply.

The House having resulted into Committee of Supply, Mr. Lutey in the Chair,

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.40]: I move—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the service of the year ending 30th June, 1928, a sum not exceeding £831,000.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: This is two months' supply.

The PREMIER: Yes, exactly similar to what was granted last year.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Norham) [4.41]: The Premier does not need the same amount as was granted last year.

The Premier: If we find we do not want it, we will not spend it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: You will not be given the chance. I notice from the statements supplied that we do not pay interest and sinking fund and in that way are saving about £400,000 a year. The Minister representing the Government in another place said that we were saving immediately £400,000 a year in anticipation of Parliament ratifying the proposed Financial Agreement with the Commonwealth. The item of interest and sinking fund payments under Loan Acts amounted to £285,000 in each of the first two months of the year.

This year we are paying much less, with a greater loan indebtedness.

The Premier: Not a greater loan indebtedness.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, greater.

The Premier: About the same. The water supply loan has been repaid.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Naturally, each year with increased borrowing there is increased interest. I know that we are saving something as regards the water supply loan, in respect of which we paid £23,000 last year and £43,000 the year before. We are now paying £150,000 a year in respect of £3,000,000, and we are saving £23,000 which last year we paid in respect of £2,500,000. This House has not agreed to the cancellation of the sinking fund, nor has it agreed that we should repudiate the responsibilities we have assumed under past Loan Acts. In point of fact, we have not been asked to do so.

The Premier: No; and of course we cannot.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But the Premier is giving effect to his wishes in this regard before the House has approved of them.

The Premier: If the House does not approve, we pay.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But in the meantime the Premier on his own authority, or the Government on their own authority, have set aside the obligation—a course which the Premier admits is both unusual and unsatisfactory. To some extent we have not been meeting that obligation since the 1st January of last year. The amounts in question, anyhow, are not being paid into a trust account, and in fact are not being paid at all. As the Premier knows, under the statutes of the country there is an obligation to pay. The House ought to be given an opportunity of determining whether or not it assents to the course adopted by the Premier. Any person who holds a bond of ours can insist that we keep our obligation. Probably the Premier will find the House anxious that this State should observe its obligation. Naturally, we are not in possession of all the information the Premier has. The hon. gentleman probably has communicated with London, and probably has received from the Sinking Fund Trustees advice of which we know nothing. But even the trustees are merely our agents, and therefore

are not in a position to relieve us from any obligation to our creditors. At all events, it seems to me that the Premier ought to obey the Loan Acts which have been passed and meet interest and sinking fund payments until Parliament otherwise decides. For my part, if I were asked if I would agree to anything approaching a repudiation of our obligations, I would reply that I would not.

The Premier: I do not think the hon. member should use the word "repudiation." There is no question of repudiation about it.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Perhaps not, but I can only speak so far as I know, for I have no information on the point. If I were asked if I agreed to the repudiation of our obligations, I would reply in the negative.

The Premier: You do not think you are the only one who would adopt that attitude!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, I do not.

