

will be able to tell us something about it. Poultry farmers are extremely interested in the matter, and I would like the Minister to say whether one of those plants will be coming to Western Australia.

The member for Nelson spoke about an experimental farm, or rather, he called it an agricultural college, in the South-West. I hope the Minister will be able to give us some information about it. I understand the land was purchased with the idea of sending mental patients there, but I would prefer to see it used for agricultural research. I feel that we should have in that part of the State a proper farm which could be used as an agricultural college and plant-breeding farm. In view of the growth of that portion of the South-West there is need for something of that sort to be done in the near future. I have previously advocated that young farmers belonging to the Young Farmers' Club should be given an opportunity to qualify for veterinary scholarships. There is a shortage of veterinary surgeons throughout the Commonwealth, and it would pay us over and over again to create scholarships in order that some of the enthusiastic young men might qualify as veterinary surgeons and give their services to Western Australia.

Mr. Sampson: Hear, hear!

Mr. McLARTY: I join with the Minister in his appreciation of the work done by flax-growers in the districts where flax has been grown. I know that when the suggestion was made that flax should be grown there many of the growers undertook the work out of patriotic motives only. They were not thinking about profits; in fact, they did not make any, as I think the Minister is aware. The farmers in the irrigation areas grew the flax because the season was late, and it was felt that flax could be grown with certainty only in those areas. I also express my appreciation of the work done by the officers of the department. I know them to be enthusiastic and only too anxious to give all the advice they can.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 11.1 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 29th October, 1941.

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

QUESTION—STATE LABOUR BUREAU.

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, How many persons are employed in the State Labour Bureau? 2, What were the total salaries paid to such employees during the past 12 months? 3, How many positions have been filled through the State Labour Bureau during the past 12 months? 4, Is it correct that the bureau is refusing to issue railway passes to persons finding employment through private employment brokers?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, 8. 2, £1,939 7s. 2d. 3, 5,616. 4, Yes. The Government decided, in view of the fees collected by private labour exchanges, namely, half of the first week's wages, payable by the employee and by the employer, there was a moral obligation on these agencies to make the necessary arrangements to advance the fares themselves for their clients.

BILL—WILLS (SOLDIERS, SAILORS AND AIRMEN).

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

BILLS (3)—REPORT.

- 1, Fire Brigades Act Amendment.
 - 2, Money Lenders Act Amendment.
 - 3, Criminal Code Amendment.
- Adopted.

BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 23rd October.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [4.38]: I understand that this Bill, which is a very small one, has been submitted to the department and after consideration by the department, no objection has been raised to it.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [4.39]: I do not know that I can agree with the Chief Secretary as to there being no objection to the Bill. The main clause reads—

Section two hundred and four of the principal Act is amended by adding a paragraph as follows:—

(61) For prohibiting or regulating the parking or allowing to remain stationary on any land of any caravan or vehicle designed or fitted as a habitation for any person or capable of being used for dwelling or sleeping purposes without the written license of the board; and authorising the granting by the board of licenses for such period or periods and upon such terms as the board may from time to time determine.

This does not refer merely to land under a board's jurisdiction, but to private land as well. Today caravans are in general use.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: That is why the measure is necessary.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Suppose a person leaves Perth in a caravan and wants to camp for the night on land belonging to a friend or, for the matter of that, on a road. Perhaps he does not know when he sets out where he is going to camp. Whatever the circumstances, he is to be required to obtain the road board's authority. He might arrive at any odd hour at the place at which he desires to camp. I agree that there should be some provision in the Act to provide for control over people camping for periods in caravans, but this measure does not end there. The Bill will apply to people who travel about in caravans throughout the country districts and who will not know beforehand where they will actually spend the night.

The Chief Secretary: It would all depend upon the regulations promulgated by the road board.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: But the Bill specifies that the written consent of the board must be obtained. The reference is definite and makes no allusion to regulations. At present caravans are used by men who are working on jobs in the country districts. They may have to shift from one part of the State to another and, if the Bill be agreed to, they will have to secure written permission from various boards before they are able to stop anywhere. They will have to apply even if they are to be located on the owners' private property.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Why? If a man has his caravan on his own property he would not be using it for the purposes suggested.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Bill refers to caravans remaining stationary on any land. Before I am agreeable to supporting the Bill, I shall require something more definite regarding the control to be exercised over caravans.

The Chief Secretary: The Bill will merely give local authorities the right to make regulations.

Hon. J. Cornell: And how far will they go?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Bill appears to go too far regarding private land.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That seems rather strong.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes. The Bill will have to be amended to meet the objection I see before I can support it.

HON. H. TUCKEY (South-West) [4.43]: I support the second reading of the Bill although I think its provisions go a little too far. I agree with Mr. Baxter that private land should not be included. When the measure is in Committee I shall move an amendment making it apply to any road, reserve or town site. I agree that it is necessary to exercise some control over caravans because they are increasing in number each year and in some localities they already constitute a nuisance. Although the Health Act contains powers enabling local authorities to exercise some control, boards seldom avail themselves of those powers. While the Bill will give the boards additional authority in that regard, I do not think it should be made to apply to private land outside the areas I have mentioned. Difficulties may arise when caravans are taken into

the bush or may be pulled up to camp overnight by the roadside. No objection could be taken to their presence in such places.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [4.44]: A Bill of this description will be welcomed provided it is made a little more equitable in its application. I discussed this matter with some people who reside at a holiday resort. Unfortunately I did not have a copy of the Bill in my possession at the time. The impression I gathered in my discussion with those people was that owing to the increasing popularity of caravans they were likely to become a menace unless properly controlled. I understand that in Victoria much trouble has been experienced in the hill districts adjoining Melbourne because the legislation in that State applies only to public reserves and Crown land. I am informed that in Victoria some people who own vacant blocks have erected signs inviting caravans to be parked there although inadequate provision is made for conveniences and so forth.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Our Health Act would enable that phase to be dealt with.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Probably that is so. The experience in Victoria has been that in some instances the practice of parking on vacant blocks where no provision is made for conveniences, had proved obnoxious and had led to drunken orgies and all sorts of unpleasant experiences. The use of caravans is much more popular in the Eastern States than in Western Australia. As other members have remarked, the Bill appears to go a little too far, but at the same time we must take into consideration the position regarding private property. We know that there are some people who, so long as there are a few shillings to be gained, do not care what happens. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, but I hope it will be amended to make it a little more practicable than it appears to be at present.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [4.47]: I support the second reading of the Bill. It embodies an addition to the Road Districts Act that I regard as long overdue. The Bill has been designed to provide local authorities with necessary control and the power to make regulations with that end in view. Section 204 of the Road Districts Act has reference to by-laws and regulations and sets out that, subject to the Act, boards

may make by-laws for the good order and government of matters affecting their districts. That appears to me to be the object of the Bill, namely, to enable local authorities to make by-laws for the proper control of caravans that may park in their districts. In my opinion, the sequel to this amending legislation will be that the local authorities will define areas where travelling caravans may park. They will provide the necessary water supplies and sanitary conveniences that are so essential and will give the boards control over facilities that, as Mr. Mann suggested, might otherwise constitute a menace.

I cannot see any objection to the Bill at all, even as it affects private land. It will enable regulations to be framed ensuring that any one desirous of utilising an area for the parking of caravans from which to derive fees, will be required to supply the necessary conveniences and water supplies. Mr. Dimmitt is to be congratulated upon introducing legislation that is long overdue. Some years ago I suggested to the Katanning Road Board that the time had arrived when an area should be set aside there for the parking of caravans. My own residence is situated almost on the outskirts of Katanning, and it is quite a common thing to have caravans pulling up in the bush a short distance away. There is no water supply, and we have no objection to supplying such people with water for boiling the billy and so forth. No sanitary conveniences, however, are to be found on the parking place.

Hon. H. Tuckey: There is already a law dealing with that matter.

Hon. A. THOMSON: There should be a right to tell people living in caravans that they can park in certain spots but not elsewhere. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading, and do not think the measure requires any amendment.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [4.51]: I support the Bill. At first sight it looks formidable, giving extremely wide powers; but wide powers must be given in order that the practice of living in caravans may be controlled adequately. In many places, and especially on Government construction works, people are living in caravans, and the local authorities should be empowered to lay down conditions that are needful from the aspect of convenience and public health requirements. In the circumstances

a comprehensive clause is needed. Existing powers in this respect are extensive, but their application is not sufficiently wide. The object of the Bill is to control the growing practice of living in caravans by people engaged in casual work.

HON. J. A. DIMMITT (Metropolitan-Suburban—in reply) [4.52]: Mr. Baxter will see that his criticism falls to the ground when he realises that the Bill deals with Section 204 of the principal Act.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: I knew that.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Then I am surprised at the hon. member's attitude. The Bill seeks to empower road boards to make by-laws for the purpose of controlling the parking of caravans in which people live. Mr. Thomson was not present when I moved the second reading. I then stated that already difficulties had been experienced by road boards in this connection, especially by a road board close to Perth, where one caravan stayed on a particular spot so long that it actually became a public nuisance. Again, there are seaside road boards, such as Sussex, which, I believe, have had difficulties with people living in caravans. The Bill proposes to place in the hands of the local authorities power to deal with something that, under proper control, can be of great advantage but—which, without such control can become a nuisance.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; Hon. J. A. Dimmitt in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 204, Parking of Caravans, etc.:

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Mr. Dimmitt has misunderstood me. I agree that there is not sufficient control over parking of caravans. Still, I fail to see the need for the drastic amendment proposed. A limit of time for parking of caravans might be imposed—say, 14 or 16 hours. I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of proposed new paragraph 61 the words "prohibiting or" be struck out.

The amendment would leave road boards free under Section 204 to regulate the use

of local parking grounds. A road board should not be permitted to prohibit straight out anything it chooses.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: It would be a pity to strike out the words. A caravan might park on private property right opposite a hotel that is paying high rates and catering for the public and is compelled by the Health Act to provide a building in compliance with building regulations. There are other considerations which cannot well be stated here but which may well induce a road board to desire power to prohibit parking on certain land under certain conditions. Regulations made for the purpose would be laid on the Table here, and could be disallowed if objectionable.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I prefer Mr. Baxter's amendment to the clause in its present form, but the suggestion I have made would be preferable. Therefore I shall vote against Mr. Baxter's amendment.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Road boards can by regulation control parking on private lands. There is no need for the extreme power to prohibit; everything necessary can be done by regulations. Local governing bodies have power to make any regulations they please.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The more one examines the Bill, the more one recognises that it should be passed in its entirety. Mr. Baxter was self-contradictory. First of all he said that the right to prohibit should not be given to local authorities because they already have that right. If the amendment is carried, we may assume that caravan owners will have the right to park where they like, so long as the parking is regulated. The local authority, however, would not have power to say to the caravan owner, "You shall not park in a particular place, but must park elsewhere." That would be the effect if the amendment is carried. There are many places where it would be most undesirable that caravans should park for a lengthy period.

Hon. A. Thomson: I would object to a caravan parking near my home.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course the hon. member would. Many local authorities will strongly object if they do not have the power to say just where, and under what conditions, caravans shall be allowed to park.

