of taxation, I feel certain that the difference of opinion as to the method of procedure will not be allowed to stand in the way, and that we shall be able to brush it aside and give thought to the important aspect of the merits of the legislation submitted for consideration. I think that assurance should clear the atmosphere by removing the misunderstandings both in another place and here.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 5.13 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 21st September, 1933.

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

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES, PURCHASE CONDITIONS.

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Premier: What are the conditions governing the applications for and the purchase of workmen's homes (a) leasehold, (b) freehold?

The PREMIER replied: The answer to the question is embodied in the attached statement which I shall lay on the Table of the House.

BILL—POLICE ACT AMENDMENT.

Recommittal.

On motion by the Minister for Employment, Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clause 2.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair: the Minister for Employment in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 66 of principal Act:

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: When the Committee last dealt with this clause I promised to take steps to delete the reference to rogue and vagabond as it applied to this particular question. To give effect to that promise, I move an amendment—

That after the word "by," in line 1, the following words be inserted:—"inserting after the words 'rogue and vagabond,' in line 2 of the section, the words 'with the exception of those mentioned in paragraphs 2 (a) and 2 (b), and by.'"

The effect of this will be that the term "rogue and vagabond" will not apply to the people under consideration.

Mr. LATHAM: This amendment should have appeared on the Notice Paper. It is very difficult to determine at such short notice the effect it will have. I am afraid the Minister is likely to do away with the penalty section altogether. I hope he will give us time in which to look into the matter.

Mr. Marshall: It will have the same effect as the amendment I moved.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister should be prepared to report progress so that we may examine the matter more closely.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: The amendment is quite clear. It comes in after the word "by" in line 1 of the clause, and excludes from the operations of the section the term rogue and vagabond, in its application to the people concerned, in this measure.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I feel sure the Minister has taken the advice of the Crown Law Department, and I therefore hesitate to comment upon the amendment. I would point out, however, that under Section 66 of the principal Act, persons who commit certain offences are deemed rogues and vagabonds. The commission of the offences is what creates the rogues and vagabonds, and the penalty is that they are liable to imprisonment. The suggestion of the member for West Perth was to add a proviso to the effect that the penalties contained in the Act should apply, other than the penalty of being deemed a rogue and a vagabond. That would make the position quite clear.

The Minister for Employment: That is what I suggested in the first place, but I have been advised to the contrary.

Hon. N. KEENAN: I doubt very much if the advice is sound, but I suppose if the Minister takes the responsibility the dictum of the Crown Law Department must be accepted.

Mr. LATHAM: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

Mr. LATHAM: I protest against the unfairness of the Minister in declining to allow progress to be reported. It seems to me this amendment is very similar to the one you, Mr. Chairman, ruled out of order. If the Minister wants his business dealt with, he should give members an opportunity to study an amendment such as this. The penalties are imposed under this section because people have been deemed rogues and vagabonds, and because they are rogues and vagabonds they are liable to imprisonment. It is no use putting into a statute a provision to deal with persons who violate the law unless we also provide a penalty. I appeal to the Premier to give us time in which to consider this matter. I have not even seen a copy of the amendment. It is not playing the game to adopt this procedure.

Mr. McDONALD: I hope the Minister will postpone consideration of the amendment. I had in mind the insertion of a proviso reading, "Provided that any person convicted of an offence under Subsection 3(a) or 3(b) of this section shall not be deemed a rogue and a vagabond, and shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding £10 or to imprisonment not exceeding 28 days." I was under the impression that the Minister intended to recommit the clause with a view to reconsidering the penalty.

Mr. Latham: That is what I thought, too.

Mr. McDONALD: There seemed to be a feeling that the penalty might be reduced, hence my suggestion.

Mr. Latham: The Justices Act determines the penalty. Imprisonment for 28 days would not conform to a fine of £10.

Mr. McDONALD: Yes, it conforms to that fine; the imprisonment is on the basis of three days per £1. The proviso would make the position much clearer.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I have no desire to be unfair to members of the Opposition, but simply want to arrive at a position that will enable me to control the situation so that those actually in want shall be provided for and not be prevented from getting their dues by others who have sufficient. When we dealt with the Bill before, I said that, on recommittal, I would make some provision to remove persons who were convicted from being classed as rogues and vagabonds.