The Premier: Then you should not use the word "repudiation" at all.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course, I have not the necessary information, but at the same time I do not say there would be any repudiation. The fact remains that we have not any information to guide us. Probably the Premier has communicated with the sinking fund trustees in London. The whole thing hinges upon the acceptance by this House of the Financial Agreement. If that Agreement is endorsed by Parliament, the position will be clarified. In the meantime, we are not to meet our obligations for July, August, September, and October. We are voting funds on the same basis as formerly, but not with the object of making similar payments. For the past two months we have escaped the payment of about £66,000 and according to the Chief Secretary, who made a statement regarding the finances when speaking in the Legislative Council, the amount we will escape having to pay will total about £100,000 a year. If that is the position, we should have some information and the matter could be cleared up by a discussion on another Bill of which the Premier has given notice. That discussion could also involve all matters relating to the Financial Agreement. I hope the Premier will be able to adopt that course soon after we meet subsequent to the goldfield celebrations. Then the position will be more satisfactory.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier-Boulder) [4.48]: The present position arises because of the altered circumstances in view of the new Financial Agreement. I know members of the Opposition are more or less in the dark regarding that Agreement. I ask hon. members to have a little patience for a month or two. It has not been possible to submit the Agreement to the House up to the present. As a matter of fact, it is not yet signed. I have not received a copy from the Prime Minister for signature. In the circumstances it has not been possible for me to bring the matter before the House. I am anxious to submit the matter to members as early as possible because that will avoid discussions that will inevitably arise because of the uncertainty regarding the whole question. It will be more satisfactory to the Government and to the House as well to have a full discussion. The Leader of the Opposition must realise that it has not been possible to have that discussion to date. I expect to receive the Agreement within a day or two for the purpose of signature, and once it is received and signed, it will be open to the State Governments to submit it to their respective Parliaments. Probably it will not come before the Federal Parliament until next month at the earliest. The Federal Parliament meet again some time during this month and although doubtless the financial measure will be dealt with at an early stage of the session, it will probably not come before members until next month. We in Western Australia are not bound to time respecting what the other States or the Federal Government may do. Each State is free to discuss the question as the respective Governments may deem fit. That is the position. I have not gone into this matter because I do not think it desirable to have piecemeal discussions regarding the Agreement, and the effect it will have on Supply Bills. If we discussed the question a little now and a little more later on, the procedure would lead to confusion. It is better to have the whole matter discussed when it can be placed before hon. members properly. For that reason I have avoided going into the question at all. I have made no reference to it, nor yet to the effect the Agreement may have. It is true that I have been in communication with the sinking fund trustees in London, and I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that what is being done is quite regular and proper in the light of the Financial

Agreement. Of course we are somewhat anticipating what will be done. On the other hand I know that in some States, Treasurers will be budgeting entirely on the assumption that the Agreement will become law.

Hon. G. Taylor: Must all the States agree before it becomes law?

The PREMIER: I am not in a position to answer that question definitely. It is highly desirable that all the States should agree, but as to whether the Agreement will take effect if one of the States stands out, is rather a moot point.

Hon. G. Taylor: I thought the point might have been discussed at the conference.

The PREMIER: It was discussed, but I do not want to offer any opinion upon it at this stage.

The Minister for Justice: It was agreed by all the Treasurers to submit the Agreement to their Parliaments.

The PREMIER: Yes. At any rate, the question put to me by the member for Mt. Margaret is one to which I do not wish to reply. The question as to the effect upon the whole Agreement, if one State were to stand out, will be dealt with by the Prime Minister in due course. I admit it is unsatisfactory for the House to be asked to carry on without full knowledge regarding this matter, but the position is unescapable at present. So far, no opportunity has arisen to enable me to submit the whole question to the House.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You are really asking us to act before we agree to the financial scheme or know anything about it. We are asked to do that in passing the Supply Bill, for in agreeing to that course we, to some extent, endorse what you have done.

The PREMIER: I do not think so, except in regard to certain payments that will not be made in London. However, I do not think the Supply Bill affects the position very much. The hon. member suggested we should not suspend payment until Parliament had endorsed the Agreement. If we waited for Parliament to endorse it, we would lose money because we would have to make certain sinking fund payments that are unnecessary under the Financial Agreement. More than that, we are receiving assistance from the Commonwealth Government. It would simply mean that we would be paying away more than was necessary.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Chief Secretary said that the sinking fund would be cancelled and the money would be returned to the State. Of course, I do not think he was right, but that was what he said.

The PREMIER: I have not read what the Chief Secretary stated, and I have avoided entering into any explanation as to the effect of the Agreement. I do not think it desirable to have snatch discussions upon it now and again. The position would not be understood by anyone if it were dealt with in that way. The whole matter should be presented fully to Parliament and discussed in all its bearings in the most comprehensive way. That is the course I propose to adopt when I submit the Agreement to the House.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Will that be before the Budget?

The PREMIER: I cannot even say that. Possibly it may not be before I deliver the Budget because I hope to deliver it during the week following the resumption of sittings after the adjournment. I hope to present the Budget, at any rate, within three weeks. As I have already stated, I have not yet received the Agreement from the Prime Minister for signature and we cannot do anything until it comes to hand. As soon as the Agreement is signed and sealed, I propose to have copies printed and made available to every member in this House and in the Legislative Council.