Hon. W. J. Mann: A regulation could be framed to provide that they must park in a particular place.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This Bill deals specifically with the parking of caravans. If the amendment is carried, then the local authorities would not have power to prohibit the parking of caravans.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Caravans could not park just as you suggest.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is my opinion. There is reason why local authorities should have discretion in this matter. Some authorities would not agree to the parking of a caravan within a townsite.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Could not that point be covered by a regulation?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. As Mr. Thomson has pointed out, the local authorities might desire to set apart certain areas for the parking of caravans. Some road boards may take the view that they do not care what happens. They will say that caravans will only stay for an hour or two and will then leave for other parts of the State. On the other hand, we have many pleasure resorts where it would be highly undesirable that caravans should be allowed to park as long as their owners pleased. There is no danger in giving local authorities the power of prohibition. If they desire to encourage people to stay in their district, they will provide the necessary conveniences, so that it will be possible for the caravan owners to utilise their conveyances to the full while they remain in the district. On the other hand, other local authorities may not desire that caravans should be permitted to park within a particular area. Therefore, it is only fair to provide for this right of prohibition. There is always this additional safeguard: Any regulation made by a local authority must be laid on the Table of the House and members will have the opportunity to object to it. I oppose the amendment.

Hon. G. FRASER: If the Bill passes, it will be a case of renaming the song "Where my caravan has rested" to "Where my caravan may rest." I disagree with the contention of the Chief Secretary, because it is immaterial whether or not the words proposed to be struck out remain in the Bill. Road boards already have power to make a regulation with re-

gard to the parking of vehicles or prohibiting them from remaining stationary. Is not that prohibition?

Hon. H. SEDDON: I object to a power of general prohibition. It is desirable that a local authority should have the right to say that caravans may not park within certain areas. I remind members of the instance given by Mr. Thomson. It must be realised, however, that people who travel for pleasure usually camp for a little while in some particular part of the bush. I think that right should not be taken away, provided the people comply with ordinary rules of hygiene and conduct. If the amendment is carried, a local authority might say that no caravan shall park anywhere within its district, except at a certain spot.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That is the point.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That, in my opinion, is the danger. If it is desired under this Bill to deal with objectionable caravan owners, we should not limit the freedom of persons who are prepared to behave themselves and are making temporary use of sites while on holiday. Even if the clause were further amended to say that local authorities should have power to prohibit in certain circumstances, that might be better than giving those authorities power over all parts of their territory.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: In other countries that I have visited, areas are set apart for caravan parking. I see no objection to empowering local authorities to prohibit caravan parking, because of occasional objectionable conduct on the part of some caravan owners. A caravan owner may be undesirable and, after he has parked once or twice at some seaside resort or country town, the local authority may wish to keep him out of the district altogether. I favour the clause as it stands.

Hon. W. J. MANN: This question of parking is much bigger than it appears on the surface. I shall give an instance. Most people going for a holiday to my district do not go with the idea of parking in the towns of Manjimup or Pemberton. They desire to keep to the coast or to go into the big timber country. During the summer perhaps a dozen parties may be camped in the big timber country; the holiday-makers like the environment, the big timber and the running brooks. I do not think any complaint has been made

about these holiday-makers; but unless sanitary conveniences are provided in many places, trouble may arise. Road boards can hardly be expected to provide such conveniences. It is desired to prohibit the person who will not behave himself.

Hon. G. Fraser: This measure will not do that.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Such a person may leave paper, litter and refuse about. As Mr. Holmes said, action could then be taken under the Health Act, but if the persons are spread along the coast from Perth to the Leeuwin and down to Albany, one can realise how futile it would be to take such action. In my opinion, a regulation would cover the situation. At the same time there is something in what the Chief Secretary has said, and I am not clear in my own mind just what we should do.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. With regard to the case put forward by Mr. Seddon, I cannot imagine a local authority objecting to the parking of a caravan that arrives late at night. The local authority should have power, however, to prohibit parking in certain portions of its district.

Hon. H. Seddon: I agree with that.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Mr. Mann also referred to holiday-makers travelling to the South-West. He said they desired to camp near running streams.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Near the babbling brook!

Hon. A. THOMSON: My experience is that caravans generally camp near water, where sanitary conveniences are not available. If large numbers of caravans are parking in a district, serious objections may be raised. Therefore if the local authorities are desirous of prohibiting camping in various areas, they will clearly define where they have made provision for campers with the necessary conveniences. I hope the local authorities will be allowed the power of prohibition.

Hon. W. R. HALL: There is nothing wrong with the Bill, and it should be adopted in its entirety. The proposed amendment takes away the essential part of the Bill. Many road boards in Western Australia have no regulations dealing with parking because they have no traffic inspectors. The word "prohibiting" would cover that aspect. The members of road boards are

fairly reasonable people, and nothing in this Bill will affect caravan owners to any extent. Those travelling by night and only passing through towns would not cause any worry to the local authority.

Hon. G. Fraser: They would be gone before the road board could worry about them.

Hon. W. R. HALL: That is so. On the other hand, if several caravans were parked in a restricted area it would be necessary, under the health regulations, to see that proper arrangements were provided. I support the clause as it stands.

Sir HAL COLEBATCH: Under the parent Act road boards have power to make by-laws in regard to about 40 different matters. Some of them are infinitely more important than this. These by-laws are made by people with local knowledge, and each of the by-laws may be disallowed if it is in any way against commonsense or justice. I cannot see why we should have any hesitation in giving the road boards the right to make the by-laws suggested in this measure. I support the clause as it stands.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It seems to me we are straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. If I own a block of land at the seaside I am not allowed to build a house until I submit plans and specifications showing the locality, sanitary accommodation and everything else, and receive a permit. Yet it is proposed that the owner of a caravan may use this same block as he likes. If the word "prohibiting" is deleted, nobody can prevent him. Surely the same conditions which apply to a man desirous of building at the seaside, should apply to the caravan owner. I support the clause.

Hon. G. W. MILES: A number of people spend their holidays at seaside resorts where the local residential facilities cannot accommodate them all. The amendment will probably mean depriving people of the enjoyment of camping, as Mr. Mann indicated.

Hon. W. J. Mann: There are camping grounds in the area about which I spoke.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Years ago families used to travel through the South-West at holiday times, and in some places accommodation was not available. In some instances people took tents and camped. That sort of person should not be prohibited.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: The local authorities would be only too anxious to encourage those people.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Some people cannot afford to pay the charges for accommodation at seaside resorts in the summer. People should not be deprived of the opportunities for camping out.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: Do you think a road board would deprive them of that privilege?

Hon. G. W. MILES: On the question of sanitary arrangements, how do fellows get on when going through the bush prospecting? Do they wait for a road board to erect a sanitary convenience? Nothing of that sort happened in the early days of the gold-fields.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I support the clause. It would appear, from the debate tonight, that road boards were exercising a mandatory power in prohibiting travellers from remaining in their areas. It is nothing in the country to see 30 or 40 motor cars in the streets at night when the regulations say they are not to remain over night. No regulations will be enforced in country centres in an arbitrary manner.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Every member who has spoken in opposition to the amendment seems to think I am taking away the power of the road board to make by-laws or regulations. All I am asking is that the mandatory power to prohibit should be struck out. The road boards can make regulations today, as mentioned by the Chief Secretary and other members. They can make regulations to meet the whole situation.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And to prohibit it.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Yes.

The Chief Secretary: Why take the word out?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Because in certain circumstances we would not be able to agree to the regulations. Take the position of a road board which says it will create a parking area in the centre of its district and will not allow parking anywhere else.

Hon. A. Thomson: Road boards are not unreasonable.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I have also been a member of a road board. There is no necessity for the word "prohibiting" to be left in. The Committee is against me and I will not carry the matter further. A road board has full power with the oversight of Parliament.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of proposed new paragraph 61 the word "land" be struck out and the words "road, reserve or townsite" inserted in lieu.

I cannot see that this measure should apply to the broad acres of this State. In the South-West there are about 20 road boards, and we have to consider the owners of the caravans. If they have to be aware of the circumstances obtaining in a dozen different road boards it will be of some annoyance to them. We should not make too many restrictions, but should encourage people to camp out. If it is necessary to create a parking area in the bush for a caravan, why not for a tent? Some people do take tents on motor cycles and sidecars.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You want to force them into the towns where they can spend their cash.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: If we deal with the roads in the townsites, that is all that is necessary.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I support the amendment. It overcomes the objection I previously had. It will allow people to go to the country or coastal areas away from the townsites and camp as they wish.

Hon. G. Fraser: And they will not have to know the regulations of every road board in the State.

Hon. G. W. MILES: That is so. This amendment covers everything.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: Are beaches like Dunnsborough and others along that coast within a townsite area?

Hon. W. J. Mann: Dunnsborough is a townsite.

Hon. J. A. DIMMITT: If that is the case, I have no objection to the amendment.

Hon. H. Tuckey: The health laws are still administered in these small places, and people are not allowed to camp indiscriminately.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I hope the sponsor of the Bill will not agree to the amendment. Surely we can trust the local authorities. They would not object to men camping out in the bush.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I hope no interference will be made with the Bill as it stands. The amendment will take the control of private land from the road boards, and it is necessary that such land should be controlled.

Hon. H. Tuekey: That is, in townsites.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It will apply not only to townsites. Many people have land at the seaside and it is difficult to say just what they could not do with it. It might be leased to people who could park their caravans on it, and possibly be a nuisance to the neighbours. The members of road boards are not all fools; they are generally the picked men of the districts and sensible people. Many of them come to Parliament.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Are you a member of a road board?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes. The board to which I belong is a particularly bright one.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The members do not show their brightness here.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Road boards are the proper authorities to control caravans and can be relied upon not to pass by-laws that would harmfully affect their districts. If privileges are being abused, the boards should have the power of control. I have faith in the local authorities to do the right thing.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Any by-law has to be approved by the Governor and gazetted.

Hon. L. CRAIG: That is so.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	6
Noes	..	..	..	16
Majority against				10

AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. Tuekey
Hon. G. W. Miles	Hon. C. B. Williams

(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. J. J. Holmes
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. J. M. Macfarlane
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. H. V. Plesse
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. W. J. Mann

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—INCREASE OF RENT (WAR RESTRICTIONS) ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had disagreed to the amendments made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. G. Fraser in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

No. 1. Clause 4: Add at the end of the clause a further new section to stand as 12C, as follows:—"12C. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as to extend the term of any lease of land which has expired during the operation of this Act, nor to entitle the lessee to remain in possession after such term has expired."

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's reason for disagreeing is—

The term "lease" as defined in the Act covers every class of tenancy including a weekly tenancy; therefore the acceptance of the amendment would prejudice the position of every tenant in the State.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move—
That the amendment be not insisted on.

It is obvious that this is the proper course to adopt in the circumstances.

Hon. J. Cornell: I move an amendment—

That the following alternative amendment be made to the Council's amendment:—Insert after the word "land" the words "exceeding one year, the term of."

As has been pointed out, the original amendment would affect all tenancies, but I want it to apply only to leases exceeding one year.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That will meet the Assembly's objection to the weekly tenancy.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes, and will not in any way affect the general principle of the Act. It is extraordinary that the Railway Department, when leasing a dining-room, calls for tenders and, according to the Minister, must accept the highest. This means that no Crown lease extends beyond one year, and what is fair for the Railway Department should be a fair thing generally. Owing to the war and the drift of men to the city, the business of city hotels has increased considerably, but landlords are called upon to provide additional

accommodation and meet increased taxation without sharing in the prosperity. On the other hand, there has been a drift of men from the goldfields and the landlord there is probably getting a higher rental than is justified in view of the falling off of trade. Other businesses would be similarly affected.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I oppose the amendment. The question of hotel leases has been debated and lessees and landlords are fully protected. We cannot legislate to deal with individual cases, which would not be numerous. So long as lessees conform to the provisions of Section 12, they have a right to remain in occupation.

Hon. L. Craig: They are abusing their privileges.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The Committee would make a mistake if it tried to legislate for the convenience of landlords. It might then do a grave injury to many tenants of other hotels.

Hon. J. Cornell: There are other business ventures as well.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I hope the Committee will not insist on the Bill being altered.