Mr. Latham: The trouble is you make us accept your word without giving us a chance to look into the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Not at all. If an adjournment were granted, how would that improve matters? I have the definite statement of the Crown Law authorities that in order to secure the result indicated, the amendment is required.

Mr. Patrick: But that definite statement seems to conflict with the opinion of the legal members of the House.

Mr. Latham: It will not be the Crown Law authorities who will adjudicate on cases arising out of this legislation, but justices of the peace. I think they will adopt the view I have indicated.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: But justices of the peace are subject to the opinions of higher courts.

Mr. Latham: You do not want unnecessary litigation.

Hon. N. Keenan: If there is a doubt, why leave the matter open to doubt?

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I am informed there is no doubt.

Mr. McDonald: Of course there is.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: Because there is no doubt, the amendment has been suggested. I had intended to achieve the objective desired by means of a proviso, but I was informed that it could not be done in that way, because the effect of the proviso would be felt respecting each of the 12 paragraphs appearing in Section 66. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, the Justices Act makes the necessary provision regarding penalties, and justices will be able to deal with cases by releasing persons on their own recognisances, or by imprisoning them for any period up to 12 months.

Hon. N. Keenan: That is quite correct.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: That very question was raised the other night. The statement was made that imprisonment for 12 months was provided, and the presiding justices would have no option but to inflict that penalty.

Mr. Latham: I did not say that.

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: No, but the member for Nedlands did.

Hon. N. Keenan: Not at all. I think you are mistaken; it may have been one of my learned juniors on the Government side of the House!

The MINISTER FOR EMPLOYMENT: I do not desire to be unfair to members of the Opposition, and I shall agree to an adjournment till the tea hour.

Mr. LATHAM: I move—

That progress be reported to a later stage of the sitting.

Motion put and passed.

Progress reported.

SECESSION—JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE.

Consideration of Report.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.52]: I move—

That the House approves of the appointment of the following gentlemen to prepare the case for secession, namely, Mr. C. Dudley, Mr. J. Lindsay, Mr. A. J. Reid, B.A., Mr. J. L. Walker, K.C., Mr. H. K. Watson, and the Hon. J. Scaddan, C.M.G.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [4.53]: I thought when we had appointed the select committee a little while ago that, in the report they would bring to the House, there would have been something more definite than in the one submitted. It is because I was under that impression that I intend to move an amendment at a later stage. The Premier, when moving, a little while ago, for the appointment of the committee, told us that, in view of the result of the secession referendum, Parliament should endeavour, by means of a dutiful address to His Majesty the King and application to both Houses of the Imperial Parliament, to provide some way to give effect to the decision of the people. I thought that the joint select committee were appointed to discover in what way that dutiful address should be presented and the application made to the Imperial Parliament. The committee deliberated for some time, and the motion before us is the result. We are no further forward, except that the joint select committee suggest practically transferring the responsibility of Parliament to an outside body. That is really an example of the mountain labouring and bringing forth a mouse. The joint select committee might have gone a little further in an endeavour to find the proper way of dealing with the position. The Premier, when moving for the appointment of the select committee, said the Government were not wedded to that particular method, and he indicated he would welcome any suggestion to assist the Government and Parliament to the goal they had in view. It was because I thought when the joint select committee were appointed they would exploit every avenue and call to their aid the assistance of persons in the community qualified to render that help, that I raised no objection to their appointment, although I am not at all in favour of seceding from the Commonwealth. I am aware that I cannot discuss that particular phase now because you, Mr. Speaker, would call me to order if I attempted to do so. I thought that the committee would have been given certain powers enabling them to call for persons and papers and to invite people to give evidence before them. Those powers were not given to the committee. We have not been told whether they asked anyone to render them assistance, and whether they requested anyone possessing Constitutional knowledge to appear before them. All the information we have is the suggestion for the appointment of an outside body. I have no personal objection to any member of the proposed committee. Each and every one of them has played, or is playing, his respective part in the affairs of the State, but I think, Mr. Speaker, there are men in this community more highly qualified to prepare the dutiful address and application to the Imperial Parliament than are those who are mentioned in the motion. I have in mind one gentleman who, I think, would have been qualified to sit on the committee. Possibly he may have been asked to do so; I do not know. I refer to Professor Beasley, Professor of Law at the University of Western Australia. On several occasions that gentleman has published highly interesting articles on the Constitutional standing of Western Australia in relation to the Commonwealth. I venture to assert that he has also a knowledge of Constitutional law generally. The committee would have been considerably strengthened had a gentleman of the status of Professor Beasley been included. Again, we have in this Chamber an hon. member, the member for Nedlands (Hon. N. Keenan) who during the campaign was