MR. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narogin) [4.50]: Before we pass the Bill, I would ask the Minister for Lands to amplify the statement he made regarding the withdrawal of land from selection. A good deal of concern is felt regarding that question and the reply he gave to-day suggested that only certain blocks were still open for selection. I understand that is not so. The instructions are not being read in that way, and all land outside $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles from railways has been withdrawn from selection. Very little land is available within $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles of a railway. All that land was selected years ago. I would like to know the position regarding the withdrawal of land outside the $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles radius from railways. I have been told that pastoral lands have also been withdrawn from selection. I do not know whether the Minister can inform me further about the position, but people are looking for land all over the State. If the Government have withdrawn

all this land from selection, we would like to know whether it is merely unsurveyed land that has been withdrawn, or whether the whole of the areas outside $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles from railways have been withdrawn as well.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [4.52]: I do not know whether this is the time to make the statement that the hon. member desires. If he wants Parliament to know, and if the country is crying out for the information, I will give it, in my desire to satisfy him and the country. Had the hon. member come to me earlier he would have been given the facts. If he were to look up the "Government Gazette," he could get the facts as well. The "Government Gazette" contains the whole of the particulars regarding land that has been withdrawn from selection and the blocks still open for selection. To be frank, there is very little classified land available for that purpose. I am speaking of first-class land on which Agricultural Bank advances can be obtained. Occasionally blocks have been thrown open for selection and have been applied for by scores of people. I have received numerous complaints from would-be settlers saying that they are heart-sick and discouraged because they have applied unsuccessfully time after time. In some instances they have been, individually, one among forty to make application for a single block and people cannot afford that expense indefinitely.

Hon. G. Taylor: For one block, there were no fewer than 70 applicants.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. For the future, I propose to throw open 50 blocks of land at a time. That can be done as soon as land is classified and ready for selection. Then if there are 200 applicants for 50 blocks those concerned will have a reasonable chance of securing a holding. They will certainly have much greater opportunity than if 50 or 70 persons are applying for the one block. The present position is most unsatisfactory, because people cannot afford the expense.

Hon. G. Taylor: They get disheartened.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Of course they do. I think if 30, 50 or 100 blocks are thrown open at one time, it will be better for the country. The member for Beverley (Mr. C. P. Wansbrough) threw out that suggestion the other night. He probably realises the position and he asked why we should not

throw open 100 blocks at one time. Hon. members will realise that the provision of 100 blocks at a time represents a big task. We may have 50 blocks at a time, and I think the adoption of the policy I suggest would be more advantageous than the present system that enables 100 persons to apply for one block.

Hon. G. Taylor: You will not have so many disappointed people.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is so. I think it advisable for the time being to remove the outlying land from selection. A number of people, if given the chance, are only too anxious to pick the eyes out of the country and so spoil the classification. The object of many of those people is to get the land and hold it.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But they cannot get more than a thousand acres each.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, under their system of working in syndicates they can. If they can get hold of the land, then without making improvements they demand a railway. In the meantime they have picked the eyes out of the country, leaving the poor land in the hope that nobody else will want it alone, and so eventually they will get hold of that, too, and work it with their better land. The Leader of the Opposition knows that.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I know that we always surveyed the land before selection.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It is the best policy, too.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It cannot always be done in dealing with big blocks. I know of one area of 40,000 acres that some people want. Another group would like to get hold of the Forresteria country.

Mr. Latham: Even so, there are certain conditions they must comply with.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But they want to pick all the best of the land and leave the poorer patches. That is really the position. I have thought it out and come to the conclusion that it is far better to arrange to throw open a large number of blocks at the one time, and so give genuine applicants a chance of getting what they want. We are having the areas classified and put up in a proper manner.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [5.4]: I agree that if we are going to build railways into new country the land should be surveyed before selection, as has

been done for many years past. Otherwise we shall get into a terrible tangle. It is the only way. If we are going to build a railway east of Kondinin we must overlook the land before we allow selection. It is the more economical way for the selectors, for the administrative staff and for everybody concerned. I suggest to the Minister that our own people ought to get the land they want. After all, there is not so much first-class land available, and we cannot keep on selling the same area year after year. The better plan would be to prepare a list of those people in the State to-day who want land—as we did with the soldier settlers—select the genuine settlers, fix them up and then make another start. There are a great many of our own young men who want land, and in my view they ought to get land before we supply the requirements of strangers. When in England, I told the British Government that our wheat land was limited and that our own people wanted it and would have to get it. The House ought to give a direction to the Government to draw up a list of our own people who want land, particularly those who have applied over and over again for land. Then the Government should see to it that those people are fixed up. The Minister is quite right in wishing to prevent the eyes being picked out of the country. East of Kondinin and east of Narembeen the good land is limited. Forresteria is a fine area of magnificent country, but that too is limited. It ought to be properly plotted before selection. We shall never have enough blocks to supply all applicants. If we were to throw open 5,000 blocks we would have 5,000 applications for them although, of course, not all the applicants would be genuine settlers.