Hon. J. CORNELL: When the Act was passed and a Bill to prevent profiteering was also passed, there was a feeling abroad that what happened in 1914-18 would happen again in this war. In many instances the reverse has been the case. Instead of there being a slump, we have an era of prosperity. We have arrived at a situation that world economists hardly thought possible.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I hope the Committee will agree to the suggested amendment. The war has created prosperity in many cities, although that may not be so in some country towns. In the city, when a lease expires the landlord is entitled to draw up a new lease. The objection raised by another place will be met by the proposal advanced by Mr. Cornell.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I referred to tenants. The landlords are already on a good wicket. The Committee should not legislate for a few individuals when there is a grave risk of doing an injustice to many people.

Amendment put and passed; the alternative amendment to the Council's amendment agreed to.

No. 2. New clause: Insert a new clause after Clause 4 to stand as Clause 5 as follows:—"5. Section 14 of the principal Act is hereby repealed."

The HONORARY MINISTER: I move-- That the amendment be not insisted on.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I hope the Committee will insist upon its amendment. The reasons given by another place for not accepting it are unsound. If it is fair to compel certain private citizens to adhere to the rents in existence when the Act was passed it is fair that similar restrictions should be imposed upon the Crown.

Hon. G. W. MILES: The Committee should not insist upon the amendment. The arguments used in connection with No. 1 amendment apply with equal force in this instance. Surely the Government is entitled to receive extra revenue from its tearooms and bookstalls if the opportunity is offered to do so.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Landlords have no right to get an increased rental for their premises.

Hon. G. W. MILES: At the expiration of a lease the tenancy does not continue unless there is a renewal. The same thing should apply to railway refreshment rooms. Some members seem to want the Government to let these premises at the old rates. When the lease of property rented by a private individual expires a new lease can be drawn up.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: That is the case with the Crown.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Members seem to object to the Commissioner of Railways receiving a higher rental for his refreshment rooms.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: If another place agrees to the modification we have just passed, it will be competent for the Commissioner of Railways to arrange for fresh leases of the refreshment rooms. The amendment we are discussing was moved with a view to bringing the Crown to the level of private persons. At that time, when a lease expired, private persons were not permitted to make a new one. If Mr. Cornell's modification is agreed to by another place private people will be permitted to alter the terms of their leases. The Commissioner of Railways should have the same right.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The amendment we are discussing is all right in theory, but actually it is all wrong. Section 14 of the principal Act declares that the measure shall not apply to the Crown. Who will sue the Crown over matters of this kind? It does not matter whether the section is repealed or not, the Crown will still occupy the box seat. I hope the Committee will not prejudice the fate of the Bill by insisting on this amendment. The measure will give relief in numerous cases. We had some ground for taking up the stand we did with regard to the Crown, but that difficulty should now be overcome. I doubt whether the Government would accept the Bill if we insisted upon amendment No. 2.

The **HONORARY MINISTER:** It has been suggested to me that this amendment will apply not only to railway refreshment rooms but to all leases held under the Land Act, and will therefore lead to endless complications. The reason given by another place for not accepting the amendment is quite sound. Actually, the amendment itself is farcical.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I cannot follow Mr. Cornell's reasoning. The Crown has to obey the orders of the Arbitration Court, and we have seen instances in which the Commissioner of Railways has been fined by that tribunal. If we bring in a law that private people must obey we should place the Government in the same position. The Crown should not be permitted to flout the law.

The **Honorary Minister:** Do you think the Minister will sue the Government?

Hon. A. THOMSON: Not at all. We are dealing with private people who may be charged a higher rent than they should be called upon to pay. They are entitled to go to the court for a reduction. We have been told of a case where the tenant took the owner to court and the court reduced the rental to the original figure, notwithstanding that the property had changed hands. The law applying to private citizens should be applied to the Government also. A private citizen has as much right to protection against the Government as against an unscrupulous landlord. It is all very well to say that the Government is not unscrupulous. It may not be the Government's intention to be unscrupulous but there are times when it inflicts a certain degree of hardship.

Question put and a division called for.

The **CHAIRMAN:** Before tellers are appointed I give my vote with the ayes.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	..	..	15
Noes	..	..	8

Majority for 7

AYES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. J. J. Holmes
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. J. M. Macfarlane
Hon. J. M. Drow	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. L. B. Bolton
Hon. W. R. Hall	<i>(Teller.)</i>

NOES.

Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. W. J. Mann	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. H. V. Plesse	Hon. F. R. Welsh
	<i>(Teller.)</i>

Question thus passed; the Council's amendment not insisted on.

Resolutions reported, the report adopted and a message accordingly returned to the Assembly.

BILL—EMPLOYMENT BROKERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Defeated.

Debate resumed from the 23rd October.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East) [6.7]: It is very unfortunate that the Government should have seen fit to place a Bill of this kind before Parliament at a time like the present. It could not have chosen a more inconvenient period. First of all, there is practically no labour available upon which employment brokers can rely to make a living. If labour were available, it would be extremely difficult for such brokers to operate under the scale of fees proposed in the Sixth Schedule.

At the beginning of the war the Government entered into an arrangement to refrain from introducing legislation of a controversial nature. This Bill deals with the liberty of the subject and nothing could be more highly controversial. Bills dealing with this particular Act have been before Parliament in the past. They have been of such a drastic character that they have gone by the board, and rightly so. There is not much to cavil at in this Bill, except the Sixth Schedule which carries the sting. The Bill is another way of putting at least 19 people out of business. I have here a list signed

by 19 employment brokers, and there may be more who will be affected. Of those whose names I have, 12 are women and seven are men, and by this measure they will be deprived of their means of livelihood. Most people at their age, especially those who are married and have obligations, cannot readily turn to another avocation in which to earn a living.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Why should they?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: If the Bill is passed they will have to try to do so. We have a State Labour Bureau, about which I do not propose to say anything critical. My experience is that the officers are very obliging and go as far as they possibly can to meet one's requirements, but it must be understood that they are not placed in the same position as are those conducting private employment bureaux. Private agencies are personally acquainted with employers and—to a very large extent—employees, and many people who do not care to visit the State Labour Bureau receive personal attention from the private employment brokers. Why should that practice be subject to interference? Why force everybody to go to the one centre—the State Labour Bureau? Why nationalise this particular service? The principle is wrong. There is only one reason for the Bill. The desire is that every person who is unfortunate enough to be faced with the necessity to seek a position shall be forced to go to the State Labour Bureau and eventually buy a union ticket. There is no other construction to be placed on the measure.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: They will not give a man employment unless he does buy a union ticket.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: That is so. So far as I can see, there is nothing in the Bill apart from the Sixth Schedule to which exception can be taken.

Hon. A. Thomson: They are handing the licensing over to the Chief Inspector.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not know that that is very wrong because, after all, I think it is necessary, when it comes to issuing licenses, that the Government should have a fair measure of authority. I intend to do my best to have the Sixth Schedule deleted.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Delete the Bill!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Members can do that if they like. An amendment to Clause 6 is necessary to meet the position I have in

mind. There is another provision in that clause to which I take exception. It reads as follows:—

Provided that it shall be lawful for an employment broker, in addition to the said charges, to charge and obtain payment from an employer of the amount of any actual out-of-pocket expenses reasonably and bona fide incurred by him in respect of telegrams and long-distance telephone calls in connection with the engagement or proposed engagement or hiring of any servant.

That is quite all right except that it exempts the employee. If an employee asks a private broker to wire to some place or other and involve himself in some expense, surely the employee should be required to meet that cost! He would not be if the provision is left as printed. The words "or employee" should be added. Surely an employment broker should be able to make a charge for such a service. Beyond the Sixth Schedule—

The Honorary Minister: What is wrong with the schedule?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Under the Sixth Schedule the highest amount a broker could realise from providing an employee for somebody is 17s. 6d., made up of 3s. 6d. from the servant or employee and 14s. from the employer. The measure is meant to achieve one purpose only and that is to put employment brokers out of business. Even if times were prosperous and many people were seeking employment in different avenues, brokers could not carry on under this measure. Surely they are entitled to make a living. I do not propose to be a party to depriving them of a livelihood. If the Bill is carried, I shall move to strike out the Sixth Schedule and thus protect brokers and maintain a balanced scale as regards employers and employees.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [7.30]: As the Minister rightly stated when moving the second reading of the Bill a similar measure was defeated in this House last session. The Minister also remarked that the present Bill conformed to the general policy of the Government to develop labour exchanges where women, young people and men could secure employment. While I have every sympathy with the Government in its desire to develop such exchanges where people seek-

ing employment can get in touch with employers, I claim that the Bill has one object in view, which is to eliminate the private employment brokers. Those people have been carrying on business for years past. I would be more satisfied in my mind if the Government, in justification of the introduction of this legislation, had submitted evidence to indicate that the private employment brokers who have been carrying on in accordance with the principal Act, had been guilty of extortion, fraud, or similar misdemeanours.

Possibly the Minister will say in reply that the Government has no such intention because the schedule provides for the charging of fees that will be sufficient to enable employment brokers to carry on business and make a reasonable living. In order to find out how many persons are employed in the State Labour Bureau and the cost of that institution, I asked several questions. I do not suggest for a moment that the information supplied in reply was inaccurate, but I claim it is difficult to reconcile the figures furnished to me with those shown in the Estimates for the current financial year. It is very difficult to dissect the figures in order to arrive at the actual cost. I was informed that there were eight employees of the Labour Bureau. I do not know if that covers the Perth Labour Bureau only.

The Honorary Minister: That covers all branches of the bureau.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The bureaux at Fremantle and at other centres?

The Honorary Minister: Yes; that covers the paid staff.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I asked how many persons were employed at the State Labour Bureau and the reply was that there were eight. I asked what salaries were paid and I was told that salaries totalled £1,939 7s. 2d. That averages per person employed £242 per annum. For the expenditure of that money I was informed that 5,616 persons had been provided with work through the labour bureaux which works out at an average cost per engagement of 6s. 11d.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: But you have to add to that cost the rent of premises and other charges as well.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am coming to that. The figure I have quoted refers to salaries only.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The cost per engagement would be nearer 4s.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I may not be correct in my calculation; the hon. member can check it if he thinks fit. Turning to the Estimates, I find that £479 was paid for an inspector. I do not know what his duties were.

The Honorary Minister: That had nothing to do with the State Labour Bureau.

Hon. A. THOMSON: It is difficult to follow the figures. I find that £472 is provided this year for "clerk in charge, relief and inspector," while £410 is provided for a clerk in charge of the Labour Bureau. As I say, my arithmetic may not be quite accurate, but it seems to me that the average wage received by the eight employees of the State Labour Bureau amounts to £242. I also find that last year £5,200 was provided on the Estimates for Labour Bureau "incidentals, including postages and telephones, miscellaneous and advanced fares, etc." Of that amount £3,629 was spent. This year an amount of £3,500 is provided on the Estimates under that heading. I want to know actually how much has been spent in connection with the bureau and what has been the actual cost of the undertaking to the State. If we eliminate the private employment bureau, what check shall we have on the charges that are made?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Government sends a policeman out by motor car to collect the fares, and that costs money as well.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I shall touch upon that point. I asked a question to ascertain if it was correct that the department had refused to advance railway fares to those who had secured employment through private brokers. Prior to the Bill of last year being defeated and shortly after the House had gone into recess I was informed that the Government had refused to make such advances, which it had done in former years. In that way assistance was rendered to a section of the unemployed who had not the necessary money to pay for their railway fares to travel to the centre at which work was available for them. Workers to whom the Government had made such advances were expected to repay the money and I think that was quite right. As Mr. Holmes pointed out, police officers were frequently sent out to collect the amounts.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I do not think that applied to men who secured jobs through the private employment brokers, but only to those who had secured engagements through the Labour Bureau.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Perhaps so. At any rate I asked the question I have indicated and the reply I received was that in view of the fees charged by the private employment brokers, namely, half the first week's wages, there was a moral obligation upon the private brokers to make the necessary advances to the workers and to secure refunds from them. That attitude may possibly be quite correct, but I would like to have further information regarding the dissection of the bureau's costs. We know that all workers who secured employment had to register when they secured jobs on main road work.