the leader of the secession movement, a man whose voice thundered from one end of the State to the other protesting against the wrongs suffered by this State under the Federal yoke. Day after day, night after night, that hon. gentleman set forth in unmistakable language the views he held in regard to the Federal bond and the necessity for the proposed severance. When the matter was before the people he led the van in the secession movement. He was a member of the joint committee. Why he is not included in the proposed committee I do not know, but I think he would have graced that committee and would have materially assisted them in their deliberations. I had intended to move an amendment that the House refer the report back to the joint committee and give them power to send for persons, papers and documents, but I have been advised by those who know better than myself the Standing Orders of this Parliament, that the committee originally appointed are now defunct, having finished their work, and so we cannot refer the matter back to them. I desired to do that, because I did not want to see this subject at this stage go beyond the control of this Parliament. I realise that the proposed committee will submit to this Parliament their report, on which this Parliament will have the deciding voice. The reason why I should have liked to see a continuation of the work of the joint committee with that added power, was because they could then not only call for people who could help them, but if those people refused to give the required help the committee could then compel them to attend. We have had joint committees of the respective Houses of this Parliament who have made inquiries of much less importance than the one now under consideration, and they have compelled people to come along and give assistance. However, in view of the fact that I cannot move that amendment, I now move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion, moved by the Premier:—"and they be given all the powers of a Royal Commission."

My reason for that is that the committee can then get the assistance which I think they will require. Because, with all due respect to the six gentlemen named as members of the proposed committee, four of them at least, like myself, are not overburdened with knowledge of constitutional law. No one can say that Mr. Dudley or Mr. Lindsay or Mr. Watson or the Hon. J. Scaddan is highly versed in constitutional law. Mr. Walker, I dare say, will be able to contribute to, and largely help in, the consideration which the committee will be called upon to undertake, as will also Mr. Reid. But I think the committee should have the powers with which I seek to invest them, so that they can explore every avenue of assistance in advising this Parliament as to the proper course to pursue. Whatever decision is arrived at by that committee, and whatever documents this Parliament adopts as prepared by that committee, in the presentation of that dutiful address to His Majesty and of the applications to be made to the Imperial Parliament, those documents will have not only to run the gauntlet of the Imperial Parliament but also to run the gauntlet of the most eminent constitutional authorities in the British Empire. Can anyone convince me that the six gentlemen named as members of the committee are competent to prepare a document or documents that will survive the scrutiny of those authorities? I do not think the gentlemen themselves would claim the ability to prepare such documents. As a committee to invoke the assistance of other people for the drafting of those documents, I dare say they would be fully competent; but they cannot get that assistance if people refuse to come along when required. The question has been asked in another place whether certain authorities were requested by the joint committee to come along and give evidence. There has been no reply to that. No member of the joint committee has told this House whether or not Professor Beasley or other constitutional authorities were asked to assist or if they were asked, whether they refused. Therefore I say if we are going to be serious in this matter, if we want to get the very best results, the committee proposed to be appointed should have the powers of a Royal Commission. The objection may be raised that a Royal Commission would be expensive. But of course we can appoint a Royal Commission without giving them fees. I have no objection to those men being paid: I do not desire that they should give up their time without some compensation, for the work they have ahead of them is arduous and will require the exercise of all the powers and ability those gentlemen possess. So if the necessity arose I would have