The Premier: Still, a great number of genuine applicants want to get on the land.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Well, let us select the genuine settlers from those other applicants who drive motor cars in Perth. I agree with the Premier that the Financial Agreement should not be discussed piecemeal. Already, of course, things have been said time and again, and of course people get a wrong impression from these piecemeal discussions. The statements made by members in another place and the reply thereto furnish an example of that.

The Premier: A comprehensive statement was made by a member in another

place, and of course that called for some reply.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, but this is the place where the discussion must originate.

The Premier: I thought it a pity that it should have originated in another place, but we could not prevent it, of course.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Then the Minister who made the reply in another place got into a bit of a tangle, for he referred to two credits and one debit in the same transaction. However, I do not wish to discuss the question now. Statements have been made and I, having seen the Agreement, know that the statements, even that of the Minister, were misleading; they did not convey enough to be of use, while they conveyed just sufficient to deceive the public.

The Premier: I have carefully refrained from discussing it at all.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: In another place the Agreement was discussed as if those discussing it had it in their hands.

Hon. G. Taylor: And the newspapers gave only brief reports of the discussion.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is a very big question, and brief newspaper reports will not convey any idea of what is proposed. For that reason we ought to have the discussion as early as possible. Whether the Agreement will be given effect to, is of course quite another matter. I for one will not be very ready to give up any part of our freedom, even in exchange for considerable advantages. However, we cannot come to any decision until we have the discussion. It all goes to show how right the late Alfred Deakin was.

The Premier: Yes, he was absolutely right. It was a most prophetic statement.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Well, we won't haul down our colours too readily. It is a tremendous question, and much confusion has been caused by partial statements.

The Premier: I think it would be a good thing if the whole matter were expounded first by the Prime Minister in the Federal Parliament, but I do not know when that will be done.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Even if the Premier introduced the proposal and then had the discussion adjourned, it would be better than unduly delaying it. We will require some adjournments if we are to

study the question properly, for the Agreement is the product of many months of work on the part of somebody.

The Premier: It would be a good thing if the discussion to be held here could be carried on in the light of the discussion in the Federal Parliament.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: At all events, we could get on with it and then adjourn it. There is a Bill on our Notice Paper, that dealing with the sinking fund, that has a bearing on the question and should be discussed with the Agreement. I have no objection to offer to the passing of the Bill before us. Still, I do not want it to be considered that in passing this measure we approve of any part of the proposed arrangement.

The Premier: No, of course. The granting of Supply will not mean that you in any way endorse the proposal yet to come before us.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: So long as that is clearly understood, I shall be satisfied. I hope the Premier will arrange to have the discussion as soon as possible, so that not only Parliament but the public may know what is proposed.

The Premier: I shall arrange it as soon as I can.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Committee of Ways and Means.

The House having resolved into Committee of Ways and Means, Mr. Lutey in the Chair,

On motion by the Premier, resolved—

That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the service of the year ending the 30th June, 1923, a sum not exceeding £450,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, £375,000 from moneys to credit of the General Loan Fund, £5,000 from the Government Property Sales Fund, and £1,000 from the Land Improvement Loan Fund.

Resolution reported and the report adopted.

Bill introduced, etc.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Bill introduced, passed through all stages, and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—BREAD ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Mr. Lutey in the Chair; the Minister for Justice in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Coming into operation of provisions relating to arrangement for joint rolls:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The clause states that certain provisions shall come into operation on a date to be fixed by proclamation. It takes time to get the rolls in order and there should be no delay.

The Minister for Justice: There will be no delay.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—Application of this Part:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The clause reads—

This part of this Act shall apply only to elections of members to serve in the Assembly and matters connected therewith, and to the rolls for such elections, and divisions (2), (3), (4), and (5) of Part III. of this Act shall, on the publication of the proclamation under Subsection (2) of Section 4, cease to apply to such elections and matters and to such rolls.