The Honorary Minister: The cost you mentioned did not cover those men.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am not in a position to contradict the Minister, but I emphasise how difficult it is to arrive at the cost of the State Labour Bureau and its activities. If we agree to the Bill, the effect may be to increase the cost of the Labour Bureau. I have always advocated the adoption of the cheapest possible means by which workers can secure employment.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The Bill would save about £12,000 spread over the 5,600 men.

Hon. A. THOMSON: But those concerned are not all men. According to the schedule, the lowest charges that the employment brokers may levy are 9d. and 3s. from the employee and employer respectively. I shall not discuss the schedule because I am not in a position to say whether the fees proposed are fair or unreasonable. The main point I have in mind is that the present is not an opportune time to introduce highly controversial legislation of this description. In the rural areas, particularly in the farming districts, the producers are finding the utmost difficulty in securing men to undertake harvesting. I know that recently an offer of £4 a week and keep was made in an endeavour to secure a man who could work a harvester. Admittedly the employment was for a short period, but that indicates the scarcity of men in the country areas. It would be interesting if we could trace the history of men who have secured employment through the State Labour Bureau and ascer-

tain how often they have secured employment there during one year.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You would require similar information concerning the private employment brokers.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Probably so, but we should endeavour to ascertain the exact cost of the work.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Such information would be of little use unless you could compare the cost with that experienced by the private employment brokers.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Possibly it would be little use to the hon. member, but I remind him we are considering a Bill the object of which is to eliminate private employment brokers altogether. There are only 19 of them in the business. I secured men from the State Labour Bureau on one or two occasions some years ago, but they were of a type that I could not get rid of quickly enough.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You must have been a bad boss.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I may have been. The remarkable thing about it, however, is that I then had several men who had been with me for 25 or 30 years. Therefore, the inference does not quite follow. Putting that aspect on one side, I note that the Government proposes to introduce, if the Bill becomes law, a schedule which not even on the Government's own figures will admit of the State carrying on business and paying salaries. The State will not be paying any rent, which, of course, is a charge on private employment brokers.

Hon. J. Cornell: Has the hon. member read Clause 9? It is most interesting.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I read that clause, and I also read an intimation that the Government proposed to alter the present system of magistrates granting licenses and to give that power to the Chief Inspector of Factories. I admit that it is the Government's policy to eliminate as far as possible the private individual and bring everything under State control. Perhaps I may congratulate Ministers on their sincerity as shown in their continuing determination to put into effect what they believe to be correct, as part of their policy. I hope that on this occasion the House will reject the Bill, and ask that the question be brought up for review at a later period when the situation is more settled. The Bill might well have been held over. Its defeat will

not seriously affect anybody. The Government will not find employment for more people seeking work. The only real effect of the enactment of the measure will be to put out of business people who have been engaged in it for years. That may be one of the aims of the Government. I protest against the introduction of the Bill.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [7.48]: I will not spend much time on the Bill. To me it was surprising to hear the Minister introduce this as a war measure. What the war has to do with it I do not know. Neither do I know why the employment broker's calling should be subjected to such strong criticism. Employers and employees need not use private employment brokers if they do not desire to do so. The Government has provided facilities available to both sections. The Government also has a State Accident Insurance Office, but nobody is obliged to insure in that office unless desirous of doing so. The Government has State saw mills, but does not compel people to buy timber there. It has State railways and State tramways, but does not say, "You must travel on our railways and tramways." It had State Implement Works, but that enterprise could not stand up to competition. The Government did not say to the farmer, "You must buy your plough from the Government works." The Government merely said to him, "If you like to use our facilities, use them." The State Labour Bureau is in exactly the same position. Employees who want to get a job free of cost can go to the State Labour Bureau. But those who think they can get better treatment at a private employment agency, can go there. That is the attitude I commend. The State runs State hotels but does not say, "You must patronise our hotels."

Within the last few days I had a conversation with a big restaurant keeper employing a large number of girls. I do not know him very well, but he rang me up and said, "It is an extraordinary thing. I sometimes advertise for girls in the papers and sometimes get no reply. I ring up an employment agency and get excellent girls. Girls will apply at my place through an employment agency, but not through advertisements in the paper." What detriment to the people of Western Australia are the private employment agencies? They serve a very good and useful purpose. If one becomes known

to an employment agent and is recognised by him as a good employer, in most cases he will send one good employee. It is just as necessary for the employment agencies to know whether employers are good as to know whether employees are good. Employees need protection against employers just as much as employers need protection against employees. Goodwill is built up, which it is undesirable to destroy. I have no objection to the State Labour Bureau operating, except that it is a most expensive hobby; but I do object to the Government declaring, "This shall be a monopoly, and those who want jobs must come here or not get jobs." The principle is wrong. Therefore, I say definitely that I shall vote against the second reading of the Bill.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [7.55]: I presume that irrespective of the times and circumstances through which we are passing the Government still continues with the old programme of submitting its legislation as if everything was right in the world. This Bill could very well have been left in abeyance until things have been straightened out somewhat and we are a little more certain as to the flag under which we shall be functioning. That is the view I take of the situation.

If my memory serves me rightly, there never was a time in the history of Western Australia when less need existed for tightening up the law relating to employment brokers. Day in and day out we hear endless protests against the application of manpower to enlistment in the armed forces. We hear plenty of cries, which have become almost a melody, "Who is going to take our harvest off? Who is going to shear our sheep?" When visiting Kalgoorlie and Boulder last Saturday and Sunday, I met men who ought to know, and do know, that irrespective of what impends over the mining industry in regard to finding skilled men or even unskilled men to carry on operations, there is the menace of the firewood adjunct being brought to such a pass that even if men could be secured to do the ordinary amount of work necessary in the mining industry, fuel supplies are likely to fail.

The Chief Secretary: Do you think those men would pay half a week's wages to get jobs there?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Again, we have the spectacle of unemployment, so far as the Government is concerned, being reduced to

what one might term the irreducible minimum, right down to the unemployable. There is a section of the community that is unemployable. From thousands of men for whom the Government had to find work, we are now reduced to the question of finding work for the unemployable.

The Chief Secretary: The principle is whether a man should pay half a week's wages for a job?

Hon. J. CORNELL: The circumstances in the depression, when men were forced to take any work offering, were totally different from the circumstances now existing. The field in which the searcher for employment rambles today is one in which he can pick and choose his job. I believe that any man who today is prepared to work has only to go to an employment office. Dozens of advertisements asking for men appear in the papers every day. It is said that the Labour Bureau is at the disposal of men wanting employment. My idea of State enterprise has undergone a radical change. If State enterprise is to exist in all channels, I think it should have a certain amount of competition. The existing private employment exchanges do offer competition against the State Labour Bureau. I am given to understand on unimpeachable authority that the State Labour Bureau was so thorough in its methods that a member of another place—an ex-Minister of the Crown—who engaged a man through the Government bureau and had to send him back, was sent the same man when he applied to the bureau for another worker!

The Honorary Minister: That is an old story.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is a true one. That is the thoroughness with which the State Labour Bureau carried out its work at that time. But my point is this: We have reached a time when the field of labour is being revolutionised. Men and women desirous of securing work now are not forced to go to a registry office to obtain it, and thus become, so to speak, the prey of what are termed harpies. That time has passed.

The Bill proposes to amend the law by reducing the scale of charges which private offices are to be allowed to impose; it has been asserted that such charges are commensurate with the hard times. I repeat that the scale of charges, owing to the exigencies of war and the shortage of labour, will, on

the law of averages, right itself. If I were conducting a registry office tomorrow, I would not be running after the individual worker. There is only one method by which a registry office can exist in the present circumstances, and that is by increasing its turnover. Private registry offices are not going to increase their turnover by charging workers through the nose for finding them employment. The stern law of necessity will compel those offices to lower their charges. That is the logical reason I advance. I will finish as I started: This is a measure that can well stand over for the time being.

HON. L. B. BOLTON (Metropolitan) [8.4]: Enough has already been said on this Bill to convince members that no necessity exists for it. A similar measure was introduced last session. I agree with Mr. Craig's remark. How the Minister can suggest that this is a wartime measure is quite beyond me. The present position of the labour market, as has been pointed out by other members, is such that private employment offices must find it hard to exist. If the Bill is passed, I agree that it would force those registry offices entirely out of business. I am unfortunately in a position to appreciate the difficulty today in securing both skilled and unskilled workers. In my own factory I have openings today for 30 to 40 skilled hands, in addition to openings for at least 10 to 12 unskilled men. Within the next three months I hope to be requiring an additional 235 men to undertake a war contract.

The Chief Secretary: You would not get them through the private registry offices.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: No. Strange to say, only within the last ten days or fortnight I advertised for skilled men and did not receive one reply. I then telephoned various registry offices and was lucky enough to secure an excellent man, who was sent to me by one of the brokers.

The Honorary Minister: Did he have to pay a fee?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: He probably had to, but he was just as pleased to pay the fee as I was to get his services.

The Honorary Minister: Did you pay a fee?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: No. The law does not provide that I should pay a fee. The man was only too anxious and willing to secure the position and, as I said, I was

only too pleased to secure his services. If the Bill becomes law, private registry offices will be forced out of business and it will be necessary for employers to apply to the State Labour Bureau for workers. Today, however, a worker is in the position that he can pick and choose jobs. In the circumstances, I am definitely of opinion that no necessity whatever exists for this measure and I hope the House will reject it on the second reading.

HON. SIR HAL COLEBATCH (Metropolitan) [8.8]: I can well understand that there may be good reason for amending the Employment Brokers Act, which was passed in 1909. Some small amendments were made in 1912, and in 1918 there was one simple amendment which required the employment broker to charge at least the same fee to the employer as he charged to the worker. Since then there has been no amendment of the Act. Circumstances have altered a great deal and I think it quite likely that a further amendment of the Act is desirable. But if this Bill is defeated on the second reading, the fault will lie with the Government, and with the Government alone, for the simple reason that the body of the Bill—no matter how desirable that may be; I do not propose to criticise it—is entirely over-ridden in importance by Clause 15, covering the new schedule. That is much more important than is any other part of the Bill.

I am sure members will be quite justified in rejecting the measure on the second reading if they see objection to the schedule of charges. Personally, I see the strongest possible objection to the proposal. The purpose of the Bill—I say this advisedly—is to drive the private employment broker out of business. Reference was made to the Bill being a war measure. I have always understood that the Government would, during the war, refrain as far as was practicable and reasonable, from introducing controversial legislation. This is not only controversial legislation; it is controversial from the purely party political standpoint, which is the worst type of controversial legislation to introduce at a time like this.

The Chief Secretary: Were not you a party to the Geneva Convention which dealt with the ratifying of this?

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I a party to the Geneva Convention!