no objection either to giving them all the powers of a Royal Commission, or to recompensing them for the time they will lose in prosecuting the work this Parliament will ask them to do. As I have already said, I have no desire to see the State sever its relationship with the Commonwealth; but of course that cannot be discussed now. Without doubt, eminent constitutional authorities of the British Empire will keenly observe every step we take from now on until the conclusion of our endeavour to give practical expression to the will of the people of this State. It behoves us to be very careful in every step we take. The members of this proposed committee should have a thorough knowledge not only of constitutional law, but also of the changed relations of the Dominions with the Imperial Parliament, as determined at the Imperial Conference of 1926. The whole position requires care and exceptional ability in the handling and preparing of these documents. Whilst I have no personal objection to the men to be appointed, I do not think that alone they will be able effectively to carry out the work. Therefore, I contend they should be given the extra powers proposed in the amendment, so that we may have no hesitation at all in sending the results of their work to the Imperial Parliament.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder—on amendment) [5.10]: I do not think the powers of a Royal Commission, which the hon. member would confer on this committee, are at all needed, nor do I think they would be of any assistance to the committee. It may be, as the hon. member has remarked, that there is great need for care in handling this question from the constitutional side. But could a committee compel, say, an eminent constitutional authority in this State, one of our leading King's Counsel—who may all be regarded as authorities on constitutional matters—could even a Royal Commission compel a lawyer to go before them and give them the benefit of his advice on a constitutional matter? Of course not.

Mr. Marshall: And he would give them the wrong advice, anyhow.

The PREMIER: Perhaps. But the advice could not be expected.

Mr. Latham: It would not make it any the more valuable if we got it that way.

The PREMIER: Of course not. But if the committee did call any King's Counsel before them and said, "We want your advice and assistance as to the constitutional position between the State and the Commonwealth in regard to this question"—of course it could not be expected that any authority would give any advice that would be of any assistance. The time for a Royal Commission and the calling of witnesses, it seems to me, has gone by. There has been quite a number of committees of inquiry into this question, and the people have decided what shall be done. All that remains to be done now is the appointing of a committee for the preparation of the case. And there is sufficient information available from innumerable witnesses that have appeared before commissions in the past, sufficient on record to-day to enable the committee to prepare the case. The constitutional aspect, of course, is a very important one. In that regard the Crown Solicitor, who is a man of standing in the legal profession in this State, will be able to assist and advise the committee. So I do not think it would be of value to the committee to call witnesses in regard to any aspect of the case whatever.

Mr. Stubbs: Are the committee to be paid?

The PREMIER: No, they will be giving their services in an honorary capacity. I do not see that the calling of witnesses would be of any use. It is not a question of whether secession is good or bad; the committee could only call witnesses to give evidence that would assist in preparing the case for secession. As I have said, the case has been presented over and over again before commissions and committees of inquiry, and there is on record quite enough to help the committee when they set to work. It is not necessary to grant the power sought by the amendment, and so I hope the motion will be carried.

MR. LATHAM (York) [5.15]: I do not see that anything could be gained by investing the gentlemen selected with the powers of a Royal Commission. As the Premier has pointed out, all the evidence that we think it is possible to obtain is available. It is merely a question of sifting the evidence and preparing a concrete case, as concisely as possible, and couched in fitting language, for presentation to the right authority. If a constitutional question were raised—I am not sure that much in the way of constitutional questions would be raised unless it were the question of how to ap-

proach His Majesty or how to present the petition to the British Houses of Parliament- and if the Crown Solicitor had any doubts on the point, he would only need to approach the Treasurer for permission to consult an outside authority. That, I think, is all that is required. If the powers of a Royal Commission were conferred, I can imagine what would happen—the gentlemen selected would find it difficult to keep away from them the persons who desired to approach them with a view to counteracting any case to be submitted in favour of secession. The gentlemen selected will not hear anyone unless they desire to hear him, and all the persons whose assistance they desire will be available to them. If the assistance of any K.C. were desired, I do not think there is any who would not be prepared to give his advice, if necessary, in consultation with the Crown Solicitor. May I say how I appreciated the remarks of the member for Perth, couched as they were in language in contradistinction to that used in another place last night. The joint committee gave very serious consideration to the choice of men whose qualifications, it was thought, would enable them to submit the case on behalf of secession. It was no easy matter to secure the services of men who had the time at their disposal and were willing to act in an honorary capacity. Though I know very little of two of the gentlemen selected, to class them as two unsophisticated ignoramuses without any constitutional or legal knowledge, was rather an insult to the persons who were invited to assist us.

Mr. Stubbs: Hear, hear!