There is no Part III. of this measure, and Part III. of the existing Act does not contain that number of divisions.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The intention of the clause is that the provisions of the Bill shall take the place of those that exist in the parent Act. The clause is drafted for that purpose and to meet the position that is set out.

Hon. G. Taylor: There are no parts "to this Act."

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: These clauses will be read as one with the parent Act. They will take the place of a certain part of the parent Act, at which time it will be called "this Act."

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Where do we find Parts II., III., IV., and V., the parts that we are cancelling?

The Minister for Justice: In the parent Act.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is Part III., Division I., of the parent Act. What have we to do with that?

The Minister for Justice: The Bill does not say anything about Part I.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It refers to Part III. We want to know what we are doing, and how far we are providing for the cancellation of these provisions. Why is this being done? Is it the Minister's idea that the Bill should conform to the Federal Act?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: This sets out the procedure in connection with the printing of the Assembly rolls.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Is it proposed to conform to the Federal Act?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The principle is the same. This machinery clause is to take the place of the relative sections in our own Act.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister is endeavouring to come into line as far as possible with the Federal Act, but the provisions we are cancelling cover a multitude of things. Unless the intention was to bring our Act into conformity with the Federal Act, the Minister would not be repealing these sections. That must be his object.

The Minister for Justice: That is so.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But we are not re-enacting the provisions that we are cancelling.

The Minister for Justice: They are almost the same in principle, though there is a difference in the procedure.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: We all want to arrive at a cleaner roll, and to see that those people who are entitled to be on the roll are put upon it. I fear we are setting aside provisions that the people have understood for many years. There may not be much difference in the principle involved, but our Act was more easily understood than is the Federal Act. Someone must suffer.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The Bill is designed to bring about conformity in the matter of joint rolls. I take it these cancellations do not affect the closing time of the rolls.

The Minister for Justice: No.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: And that they do not affect the North-West seats?

The Minister for Justice: No.

Mr. DAVY: Ought not this Bill to consist of three clauses only? Clause 5 is really No. 3 of the proposed new Part IIIa.

The Minister for Justice: These clauses will be put in their proper order in the Act.

Mr. DAVY: Too much is left to the Solicitor General to put into order.

The Minister for Justice: The clauses must be numbered consecutively as they appear in the Bill.

Mr. DAVY: Clause 5 is not Clause 5 of the Bill, but Section 3 of the proposed new part, and is a kind of schedule to Clause 2. When we find an expression like this in the Bill, "Divisions 2, 3, 4, and 5 of Part III. of this Act," confusion must arise because that means the divisions of the Bill before us. I hope the Minister will see that in another place this difficulty is overcome.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Most Bills that are brought down in this House are amending Bills. When an amending Bill is incorporated in the parent Act, the clauses are placed in their proper order. We cannot be expected to number Clause 5 as No. 3 merely because it deals with Section 3 of the Act. Bills are always printed in this fashion.

Mr. DAVY: They are never printed in this way. I remember what happened with regard to the Bill dealing with arbitration. In that case the proposed new sections were given the numbers they would have when they appeared in the Act. That is what should be done in this case.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: I do not remember a Bill containing as many complications as this one. The Bill should become law as it is passed by the House, and should not be altered afterwards by anyone.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Bill is so arranged for the sake of convenience. We strike out Divisions 2, 3, 4 and 5, and we insert these clauses to take their place. We, therefore, know precisely where we are. We are reconstructing the Act to conform to the Federal Act, so that we shall have all the information there without looking through different Acts. It would necessitate an immense amount of trouble to draft separate clauses dealing with every small amendment that is being made to the Act, and this would mean that members would be obliged to compare every amendment with the sections of the Act. We all know how long it takes to ascertain the meaning of any amendment that is being made to the Land Act, for the reason that we have to look at not only the parent Act but all the amending Acts.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Land Act says in effect, "This shall be the law unless the Minister otherwise decides."

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The clauses in this Bill are the same in principle as the relative sections in the Act.

Mr. DAVY: The Minister will not admit the point we are making. The Bill should have been drafted in the same way as that which dealt with arbitration, setting out clearly what sections of the parent Act were being amended, and how they were being amended. The Bill refers to "this Act," which can only mean the document that is before us. This must lead to confusion. I submit that through a mistake it has been put in this form, and that thus confusion is caused. The Minister might well admit that the procedure is different from that of the past.