The Chief Secretary: Officially.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: No. I have not been a party to anything done at the Geneva Convention. I am not ashamed to say that, having attended one of the meetings of the League of Nations, it only strengthened me in the conviction that I always held, that the League of Nations—I will not say it was a fraud—was never calculated to do any good and that reliance on the League probably has as much as anything else to do with bringing us into our present trouble. Still, that has nothing to do with the Bill. I have never had anything to do with the functions of the League of Nations. I never had any faith in it. Is it suggested that the Minister means that I, as Agent General, had something to do with the League? I may have, as Agent General, but it would be under instructions from the Government. I, as a private person, certainly never had anything to do with the League of Nations. As Agent General I may have conveyed to it the wishes of this or of that Government; but I had no personal responsibility in connection with it. I repeat that the schedule is designed to drive private employment brokers out of business, in order to carry out one of Labour's political principles. There has been no public demand for this measure.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: None at all.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: It is quite possible that its adoption and the driving out of business of private employment brokers will not do the least good to anybody. The Bill is introduced only in fulfilment of one of Labour's principles, that there should be no private employment brokers. As other speakers have said, no obligation rests on any worker to seek the services of a private broker. No worker goes to a private broker unless he so desires. I have heard of a great many cases in which people have been extremely dissatisfied with the workers sent to them by the Government Bureau. I have not the slightest doubt that if the Government could be depended upon to find and send suitable employees to the same extent as private offices do, then the private offices would soon have to go out of business.

Already the Government has adopted unfair methods of competition as against the

private offices, particularly in the matter of the advancing of fares, which seems to have been a spiteful action carried out because this House rejected a similar Bill last year. It is all very well for the Minister to shake his head, but that is so. That action undoubtedly was taken in order to prejudice the private employment brokers. Whether there is any reserve action that the Government may take against private employment brokers if this Bill is thrown out, I do not know. I do not care whether the second reading is passed or not. There may be some virtue in some part of the Bill; but, as I said at the outset, the schedule so overrides everything else in importance that if the Bill is rejected on the second reading, it will be the fault of the Government and the fault of the Government alone, for introducing, at a time like this, legislation that not only is controversial but is purely party political and cannot do the community the least bit of good. It may do a very great deal of harm.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [8.15]: I was surprised to see this measure brought here, and to note that the Government desires to force upon the employers a new system of engaging labour. The Bill will do away with the present method by which a magistrate licenses employment brokers, substituting the Chief Inspector of Factories for that purpose. What does he know of the ramifications of businesses throughout this country?

The Chief Secretary: More than the magistrates.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY: I doubt it very much.

HON. H. V. PIESSE: He knows the union side of it.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY: Yes. This Bill reeks with the object the Government has in view. The Minister's action recently, in advancing fares to take the workman to his job in the country, affected the private employment agencies. It was a shrewd provision because such people spend practically every shilling they receive in the large towns. The employment brokers know these men and the jobs which they can honestly fill. It is ridiculous for the employer who sends down to an agency, or probably to several, to have to forward fees to each one.

Under the scheme in operation until last year, the Government advanced railway fares. Last year the edict was issued that these fares would not be again advanced. That has put the employers to a very great disadvantage and it is certainly not working in the interests of the employees seeking work. The railways always recovered these fares, even though the men did not turn up on the particular jobs. The police would eventually locate these men and report them to the employers. I have spoken to some of the men. I said to one of them, "You have dodged payment of fees for 12 or 18 months," and he was quite willing to have that money sent to the department. That scheme has been cancelled and the position of the employment brokers made more difficult. These brokers have to register and pay a considerable number of fees to the Crown. I take serious objection to the proposal to make the Chief Inspector of Factories the licensing authority. All the business must come to the city under this measure, whereas employment brokers are operating in other localities. The provision in the present Act is far ahead of the suggested amendment in this respect.

I hope the second reading will not be passed because the measure will serve no good purpose. It is not a genuine attempt to better the lot of the workers, the people who should receive the greatest consideration. I see in it another attempt to force the workers to join a union. I understand they cannot get a job unless they have paid their union fees. Members may laugh, but I know that is the opinion of a number of the men who actually refuse to go near the State Labour Bureau.

It is a shame that this measure should be brought up year after year to endanger the rights of the people who have been running private employment agencies and successfully supplying workers to the employers. They have their clientele, but under this measure they stand a good chance of losing their opportunity to earn a living. Many of them are widows, and many have sons at the front, and their livelihood is now to be threatened or taken away. The employers themselves will be in a much worse position if they have to rely on getting employees through the State Labour Bureau. Some people have gone on paying their fees to the employment brokers, who would not have been able to live if the State Labour Bureau

had rendered the satisfactory service claimed for it. Why is it that so many employees say they would not be seen in the place? I oppose the second reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West—in reply) [8.24]: I am disappointed at the way the Bill has been received.

Hon. L. Craig: But not surprised.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The fact remains that it has been introduced as a war measure. Members opposed to the Bill have stressed the possible plight of 19 brokers. There are more than 19 private brokers affected by this measure. Members have said nothing about the hundreds of workers who have to pay half a week's wages to get a job.

Hon. L. Craig: They do not have to go to private brokers.

The HONORARY MINISTER: For some years now we have had grave suspicion that the private brokers have not carried out the provisions of the Act under which they operate. That has been dramatically proved in this House tonight by Mr. Bolton. An amendment was carried in 1918 adding the following words to Section 15 of the principal Act:—

No payment or remuneration for or in respect of any hiring shall be charged by an employment broker to the servant which is not equally charged to the employer.

Mr. Bolton spoke of an instance a month or two ago.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: It was this month, 10 days ago.

The HONORARY MINISTER: He got a man from one agency, and he stated he had not been charged a fee.

Hon. J. Cornell: You have not established that the man was charged.

The HONORARY MINISTER: If that were the case, free service was given. The hon. member has proved that the private employment brokers religiously make the workers pay and very often miss the employers. That is why the employer is so anxious to keep the private employment brokers in business. It is a fact that in no country in the world is the system of private registry offices approved. It has been condemned twice by the League of Nations at Labour conventions. Sir Hal Colebatch should have known that the convention

passed a resolution along those lines and circularised all contributing countries accordingly.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Do you approve of everything that has happened in Europe of recent years?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That has nothing to do with the present measure. At a time of shortage of labour, and when there is not sufficient to take the harvest off, there is no justification for a man paying £2 to get a job. The principle of charging fees for labour unprotected by unions or Arbitration Court awards is pernicious.

Hon. A. Thomson: Would you answer a question?

The PRESIDENT: Order! The Honorary Minister is not under cross-examination.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Strong efforts have been made during the term of the present Government to improve the State Labour Bureau.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Did you use the war as an excuse?

The HONORARY MINISTER: No. Complaints were made in this House on several occasions when similar legislation was introduced in past years regarding the inefficiency of the Labour Bureau, and we have tried to remedy the position. The quarters of the men's bureau have been shifted to a more central place to meet the wishes of the employers. We have moved the quarters of the women's bureau for the same reason. I suppose the State Labour Bureau does more business than all the private labour exchanges put together.

Hon. A. Thomson: Do you charge anything?

The HONORARY MINISTER: We charge nothing.

Hon. A. Thomson: From where do you receive your revenue of £2,500?

The HONORARY MINISTER: That comprises railway fares repaid by workers. The bulk of the fares are repaid every year. We can provide ample testimony to the efficiency of our service. We are not worrying about the private labour exchanges and we do not want to drive them out of existence. We are concentrating on doing justice to two types of workers, the domestic servants and farm labourers, both of whom have no other protection, and are at the mercy of the employer and anyone else who wants to exploit them. The duty de-

volves upon the Government to protect them. Why should these people have this injustice inflicted upon them? It is not fair. We have no quarrel with the pastoralists' bureau which gives a free service to employees, but we want to secure free service for all workers. The schedule of fees in the Bill is very much higher than that operating in Victoria.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you call it a free service to the worker when you charge him 25s. before you allow him to start work?

The HONORARY MINISTER: I am glad of that interjection because I am able to reply to it. It has been said in this Chamber that when a man goes to the State Labour Bureau he is asked to join a union. That statement is wrong.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I must ask members to allow the Honorary Minister to proceed. If the Minister addresses the Chair, he will not attract so many interjections.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not object to interjections because they bring out points that otherwise I might miss.

The PRESIDENT: The Honorary Minister must not provoke interjections.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I wish to impress upon the House that this Bill is brought forward in all sincerity. One point I would stress is that at the present time, when there is such great difficulty in obtaining domestic servants and farm labourers, it is wasteful to inflict upon those workers fees for obtaining employment. We have been told that the proposed schedule will drive the private labour exchanges out of existence. It will do nothing of the sort. If there had been any risk of that happening, it would have led to private exchanges in Victoria being closed down long ago because the fees there are lower than those provided for in this Bill.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: But what about the difference in the populations of the two States?

The HONORARY MINISTER: We are not worrying about a comparatively few employment brokers. What we are concerned about is the unprotected worker who is called upon to pay fees in order to get employment. I am greatly disappointed at the reception given to the Bill.

Member: You knew what would happen.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I knew nothing of the sort. I expected country members particularly to appreciate the very great improvements that have been made in our service to meet the wishes of farmers and pastoralists, and I thought that, as a result, they would approve of the Bill. Undoubtedly the time is opportune to pass such legislation; the time is overdue when the two classes of workers I have mentioned should continue to be unprotected and suffer under the pernicious system of charging fees that has prevailed in the past.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	6
Noes	..	..	..	16
Majority against				10

AYES.	
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. W. H. Kitchin
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. W. R. Hall
	(Teller.)

NOES.	
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. J. J. Holmes
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. H. V. Piesse
Hon. J. Corneli	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. W. J. Mann
	(Teller.)

AYES.		PAIRS.		NOES.	
Hon. E. M. Heenan				Hon. J. M. Macfarlane	
Hon. T. Moore				Hon. H. S. W. Parker	

Question thus negatived.

Bill defeated.

BILL—POTATO GROWERS LICENSING.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 23rd October.

HON. H. V. PIESSE (South-East) [8.38]: I thank the Government for having brought down this Bill, which has been introduced at the request of various interested associations and at the instigation of the Australian Agricultural Council. My colleague on the Federal Advisory Committee, Mr. Burvill, and I have always advocated legislation along these lines. From knowledge gained at various conferences in the Eastern States, we know there was a recommendation that measures of this kind should be introduced throughout Australia. When the glut of potatoes occurred in the

Eastern States some time ago, Professor Copland, in the course of an address to a meeting in Tasmania, which is by far the best organised State in Australia, said that legislation of this nature was, in his opinion, the forerunner of the organisation of the growers.

Member: And of price fixing.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Not altogether, though anyone with common sense must realise that unless we have orderly marketing and profitable prices for all our products, agricultural production must decline.

One of the objects of the Bill is to license growers, but not to refuse a license to any grower. That is one of the most important provisions of the Bill. As was mentioned by the Honorary Minister when moving the second reading, anyone growing potatoes on an area exceeding half-an-acre must obtain a license. The fees to be collected will be paid into a special account at the Treasury and will be used firstly to defray the cost of administration and secondly will be paid over to organisations or used to secure benefits for the industry. I introduced a somewhat similar measure in 1939.

Hon. C. B. Williams: And what happened?

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: Several clauses in this Bill are unlike those in my Bill. One of them provides for the appointment of a committee of three, consisting of two licensed growers and a departmental officer. The duties of the committee—and I wish to impress this upon members—will include advising the Minister on the expenditure of the license fees and the manner in which the money may best be used for the benefit and advancement of the industry. The Bill contains no provision to empower the committee to organise or carry out any marketing regulation or in any way to interfere with producers or consumers or to engage in price-fixing or anything of that sort. It will be purely an advisory committee.

This is a matter which, in my opinion, could well have been left to the Minister as has been done in New South Wales. When the New South Wales legislation was passed, the Government of the day advanced £600 to the associated growers for the purposes of organisation, and an organising secretary was appointed. Yesterday I received a letter from the Hon. W. C. Cambridge, of New South Wales, stating that the election of the first board

in that State would take place on the 1st November. When the board has been elected, the Government will pay the license fees to that body so that it will be able to proceed with the organisation of the industry and assist in every way to keep matters of importance before the growers for the benefit of the industry, as well as to maintain a reasonably orderly system of marketing. This matter in New South Wales will be purely within the province of the board, which will function under regulations. The election of the board is provided for by regulations. If this Bill becomes law, as I hope it will, similar procedure could be provided for under regulations.