Mr. LATHAM: I take this opportunity to protest against those remarks.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is distinctly out of order is discussing remarks made in another place.

The Minister for Works: That is bad luck.

The Premier: I would have had something to say on that point, but I knew it would be objected to.

Mr. LATHAM: I am sorry I cannot refer to it, because I am not enabled to defend an important official of the State like the Crown Solicitor.

Mr SPEAKER: No; to do so would be out of order.

Mr. LATHAM: I wondered why the Premier had not done so. It is a shocking thing that a matter of this kind cannot be discussed without a member of another place speaking derogatorily of people who cannot defend themselves. The member for Perth, on the other hand, has shown a laudable example. I am anxious to do everything possible to give effect to the wishes of the people but I do not think any greater effect could be given to them by adopting the course proposed in the amendment. We can safely leave the matter in the hands of the gentlemen selected with the knowledge that the Premier will make available to them any constitutional advice that they consider is necessary.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [5.20]: It is well known that I favour secession. I was impressed by the remarks of the member for Perth and can see a good deal of force in his suggestion to grant the powers of a Royal Commission. It may be true, as the Premier says, that it would be impossible to compel an eminent K.C. to give evidence before the Royal Commission.

Mr. Latham: Would it not confound them, rather than assist them?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Though the Crown Solicitor is one of the gentlemen selected, there will probably arise doubts regarding legal aspects, perhaps as to the form the report should take, or how it should be applied. If there was power to call for advice, the task might be facilitated. I was always under the impression that any witness could be compelled to give evidence before a Royal Commission. It has been said that sufficient evidence is in existence.

Mr. Doney: It is not so much evidence as advice they need now.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: A report was compiled by an eminent K.C. about 1920—a very informative document setting forth in well-considered and orderly fashion the case in support of the State receiving a better deal from the Commonwealth.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member connecting that document with the amendment?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Reference has been made to the member for Nedlands, and I consider it unfortunate that he was not included among the gentlemen selected. It may be that he is assisting from behind the scenes.

The Premier: That is not in the amendment and has nothing to do with a Royal Commission.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Anyhow, I have said what I wanted to say. I support the member for Perth whose arguments, I consider,

were sound. There may be some objection to granting the powers of a Royal Commission, as the Premier stated, but I think the power to call evidence should be granted.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question put and passed.

BILL—EMPLOYMENT BROKERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [5.25] in moving the second reading said: It will be remembered that the first Collier Government on two occasions endeavoured to effect reform in the law relating to employment broking business. On the first occasion we introduced a measure that we held was in keeping with the decisions of the Labour Convention of the League of Nations, which provided for the total abolition of the business of private employment brokers. The Bill passed this House, but failed to pass another place. During the debate, both here and in another place, opponents of the measure expressed the belief that some measure of reform was necessary, and stated that if the Government introduced a Bill to tighten up control, do away with the charging of fees to employees and make the fees payable solely by employers, it would receive their support, but they would not go so far as the Government then suggested. The Government later introduced a Bill to give effect to the views held by a large number of members who had opposed the first Bill. The second measure provided for a more effective control of private employment agencies, and for the charging of fees to the employer only. That Bill received wider support, but in another place a lot of amendments were made to which the Government could not agree, and eventually that Bill was also lost. I noticed from the files that our predecessors in office had a Bill on the stocks ready to introduce.

Mr. Latham: Let me have a look at it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member may have it. Although that Bill did not go so far as does the measure now before the House, it certainly indicated that the Mitchell Government were satisfied that existing conditions should not be permitted to continue. When last dealing with similar legislation nearly nine years ago, I pointed out that this country was a defaulting country, that quite a number of countries had given effect to the Geneva decisions, and that although we considered ourselves an advanced democracy, we were lagging behind many other countries. Being a party to the Peace Treaty and a member of the League of Nations, we had defaulted in our duty to give effect to the decisions, although many other nations known as backward nations had passed into law, years before that time, legislation similar to that which I was then submitting. Eight years have passed and this country has made no move to retrieve the position or to conform to the decisions of the League of Nations, with the result that we are still lagging far behind most countries in this respect. In order to substantiate what I have said, I propose to quote extensively from the report issued by the International Labour Office of the League of Nations. It will then be understood that the problem dealt with by the Bill is not purely a local one, or one that emanates from Labour Governments or Labour Parties. The report to which I have referred was issued in 1932. It discloses the views that are held by a number of countries, and by those who constitute the officials of that particular body. On page 1 of the report the following appears—

> The preamble to Part 13 of the Treaty of Peace mentions, "The regulation of the labour supply" among the conditions an improvement of which is urgently required if social unrest is to be avoided. In Article 427 of the Treaty among the principles of special importance which signatory parties considered well fitted to guide the policy of the International Labour Organisation stands in the first place the principle "that labour should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce."