The Minister for Justice: Entirely different.

Mr. DAVY: Yes; and the Minister should consider whether the previous procedure, that which is advocated by the Minister for Works, should not be adopted in this case. To put this matter in order, the Solicitor General will have to do a little bit more than he is inclined to do when putting things into shape afterwards. I have never said anything disrespectful of the Solicitor General, or anything deprecatory of his ability: it is the Minister who is wrong in this case. Why should not the Minister admit that he is wrong?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: If we carry this clause, shall we not be striking out the fee of 2s. 6d. that has to be lodged with an objection?

The Minister for Justice: No.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—Arrangement with Commonwealth as to rolls:

Mr. LATHAM: Does this clause propose to adopt the same franchise as the Commonwealth?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No. That matter is dealt with later in the Bill.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 7—First rolls:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I take it the first rolls will have to be prepared by direction. Apparently the rolls will be made up by the Commonwealth, and our registrars will have to do the rest.

The Minister for Justice: No. All persons who have made application for enrolment on our rolls will be enrolled on the rolls contemplated by the Bill.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Will our registrars still have control over the rolls?

The Minister for Justice: Yes. The agreement provides for that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Our rolls and the Commonwealth rolls will have to be precisely the same under the Bill, but to-day they are not anything like the same. Will the Commonwealth take the names on our rolls and embody them in theirs, and will we take the names on the Commonwealth rolls and embody them in ours?

The Minister for Justice: No. The Commonwealth will take all names on our rolls and put them on theirs.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Heaps of names on our rolls are not entitled to be there.

The Minister for Justice: As I have explained, we are amending our rolls all the time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Our Electoral Act has never been administered. We have compulsory enrolment; but it has never been enforced, either by the present Government or any past Government. Incidentally, the Commonwealth will derive considerable revenue from the arrangement: if people pay a fine to the Commonwealth, they need not appear at the court. Our rolls must be cleaned up. At the last election they were in a bad condition. As a fact, there are on our rolls thousands more names than on the Federal rolls. In this State people move about so much from one electorate to another; and our rolls, consequently, have not been in particularly good order. They have always been a source of trouble to members, who have to attend to their own roll work. It is not right that members should have to do that work. Since we have compulsory enrolment, it should be enforced. I hope that under the proposed arrangement the rolls will be in somewhat better form. Names have been kept on our rolls although the Electoral Department knew they were not entitled to be on.

The Minister for Justice: No.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The Minister knows that one man committed, with impunity, as many as three offences under our Electoral Act.

The Minister for Justice: I do not know that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The member for Yilgarn admitted that he himself witnessed the claim cards of men who were not entitled to be enrolled. The hon.

member admitted that in court quite frankly. He said the men in question were not in the district on the 5th January, were not there until the 7th.

Mr. Corboy: I never admitted anything of the sort, and the hon. member knows it. I will not say his statement is incorrect: I will say it is untrue.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The hon. member must not use that word here.

Mr. Corboy: I will use it. You know the statement is untrue.

The CHAIRMAN: I think we are getting a little bit far in this matter. We must deal with the clause.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: At Yilgarn the hon. member said in the court—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is nothing in the clause dealing with what took place at some past time somewhere else.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But we are dealing with what might take place. It is our business to see that we provide legislation under which we shall have clean rolls, and under which only those people entitled to be enrolled will get their names on the rolls, and under which people will have to carry out every requirement of the law. That has not been done in the past, but I hope that it will be done in the future, and that the Minister will see it is done. This is an extraordinary way to amend legislation.

The Minister for Justice: It will provide a form necessary for the unification of the rolls.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suppose it will achieve the object the Minister has in mind. I hope we will get more than an amended Act, but amended administration as well. I refer to compulsory enrolment. The designations included may lead to confusion. A divisional returning officer is a Federal officer whereas our officers are known as electoral registrars or electoral officers. I suppose the position, in view of the two sets of officers who will operate, will be improved compared with that which existed in the past.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I do not admit that we have administered the Electoral Act in a lax manner. The Leader of the Opposition has often said that the less political influence there is regarding the administration of the Electoral Department, the better it will be for all concerned.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: There should not be any.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The less political influence there is the better, and if there is none, that will be more desirable still.