The State could be divided into zones and representatives could be elected from each zone. It has been suggested, at various meetings I have attended, that the South-West should have two zones, the Albany and Denmark district one, and the metropolitan area another, making four in all. Representatives from each of those zones could be appointed to the board and that would be a reasonable representation of the various growers having regard to the proportion of the output in the different districts in relation to the total output of the State. I imagine that the thought underlying the Bill is that a marketing or controlling officer or secretary should be appointed and the services should be obtained of a man similar to the officer carrying out this function in New South Wales for Tasmania. This individual is called a marketing officer. He does not control the price but inspects and sees that the growing of potatoes is correctly undertaken. That officer from time to time also delivers lectures over the wireless and popularises the sale of the commodity. That is the idea underlying the Bill, and the aim is so to organise the growers that they will be able to speak with one voice regarding their own industry and form associations throughout Western Australia.

Hon. C. B. Williams: With the idea of fleecing the public!

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I daresay the hon. member is used to fleecing the public with his union arrangements.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: The hon. member who interjected stated that the idea underlying the Bill is to fleece the public. That is not so. The growers in Western Australia

lia do not desire to have an exorbitant price fixed for potatoes; they desire to see production increased and quality improved. Western Australia has sufficient good land with a perfect rainfall to supply the whole of the Sydney market if it were so desired, and the potatoes could be marketed at a reasonable figure. I heard Mr. Craig, at a meeting at Dardanup, say that if there were a shortage of potatoes anywhere in this country he would guarantee, with the help of an irrigation scheme in that district, to produce thousands of tons. And there is no doubt that could be done. We have every favourable condition in Western Australia for supplying any quantity of potatoes desired.

First and foremost, however, our growers require an opportunity to organise themselves so as to be able to speak with one voice and improve conditions in their industry. Then, when they are discussing marketing problems and grading with representatives of other States and within their own boundaries, they will be able to speak with unanimity. This legislation will promote a long-desired organisation and when the industry expands I feel sure that every man connected with it will be on a very much better financial footing. Contrary to the belief of Mr. Williams, we could supply potatoes at a reasonable figure, which would be advantageous to all. The potato grower is not the dud that some people would like city folk to believe. We have educated men growing all sorts of primary products in the country, and there is no doubt that when legislation is passed those men know how to deal with it. When this organisation is established the growers will be able to assist themselves as well as the industry. The Agricultural Department has undoubtedly given great help in every way, especially in regard to checking disease and advising as to quantities that are being produced and generally assisting those who are engaged in the industry. I would, however, like to refer to a letter that I received from Mr. Foster of the Potato Marketing Board of Tasmania, in which he stated—

Your letter of the 8th to hand, and under separate cover I am sending you a further half dozen copies of our annual report.

There is an interesting position here at present, Brownells being £10 per ton and Snowflakes £5 to £5 10s. The trade attributed this wide margin very largely to our advertising, and if this view is correct it would indicate

that if we could raise sufficient revenue in Australia to put over a real advertising campaign we could increase the consumption of potatoes in the same way that demand for Brownells has been created in Sydney.

Thus we have on the one hand Tasmania, a State with a perfect organisation, and on the other hand Victoria with very little organisation. As a result of the Tasmanian organisation they are able to create a demand from the public for their goods in such a way that the price they receive for their commodity is £5 per ton greater than the Victorian price. I received another letter from Mr. Foster in September in which he told me exactly how our State was faring. I would like to read this particular part—

The following information was received from a Western Australian firm today:—

Our State has only about one-third of the acreage planted for the spring crop compared with what was planted last year. We are of the opinion that the market is going to be good. Information received from South Australia is to the effect that owing to labour shortage, plantings from that State are very light. Last year Western Australia exported during October, November and early December, approximately 13,000 tons of potatoes. We required another 3,000 tons for our local trade, making a total of 16,000 tons.

It is added that, as a result of our new markets in Singapore and the East, there will be very few potatoes for export from Western Australia to Sydney this coming season. We have exported from 250 to 300 tons per fortnight to Malaya, and in the last week or so extra potatoes have gone to Sydney. That has been brought about by information obtained in that State, and this man has been able to inform me of everything that is taking place in Western Australia. We need a similar organisation here, so that we may gain new markets and be able to maintain the production of this commodity which without doubt is one of the best-priced commodities we can sell in New South Wales. When our potatoes are sold on the Sydney market they usually bring a similar price to the Tasmanian product.

Two or three days ago there was a letter in the "West Australian" from a resident of Donnybrook. That letter pointed out that the Bill introduced by the Government was not exactly what people had been led to believe would be submitted. Before seeing that letter I had already placed several amendments on the notice paper and my colleague from the South-East Province, Mr.

Thomson, was moving for the deletion of the provision relating to half-an-acre and substitution of a quarter-of-an-acre. That is a matter we will discuss in Committee. There was reference also in that letter to the election of the proposed advisory committee. It is my intention when the Bill is in Committee to move that the advisory committee be appointed by the Minister or the Governor-in-Council for 12 months and that at the end of that period an election shall take place of all licensed growers, and only those who have a vote in connection with the Legislative Assembly election shall be permitted to vote for the election of the two committee men on the board.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It would mean that half the growers would not have the vote, because half of them are unnaturalised.

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I have already stated that only those who are able to vote at the Legislative Assembly election should have the vote. That is a very gentle way of saying that we are proposing what the hon. member has requested.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I requested nothing of the sort!

Hon. H. V. PIESSE: I have had letters from various organisations but I do not intend occupying the time of the House by referring to them. Their main objection seems to be to Clause 3, and various statements have been made to the effect that aliens should not be permitted to grow potatoes. That is a point that was referred to the Minister when he was in Albany and he said it was a Commonwealth matter, and that if the Commonwealth introduced regulations to that effect, the Government would see that they were carried out, to the best of its ability, and that they were thoroughly policed. The only amendments likely to be suggested are those I have mentioned, and I ask all members to give very careful consideration to this measure. It cannot do any harm and will do a great deal of good for the industry, giving growers an opportunity to organise themselves in an association for the benefit of themselves and the industry. I support the second reading.

HON. C. B. WILLIAMS (South) [8.59]: The Government was not right in introducing this measure. The Government represents consumers who have to pay more than 2d. a pound for potatoes, and the Bill is an attempt to fleece the public. I stated that

previously, and I repeat it. It is an attempt to organise the potato growers into a monopoly with a view to forcing up prices. The result will be that subsequently thousands of tons of potatoes will be destroyed rather than be sold at a reasonable price to the people, just as thousands of tons of fruit have been destroyed in this country while prices have been forced up. At the same time efforts have been made to popularise the consumption of fruit. If members went to the Trades Hall in Kalgoorlie they would see hundreds of pounds' worth of printed matter sent up for distribution, telling people to eat more fruit. If the price of fruit were reasonable, people would eat all that growers could produce, and the growers would get the proceeds just the same. Had it not been for an amendment moved by the Minister in another place, an amendment that led to many members supporting the Bill, the measure would not have survived in that House.

If it is decided in a display of audacity to move an amendment in this Chamber that will prevent people from growing a few potatoes in their backyards unless they go to some Government official for permission to do so, I shall have much pleasure in opposing the proposal. Why are we at war? Is it not for freedom? Are we to stop a man growing a few potatoes in his backyard? I have had half an acre under potatoes in my backyard and it cost me 15s. a stone to grow them—but still I grew them. If the Bill is agreed to, I will be included among those who must run to some Government official to secure permission to grow a few spuds! I do not want deplorable conditions to continue in the industry, but let members go round the metropolitan area and note how the Chinamen have practically been forced out of vegetable growing by Slavs. They are working from daylight to dark under conditions that no Britisher would wish to endure. I oppose the Bill altogether. There is no necessity for it. All that is required is for the growers to get together and organise on a co-operative basis so as to control their commodity.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: You would have compulsory unionism?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: That is what I believe in.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: We would get them all in.

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Yes, and then the growers would find out where they were. Think of the Italians, Slavs, and Montenegrians who now comprise more than 50 per cent. of the growers. Mr. Piesse does not understand them; he does not know them. How would he get them all in? What would happen if he did? We all know the experience regarding the Onion Board. There were many who undersold and undercut and the people have to pay 7d. or 8d. a pound for that vegetable. So it was with eggs. The board forced the price up to 2s. 10d. a dozen.

Hon. W. J. Mann: And even then the people had to take the risk!

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: Of course they did. Now we are asked to agree to a potato board. Mr. Piesse can say what he likes, but the growers in the Harvey district and elsewhere have said definitely that they will be satisfied if they get £3 10s. for their potatoes. The people have to pay at the rate of 2d. a pound for second-grade potatoes and the man in receipt of the basic wage cannot buy at that price. He will do without them. The position is quite clear to me.

There is undoubtedly in the Bill what Mr. Holmes often describes as a nigger in the woodpile. The Labour Government introduced this legislation at the behest of Mr. Piesse and a few others, but even in the Lower House at least two Labour members opposed the Bill, as I shall do in this Chamber. The people in the Harvey district consider they have been misled and, in effect, have intimated that they do not want the Bill. Fancy having to secure a license if one desires to put a half of an acre or less under potatoes! If a man wants to grow a few spuds at Leonora, he must write to the board for permission. The same applies to the individual living at Esperance.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: Have you ever seen a crop of potatoes growing in Leonora?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: I have seen cabbages growing there and cabbage land is potato land. As for Esperance, the potatoes grown there are so large that they are too big for the bags. I mean to say that too few can be put into bags. Those growers would have to write to the authorities in Perth for permission to grow their potatoes. They are not like the little pebbles that are produced in Dardanup and elsewhere, and sold at 2d. a pound! From time to time members in this

Chamber have been able to defeat Bills without much trouble. They would be wise if they adopted that course in connection with the Bill under discussion. Today the sharks are getting the profits and there is nothing to stop them except the selfishness of the potato growers which prevents them from getting together in order to deal with their own interests.

Hon. W. J. Mann: What about the speculator?

Hon. C. B. WILLIAMS: That is all very well. How can we get the Yugoslavs and others into a combine? Perhaps they might be induced to join but the trouble would be to keep them. If the Bill is agreed to I am sure that we will have complaints inside 12 months about the cost of the board to the industry. The same experience will result as with onions and with eggs. It is ridiculous to think that people have to pay the price that is now demanded for potatoes. Possibly if we had a board we might find potatoes being dumped into the sea rather than that people should be able to secure them at a low price. I trust the common sense of members will not permit them to waste further time on the Bill. My vote will go against it.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [9.7]: I have been very interested in the dissertation by Mr. Williams on the growing of potatoes.

Hon. W. J. Mann: He is a fellow potato grower.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Had his story been correct, it would have been more interesting. The potato industry has been likened to horse-racing. On the other hand, in connection with horse-racing we can obtain some information about the favourite, about training matters and the likelihood of one horse winning an event. The information that can be obtained regarding the potato industry is almost nil. The purpose of the Bill is, by the provision of licensing fees, to secure sufficient money to enable information to be obtained that is essential in connection with the growing of a commodity like potatoes.

Western Australia is in a peculiar position in that three crops of potatoes can be grown in a year. No information is obtainable as to the area under crop or the likely production. No details are available as to the likely markets in the Eastern States, and altogether the industry is a

gamble. One of the principal officers of the Agricultural Department has stated that potato growing is like taking a ticket in Tattersalls. The object of the Bill is to remedy that position. The idea of licensing growers is not to control production. The measure has nothing to do with the growing or marketing of potatoes. The idea behind it is to secure information as to the areas under crop so that the committee that will be appointed—it will comprise a departmental officer and two growers—will know approximately the quantity of potatoes to be dug at a certain time. That information will be disseminated amongst the growers who can then decide for themselves whether it is advisable or inadvisable to plant more potatoes for a further crop.

One of the functions of the committee will be to advise the growers as to the prospects of markets in the Eastern States. The industry in Western Australia is almost entirely governed by market prices in the other States. The Tasmanian growers have practically a monopoly in the Sydney market. If there is a shortage in Victoria, we can be sure that the market in Western Australia will be good. Should there be a glut in Victoria, as there was last year, it means that there will be no outlet for the surplus production in this State. Very often our crop has been planted and is almost ready for digging before our growers really know what the Victorian position is. Often they put in a large acreage hoping that there will be a shortage in the other States.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Bill will not rectify that position.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It will. The funds that will be available will enable an officer to be appointed who will be in a position to advise growers regarding expectations in the other States.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Do you not think the restriction to half an acre is too much?

Hon. L. CRAIG: That may be, but that is hardly here or there. The man who puts half an acre under potatoes will not interfere with the selling or marketing of the potato crop. The object of the Bill is mainly to obtain information. It is essential to know what are the prospects for disposing of the crop. I am not in favour of marketing control with respect to perishable commodities. It will break down

every time. From time to time at meetings of growers where I have had everyone in opposition to me, I have stressed that it is quite impossible to control the marketing of perishable commodities for which there is no overseas outlet. That has been proved time after time. Unless we can send our surplus away, it is impossible to control the orderly marketing of perishables. That, however, is another story. I have indicated the real purpose of the Bill and I do not see anything wrong with it. The question of aliens in the industry is most difficult. I think it hardly competent for this House to deal with a question that may lead to internal complications.

On motion by Hon. W. J. Mann, debate adjourned.

BILL—PUBLIC TRUSTEE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 22nd October.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [9.14]: I feel sure that members will pass the second reading of the Bill, but I desire briefly to reply to some of the statements made in the course of the debate. Mr. Holmes and Mr. Parker were the main contributors and each raised certain objections to the introduction of legislation of this description. Mr. Holmes, as usual, had quite a number of objections which he never fails to raise when matters are brought before this Chamber. Perhaps his main complaint on this occasion was that the proposed appointment of a public trustee would result in the creation of an enormous new Government department. Mr. Parker followed on somewhat similar lines, suggesting that the Bill would establish a new State trading concern. Mr. Holmes was not satisfied with that objection, and raised several others. He finished by suggesting that he had no desire to influence the House. He said that he was not going to take any further part in the debate and that he had not spoken with the object of influencing members. Yet he raised many objections to the Bill.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Be fair! I only stated facts.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If the hon. member had contented himself with stating facts alone, one might not have found fault

with anything he had to say; but I am going to show that the hon. member did not state facts. It was pleasing to hear Mr. Holmes and also Mr. Parker suggest that a very large staff would be required for this office; for that really means, if it means anything, that those members believe the establishment of a public trustee office will be a huge success right from the commencement; in other words, that there is going to be a tremendous lot of work to be done immediately that is not being done at present. Both members are aware that we have at the present time a Curator of Intestate Estates.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: In a Government enterprise there is often the staff without the business.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course it is a fact that we have that officer, and that he already has a staff and has already office accommodation. There would be no need, so I am advised, to make any alteration as regards those features. We believe that the appointment of a public trustee will be highly acceptable to the people of this State, and that there will be a gradual increase in the business transacted by his office as the result of this Bill.

May I say also that if there should be any increase in staff, it will only be because the work involved justifies that increase. I am inclined to think the public trustee will be in just the same position as the head of any department. Before any increase can be made in his staff, he will have to show every justification for it. He will have no hope of increasing his staff unless he can put up a very strong case.

Quite a lot was made by Mr. Holmes of the fact that a private trustee company which has been operating for close on half a century in this State has kept its charges within the maximum fixed 48 years ago. I dare say that is quite a good record. It is perfectly true, of course, that the company has not only done that but has been paying its directors their fees, whatever they may be, and also has been paying its shareholders dividends of 5 per cent. So that if those things are true—and I believe them to be true—and the company has kept its charges within the maximum fixed nearly 50 years ago, one can assume that that maximum must have been a very fair maximum from the point of view of the trustee company.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The Act prevents the company from paying more.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It has been admitted by both members that this matter should be placed on a proper footing. Mr. Parker suggests that this is impossible under the present Bill because it is designed to establish a State trading concern. Again I would point out that we already have our Curator of Intestate Estates and Official Trustee, who has for many ears been performing highly important and onerous duties, and I have yet to learn of any complaints having been raised against the way in which he has transacted his business. Certainly it cannot be asserted that he has been ineffective. On the other hand we have heard on many occasions of the excellent work he has done. I would reiterate that there have been no complaints in regard to either the administration or the capabilities of the officer who has filled those positions. Consequently I have no reason to anticipate that there will be any departure from the high standard that has been attained in the past, when this larger business that is spoken of has to be transacted.

Both hon. members featured the fact that private trustee companies do certain things which the public trustee would not be able to do; in other words, that the regulations under which the public trustee would operate would not be as flexible as the system employed by private trustee companies. My reply to that is that the public trustee, if the Bill becomes law, will be able to do everything that a private trustee company can do at the present time.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Will the public trustee be able to decline acceptance of an estate?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. He will be able to exercise the same discretion as the private trustee companies. There will be no more red tape attached to the office of the public trustee than to any private trustee company doing business here. The Bill makes provision whereby the trustee will have all the powers and all the rights that private trustee companies now have.

Another objection was that administration costs would be increased on account of staff, employment of agents, solicitors, etc. Again, the public trustee will do just as private trustee companies are doing at the present time. It will not be necessary for

him to have permanent members of the staff to deal with everything that has to be done in his office. I have no doubt that he will be obliged to engage outside people in just the same way as private trustee companies do from time to time. So I would say that from that aspect there can be no objection whatever to the Bill.

If there is to be any saving in costs, it will arise from the fact that there will be no directors' fees or dividends to pay. In some of his remarks Mr. Parker expressed himself in favour of local courts being branches of the Probate Office. He said that would be a good thing, but the Public Trustee Bill would not effect that purpose. Those observations, in my opinion, show that the hon. member has not studied the Bill, because Clause 50 provides that any clerk of courts or any other officer of State may be co-opted by the public trustee to act as his agent. To all intents and purposes such officers would be branches of the public trustee office in their own districts.

That brings me to another point. I believe there will be considerable savings effected if the public trustee office is established. In the first place, Government officers are not entitled to charge commission or to accept fees; and so a saving would be made there in respect of country business. I feel no doubt that under Clause 50 a public trustee office acting through district officers of that kind will prove highly convenient to the public in country centres. As we know, the local policeman often acts as clerk of courts. I should imagine that the local policeman would frequently be found highly valuable in rendering assistance in, for instance, the preservation of the personal property of a deceased intestate. We know of instances where the Government would be able through different departments to render services much better, I should say, than trustees acting in a private capacity. It is true, of course, that a person can have his estate administered by nominating a friend as executor of his will; but Mr. Parker suggests that this results in cheap administration. In some cases it might have that result, but the fact remains that even the friend has to be paid commission—a commission for administering the estate of the deceased person—with a limit of 5 per cent. I am also advised that most executors and administrators claim that commission. Further, I

have no doubt that Mr. Parker as a member of the legal profession has on numerous occasions paid that commission on behalf of clients of his who were probably private executors. Only seldom does a testator provide in his will that the executor shall not claim commission. I may say, too, that the passing of the Public Trustee Bill will not prevent private persons from becoming executors or administrators. The public trustee will have exactly the same position as private executors or private trustee companies so far as wills are concerned.

Hon. L. Craig: The public trustee will charge fees just the same, will he not? There is no difference.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It does not become compulsory for testators to nominate the public trustee. They retain their discretion in that regard. If they care to appoint the public trustee, they are entitled to do so; but there is no compulsion in the matter. The public trustee will have no power where administration is concerned except where no administrator is willing and capable to act, or greater convenience otherwise justifies the appointment of a public trustee. Some reference was made to widows and widowers taking out probate. They will be able to take out probate or administration of the estates of deceased relatives unless the testator himself directs otherwise. Mr. Parker was also concerned as to the public trustee being bound by Government regulations, and therefore tied up with red tape. To that I reply that this House knows full well that all regulations must be laid on the Table and must be approved by the House. If there is anything wrong with them, members are not slow to draw attention to that fact, and this House certainly is not slow in disallowing regulations with which members do not agree.

Some complaint was made by Mr. Parker about the present administration of money invested by order of the court through the Official Trustee. I take it members are aware that the Official Trustee invests large sums of money under orders of the Supreme Court. That duty, under this Bill, is to be transferred to the public trustee. If the hon. member will refer to the Trustees Act, he will see that any investment by the Official Trustee depends entirely on the rules of court, which are made by the judges; in other words, as far as investment of moneys in the hands of the court

is concerned, the Official Trustee at present is the agent of the judiciary. Therefore, if the hon. member has any complaint, it is not against the Official Trustee but against the Chief Justice and his fellow judges. Perhaps Mr. Parker may be prepared to approach those gentlemen with his complaint and let them know that the rules they made are ridiculous. This Bill is not going to change the present law. The public trustee, in his investment of Supreme Court moneys, will be directed by the rules of court, which will still be made by the judges of the Supreme Court. So there is very little in the objection raised by Mr. Parker on that score.

Perhaps a more serious objection was taken by Mr. Holmes, who appeared—rightly or wrongly—to be concerned whether a hard-up Treasurer might, by some means or another, postpone the investment of moneys paid to the public trustee in order to tide him—the Treasurer—over a temporary difficulty.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It has been done in the past.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot accept that statement. I question whether the hon. member can quote one instance of where a Treasurer has utilised trust money he was not entitled to use. I have no hesitation in assuring the hon. member that the Treasurer could not possibly touch one penny of the money that would be paid into the common fund if this Bill passes. Clause 40 provides for a common fund to be kept at the Treasury in a special account and to be invested by the public trustee. It would be absolutely impossible for the Treasurer to lay hands on one penny of that common fund. It would be a trust account in the true sense of the term; of course, it is to be kept at the Treasury only as a matter of convenience.

Clause 42 provides for a possible deficiency in the common fund. Mr. Holmes said he failed to see how there could be any deficiency. He pointed out that if a trust fund were overdrawn an indictable offence would have been committed. That is largely correct, but Clause 42 is included in the Bill not to deal with any overdrawing of the common fund. It must be understood that that fund will be invested for the benefit of all persons interested in estates that are to be cared for by the public trustee. Should those investments fail and

the public trustee be called upon to meet trust funds which he might be unable to meet on account of the failure, then the Consolidated Revenue of the State will stand behind the common fund, with a certain guarantee that those interested in it will lose neither their principal nor interest.

I contend it is hard indeed to visualise that Consolidated Revenue will ever be called upon to meet such a deficiency; but we wish to make the position certain, so that the public may be able to see by this measure that Parliament itself—not the Government—has authorised the guaranteeing of the common fund. It would be an extraordinary event that would bring about such a deficiency. If there were a cataclysmic depression, causing property values and securities to crash, and if there were a general drain on the common fund, then of course a deficiency might occur; but apart from such a catastrophe, it is unbelievable that there will ever be a deficiency in the common fund. I point out again that investment in the common fund is not compulsory. Any person who appoints the public trustee as his executor, agent or attorney, can direct that trust moneys with which he is concerned shall not be invested through the common fund. Consequently, he has only himself to blame should some other form of investment not bring him in a better return than would the common fund. It is considered that the common fund will be the most satisfactory method of investment. It has proved to be so in the other States and in New Zealand.