Mr. Griffiths: Electoral officers should be absolutely untrammelled.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Occasionally Ministers have to give directions to electoral officers in relation to the expenditure of money and so on. All Ministers have to do that. On the other hand, if the Chief Electoral Officer and those under him carry out their duties in accordance with the spirit of the Electoral Act, there should be no interference whatever with them.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It happened during the last election.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I know that the Leader of the Opposition claims that names appeared on the rolls that should not have been included.

The Premier: And there were a number off that should have been on.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Quite so. I adopt this attitude: I would prefer to have 50 people enrolled whose names should not properly be included, rather than have ten people not enrolled although they were properly entitled to the franchise. If people are enrolled improperly, we have a legal remedy against them, but if people entitled to the franchise are not enrolled, they have no redress whatever.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why do you want 50 people on the roll who are not entitled to have their names included?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: I did not say that at all. If 50 people are improperly enrolled, each of them has to accept responsibility for the enrolment and we can prosecute each if he has made an incorrect statement. I am chary about striking the names of people off the rolls, and it is the desire of the department to have everyone enrolled who is entitled to the franchise.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But not on two rolls.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: No. The trouble is that when people make out their claim cards, almost invariably they omit to include the name of the district for which they were formerly enrolled, and instead merely write the words "no other" along the line where the name of their former electoral district should be inserted. If an individual desires to transfer his enrolment from Northam to Swan, instead of

intimating on the claim card that he was formerly enrolled in the Northam district, he often deliberately sets out on the claim card that he is enrolled in no other electorate. In those circumstances, the electoral officers have no opportunity of knowing that that man is enrolled in the Northam district.

Mr. Mann: Often they do not write in the words "no other," but merely leave it a blank.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is so.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why not prosecute such a man for having made an incorrect statement?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: But the Electoral Department would have to find out first that such a man was enrolled in the Northam district.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But such a man makes a false statement.

Mr. Chesson: Very often he does not know that he is on the other roll.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: He thinks it is somebody's job to strike him off, whereas it is nobody's job, except that the department endeavours to keep the roll up to date. To that end information is sought from everybody who can supply it, officers such as road board secretaries, town clerks and the registrar of deaths. However, I do not know that we ought to discuss the general administration of the department on this clause. In it we are preserving the franchise of all electors on the State roll. All those on our roll at present, if not on the Federal roll, will be added to that roll. That is what the clause is for.

Mr. CORBOY: You, Sir, permitted the Leader of the Opposition to depart from the clause for a moment, and I hope you will give me the same privilege.

The CHAIRMAN: I stopped the Leader of the Opposition. Do you wish to make a personal explanation?

Mr. CORBOY: No.

Hon. G. Taylor: He has nothing to explain.

Mr. CORBOY: No, there is nothing to explain. If I exceed the bounds, you, Sir, will pull me up.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like you to keep to the clause.

Mr. CORBOY: In the circumstances that will be difficult. A certain section of the Press adopts the attitude of reiterating a lie to the end that it may be believed. It

seems to me the Leader of the Opposition is for once adopting the same attitude. I do not mean that the Leader of the Opposition is deliberately reiterating what he believes to be a lie; I know the hon. member sufficiently well to be assured that he would not do that; but I say he has had the opportunity in the House of listening to a recital of the real circumstances, and if he did not benefit by that opportunity, he should have done so. When he suggests that I deliberately enrolled men—

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, I did not say that.

Mr. CORBOY: That I enrolled men whom I knew were not entitled to be enrolled, he is quite wrong. As I explained when previously this was before the House, it has never yet been decided whether or not those men were entitled to be enrolled.

The CHAIRMAN: We have had a discussion on that. It has nothing to do with the clause, so I cannot allow it to go on. The hon. member will discuss the clause.

Mr. CORBOY: I was brought into the discussion by the Leader of the Opposition, and I think I should have the right to reply.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have already replied to the statement. It has gone far enough, and I ask you to get back to the clause.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I did not say the hon. member deliberately enrolled men whom he knew were not entitled to be enrolled. What I said was that when he was before the court he was not sure that they ought to be enrolled.

Mr. CORBOY: By way of personal explanation I will reply to that. At the time I was before the court I believed, as I still believe, that those men were entitled to be enrolled. Perhaps that will satisfy the Leader of the Opposition. Until the court decides the question of the period that must elapse for a man to be enrolled, I shall continue to believe it. Those men had been in the electorate for 31 days and the Act stipulates one clear month. Having been 31 days in the electorate, they were quite right in claiming to have been there a clear month. Until the court decides that 31 days is not a clear month, I shall continue to believe that the men were properly enrolled and that I was entitled to witness their signatures. I have explained this matter previously and the Leader of the Opposition is grossly unfair in suggesting that I improperly enrolled those men, be-

cause I still believe they were properly enrolled.

Mr. MANN: Which electoral officer will be responsible for the general upkeep of the rolls? The clause does not indicate whether that work is to be the responsibility of the Commonwealth or the State officer.

The Minister for Justice: The Commonwealth officer.

Mr. MANN: Then the State officer to a certain extent will be subservient to the Commonwealth officer?

The Minister for Justice: No, he will have the right to see that the rolls are in order.

Mr. MANN: Whose province will it be to institute proceedings for any infringement of the Act?

The Minister for Justice: The Commonwealth officer's.

Mr. Latham: Then a man could be fined only once and not twice for the offence.

Mr. MANN: It means that the State officer will be more or less subservient to the Commonwealth officer, and in a sense he could probably be retrenched.

Mr. Davy: As a matter of fact the Chief Electoral Officer is a clerk.

The Minister for Justice: No, he has statutory obligations.

Mr. Davy: He is a clerk in the clerical division.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: He should be in the administrative division.

Mr. MANN: If the Commonwealth officer is to be responsible for the upkeep of the rolls and for instituting proceedings for infringements of the Act, surely the State officer will lose his status.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: The Commonwealth officer will merely be in charge of the compilation of the rolls. The clause will not prevent us from taking action against any person for non-enrolment. Under the arrangement between the Commonwealth and State Taxation Departments the Commonwealth collects the tax.

Mr. Mann: There is only one officer and he represents both authorities.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: It is necessary to have two officers in the Electoral Department. We are not handing ourselves over to the Commonwealth or permitting them to run our elections and do all that is necessary under our Electoral Act. This clause refers only to rolls.

The Minister for Mines: And to only Assembly rolls at that.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is so. Many duties that are statutory are put upon the shoulders of the Chief Electoral Officer. The Commonwealth officials will have nothing to do with our elections. All that this Bill relates to is the compilation of the roll.

Hon. G. Taylor: And any proceedings under this legislation will be instituted by the Chief Electoral Officer.

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: Offences will be dealt with by the people responsible for the rolls, namely, the Commonwealth officers, but this will not prevent our electoral officers doing the same thing if the occasion arises.

Mr. Mann: Without reference to the Commonwealth officials?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: That is so.

Mr. Latham: Surely we are not going to make it possible for a man to be prosecuted under both the Commonwealth and the State law?

The MINISTER FOR JUSTICE: There will be only one prosecution.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—Power of Governor-in-Council as to subdivision of districts:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This is an important clause. Where the electoral boundaries are coterminous we can divide our electoral districts into a couple of divisions. In that case will they not have to carry the names of the electorates?

The Minister for Justice: Yes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That simplifies the matter. I think the Minister said that it would be impossible to make our boundaries fit the Commonwealth boundaries.

The Minister for Justice: We will simply take cognisance of them. We can do what suits us best.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suggest that the Commonwealth authorities should make their boundaries conform to ours. They have only five divisions, while we have many.

The Minister for Mines: It is nearly time they adopted the names of the present electorates.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I suggest we wipe them out altogether and make a fresh start.

The Minister for Mines: It would not be a bad idea to wipe out the Commonwealth altogether.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There would then be no confusion. We must conserve our own boundaries as seems best to us. This overcomes the trouble.

The Minister for Justice: Yes.

Clause put and passed.

Progress reported.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [6.14]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 13th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 6th September, 1927.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY. PRESENTATION.

The PRESIDENT: I desire to inform hon. members that in accordance with their resolution I presented to His Excellency the Governor the Address-in-reply passed by this House on the 17th August last, and received from His Excellency the following acknowledgment:—

Mr. President and hon. members of the Legislative Council, I thank you for your ex-