Hon. H. Tuckey: It is a pooling system?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. The return might not be as high as would be obtained from other investments. Its greatest attribute is the certainty and the security which I am sure thousands of people will prefer to the worry and doubt frequently associated with more spectacular investments. This is a service which the common fund will give and in my opinion it must commend itself to cautious people who do not wish to take risks. I repeat, investments through the common fund are not compulsory, and only those who care to avail themselves of it will be concerned with calculations as to whether or not they are getting a maximum return for their money.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Investors in the common fund will all share alike?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, the rates would be the same for everyone. Mr. Holmes is also concerned about the provisions of Clause 57. He considers greater protection is given to the public trustee than is given to trustee companies. I am advised that his fears are quite groundless. If the clause is read attentively, it will be found that protection is only given as long as the public trustee's officers or servants act in accordance with the authority conferred by the Act and as long as they are not guilty of fraud or crime. In other words, if their actions are contrary to the provisions of this measure, or if they are guilty of fraud or crime, then they become personally liable. These provisions are similar to those applicable to trustee companies. If an officer of a private company acts contrary to the charter of the company, or is guilty of fraud or crime, he is personally responsible. He is not personally responsible for every action which results in loss to his company's clients. If his actions are bona fide and in accordance with his authority, he cannot be made personally liable. That, I am told, is the legal position. A trustee company does not guarantee that its clients will not lose on investments made by it; it does not insure its clients' funds. If an inevitable loss occurs, the client has to bear that loss himself. That is the sum total of the effect of Clause 57, which contains provisions similar to those applicable to public trustees in all parts of the British Empire.

There is only one other point I wish to deal with, and it was raised by Mr. Williams. He can rest assured that the public trustee is not going to interfere with a magistrate's decision as to the application of moneys due under the Workers' Compensation Act. It can be said quite definitely that, on the other hand, the public trustee will have to act in accordance with the directions of the magistrate. The public trustee will really be an agent for the magistrate as far as the investment is concerned. It must be understood that, except where the magistrate orders investment of compensation moneys, the public trustee will have no jurisdiction whatever over such funds. In any of the cases where a magistrate orders payment direct to the worker, the public trustee will not become concerned in the slightest degree.

If, however, a magistrate orders payment out of a certain sum, the balance to be invested, the public trustee will then come into

the picture. His sole duty will be to invest in accordance with the magistrate's decision. If the magistrate directs disbursement in any special way, the public trustee will have to obey that direction implicitly. Magistrates will still be able to order payment out of the whole or any portion of compensation moneys. They will still be able to order payment out by instalments, whether weekly or annually. They will still be able to vary original orders to suit changing circumstances.

With respect to any of these orders, the public trustee will be subject to the magistrate. Subclause 4 of Clause 37 speaks for itself. It says that any sum ordered by a magistrate to be invested shall be disbursed by the public trustee in accordance with the order of the magistrate, who shall determine the manner in which such sum shall be applied.

Hon. C. B. Williams: That is all right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is only the question of investment which gives the public trustee any jurisdiction at all. He can only invest if the magistrate directs investment. If such a direction were given, the public trustee would invest the funds for the benefit of the person entitled, but would be obliged to make provision in each investment to allow for payment to the worker in accordance with the magistrate's order. Thus, if a magistrate orders investment of a sum subject to payment of weekly, monthly or yearly amounts, the public trustee will invest so as to make those amounts available. This is where the common fund will be particularly useful and where the local courts will be the liaison between the public trustee and the people in the outback. At present, a worker has to go to the local court for his original order and for any variation thereof. He will still be able to do that and the public trustee will be subject to any such order or variation. The difference will be that instead of the magistrate investing compensation moneys on behalf of the worker, the public trustee will undertake that duty subject to any special direction from the magistrate. That is as clear an explanation on that matter as I can give. I have covered the more important points raised in the contributions to the debate. The Bill, I think, will receive the blessing of this House.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Unless otherwise directed all the investments will go into the common fund.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes. Members will realise that this is actually not a new proposal. This is the last State in the Commonwealth to arrange for the establishment of a public trustee as provided for in this Bill. We have had a Curator of Intestate Estates and Official Trustee operating for years. He has been handling considerable sums of money. It was, I think, Mr. Parker who complained somewhat because although I had quoted quite a number of figures in regard to other States of the Commonwealth, I had refrained from quoting the amounts of money for which the Curator of Intestate Estates and Official Trustee is responsible. I did not have the information at the time I introduced this Bill, but I have it now. I do not propose to give the details, but the total assets controlled by the Curator of Intestate Estates and Official Trustee as at the 30th June, 1941, are as follows:—

	£
Curator of Intestate Estates ..	90,235
Official Trustee	130,882
	<hr/>
	£221,117
	<hr/>

No complaint has been raised regarding the efficiency or otherwise of the gentleman filling these particular positions. I feel sure that with the appointment of a public trustee the same standard of efficiency will be maintained, and that there will be no cause for complaint.

I wish to deal with one other matter before I conclude. It has to do with a statement made by Mr. Parker who was somewhat critical of public servants as a body. Members will recall that he said the average public servant was not very much concerned with the success or otherwise of his department; that he could not be expected to display the same interest in work of this kind as the employee of a private company, and that under no circumstances would he, Mr. Parker, be able to recommend any person to place his affairs in the hands of the public trustee. Those were, Mr. President, very strong statements to make, and I am sorry because they are perfectly unjustifiable. We have some fine public servants, and more particularly those who are occupying responsible positions such as the

Curator of Intestate Estates, and even officers such as the Crown Solicitor, a position which Mr. Parker at one time occupied. I am wondering what he would think if anyone criticised him on the same score. It is not fair to indulge in wholesale criticism of such a nature against a body of men who, I believe, are giving extraordinarily good service to the State, particularly at this time.

I conclude by again stating that the appointment of a public trustee can only have a beneficial effect from the point of view of a large number of people in this State. The public trustee will not be placed in any different position from that of the private trustee companies who have given good service for many years. As a result of past experience there can be no doubt that the public trustee, whoever he may be, will handle his work just as efficiently and with as little complaint from the public generally, as has the Curator of Intestate Estates and Official Trustee.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. V. Hamersley in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—Short title:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Part II. of Subclause 3 the figures "41" be struck out and "37" inserted in lieu.

This amendment is necessary because of a typographical error.

The CHAIRMAN: The mistake can be corrected by the clerk.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not want the mistake perpetuated.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 13—agreed to.

Clause 14—Election to administer an estate not exceeding £500, without order to administer:

Hon. G. FRASER: This clause refers to the estimated "gross" value of an estate at £500. It is very often found that the net value of an estate may only be £10 or £20. Why is the word "gross" inserted instead of "net"?

Hon. L. Craig: What do you mean by "gross" value?

Hon. G. FRASER: The value generally placed on an estate without taking into consideration any mortgages or debts.

Hon. L. Craig: Is that the interpretation in the Bill?

Hon. G. FRASER: It definitely says "gross value." That is the interpretation placed on the phrase by the Probate Office in the past.

Hon. L. Craig: The Probate Office assesses the value after all outside debts have been paid, but not the taxable probate.

Hon. G. FRASER: No. An estate may consist of a house and land of a gross value of £600, with a mortgage of £200 or £300. I was wondering if some alteration could be made to use the phrase "net value" instead of "gross value."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is no departure from the present Administration Act. I am advised it would be difficult to adopt any other method. A gross value of £500 is perhaps not easy to arrive at but it would be very hard to arrive at a net value.

Hon. G. Fraser: In some cases, but in other instances it would be quite simple.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know whether any real difficulty has arisen because of the sum being fixed at £500 gross and not £500 net.

Hon. L. Craig: I do not see that there should be any great difficulty in arriving at the net value. It is only the difference between the assets and the liabilities.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There are charges against many estates which are not apparent at the time.

Hon. G. FRASER: I had no intention of moving an amendment; I merely wished to ascertain whether the alteration would create any difficulty. A party may make personal application to the Probate Office if the value of the estate does not exceed £500. In numerous cases a house is the only asset in the estate, and it might be valued at £600, but be carrying a mortgage of £200 or £300. Because the gross value exceeds £500, the person is compelled to go to a solicitor or to an executor company in order to get probate granted.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The real object of the provision is to save expense in the case of small estates. An estate might be worth £20,000 gross but only £500 net. We

should retain the gross amount. We all have knowledge of estates which have a high gross value but which, if realised, would show a very low net value.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 15 to 48—agreed to.

Clause 49—General powers of public trustee:

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The powers are very wide and have been culled from various Acts dealing with public trustees. When the Bill was before another place, the member for Katanning (Mr. Watts) desired to move an amendment to clarify paragraph (e), but was too late. I desire to take the opportunity of making the amendment now. I move an amendment—

That in lines 1 and 2 of paragraph (e) the words "subject to the provisions of section eighteen of the Administration Act, 1903-1939" be struck out and the words "The public trustee, when acting under this paragraph as executor or administrator, shall be subject to the Administration Act, 1903-1939," added.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: You are back where you started.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It means the same thing but makes the paragraph clearer.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 of Subclause 2 after the word "court" the words "or except when acting as an executor or administrator for the purpose of administration" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (i) of Subclause 2 after the word "sell" the word "real" be inserted.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What is the definition of "real property."

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is not defined in the Act. This is inserted to bring the measure exactly into line with the Administration Act. I understand that "real property" has a definite legal meaning. It is applied to land and fixed assets of that kind.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That in line 1 of paragraph (ii) after the word "exchange" the word "real" be inserted.

This amendment is suggested for the same reason as in the case of the previous amendment.

Hon. G. FRASER: I would like some explanation of the reason for limiting the powers of the public trustee to real property. The first paragraph of the subclause prevented the public trustee from selling property of a greater value than £1,000. Then the Committee inserted the word "real" and that has the effect of preventing the public trustee from selling anything but real property beyond that value. Now it is proposed to insert the word "real" in paragraph (ii). What is the reason for the limitation?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am assured it is desirable to have a limitation imposed. As I have already stated, real property means land and assets of that kind, and I understand the usual practice under the Administration Act is in accordance with this provision. We do not desire to depart from what has been the law and practice over many years.

Hon. G. FRASER: If we limit the public trustee to that amount, what is to become of the other property in an estate? How is he going to handle that?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am advised that this is meant to protect real estate. So far as other property is concerned the public trustee has the right to sell at any time he likes and distribute the proceeds amongst the beneficiaries. Real estate, however, has to be handled very carefully and it is necessary for an order of the court to be obtained if the value of the real estate is over £1,000.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 50 to 65, Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [10.33]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 4th November.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 10.34 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 29th October, 1941.

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

QUESTION—LINSEED CROP.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Minister for Industrial Development: Is it his intention to lay upon the Table of the House the file covering the negotiations and arrangements with Richard Gray & Co., regarding the treatment of the linseed crop to be harvested as a result of the distribution of linseed seed by the Government, and the subsequent inclusion of Hemphill & Sons in the said arrangement?

The MINISTER FOR THE NORTH-WEST (for the Minister for Industrial Development) replied: The file will be made available to any member who desires to peruse it.

BILL—LAND DRAINAGE ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Minister for Works and read a first time.

MOTION—POST-WAR PROBLEMS.

As to Employment.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [4.33]: I move—

1, That this House considers that Cabinet should take steps now to explore avenues of employment for our fighting men and war workers after hostilities.

2, That the public works to be examined for this purpose should include the following:—
Western naval base, with docking facilities;
Completion of various harbour works as necessary;
Gauge standardisation and modernisation of W.A.G.R. in stages;