It was the enunciation of that principle which led to the question of the control of labour exchanges being dealt with at the different conferences. It was determined that labour should not be regarded merely as a commodity or article of commerce, for sale, or to be dealt with as goods and chattels, but that it should be treated more from the human aspect. The different nations who are members of the League of Nations took up the matter, and have set out a policy for the control or the abolition of these businesses. On the same page the report goes on to say—

> Conscious of the importance of the problem, and in view of the stress laid upon it by the

Treaty of Peace, the International Labour Conference directed from the outset its interest to the question of the abolition of fee-charging employment agencies. In a recommendation on unemployment adopted at the first session held at Washington in 1919, the conference recommended, "That each member of the International Labour Organisation take measures to prohibit the establishment of employment agencies which charge fees or which carry on their business for profit." It further recommended that where such agencies exist "they be permitted to operate only under Government licenses, and that all practicable measures be taken to abolish such agencies as soon as possible."

That was in 1919. In this year, 1933, the State Parliament has done nothing to give effect to that decision. Members should keep clearly in mind that this was not a Labour gathering. The constitution of the conference was such that the Governments of the countries represented had one direct nominee, the employers nominated one, and the Labour organisations one. The conference was therefore constituted of a two to one majority of anti-Labour representatives. In 1919 there was no Labour Government represented at that convention. Notwithstanding this majority against Labour organisations, that resolution was carried, and set out the principle by which all the parties to the Peace Treaty and the members of the League of Nations were to be bound. We stand to-day as one of the prominent defaulters. I had the privilege, when passing through Geneva some five or six years ago, of discussing our position with the officers of the International Labour Office there. They could not understand how it was that Australia, which was considered to be so advanced in its legislation, should be one of the defaulters. In no part of our continent, except Queensland, which has abolished private broker's agencies altogether, has action been taken to give effect to that decision. The Commonwealth Government, who are regarded as directly responsible, and as the responsible authority in Australia to deal with the question, have not got it within their power to pass legislation along these lines. It is purely a State function, and the States have defaulted, with the exception of Queensland. The second session, held in Genoa in 1920, was devoted almost exclusively to maritime questions, but the conference went a step further and embodied the principle of the abolition of fee-charging employment agencies with a view to providing facilities for the finding of employment for seamen. On page 4 of the report we find—

> Inquiries conducted in various countries into the practice of finding employment for fee, disclosed that serious abuses grew up in connection with the operation of fee-charging employment agencies.

On page 6 the report says—

> Since 1920, there has been constant progress in legislation, whether providing for regulation or the abolition of fee-charging employment agencies. The principle that the carrying on of employment exchange work for fee should be prohibited received increasing application.

In 1922, Germany sanctioned a law stipulating for the complete prohibition of the conduct of agencies carried on for gain. That law was to operate as from 1931. The provision was subsequently endorsed by an enactment in 1927, and carried into effect in 1931. In 1924, Manitoba amended its legislation to provide for the closing-down of fee-charging agencies. In 1925, agencies run for gain were suppressed by an Act in Bulgaria, and by a decree in Russia, whilst an amendment in Quebec gave power to the Governor to exercise discretionary right in respect of their suppression for any given locality. In Italy, a decree of 1928, which was amended in 1929, prohibited the private finding of employment, even if it were carried on free of charge. Page 9 of the report says—

> Among the numerous abuses ascribed to fee-charging employment agencies which have retained the attention of the legislative authority, the following might be mentioned:—Exaction of exhorbitant fees, charging of fees where no service is rendered, misrepresentation of the conditions of work, publication of false advertisements, advertising of posts or requests for employment without endeavouring to satisfy the requirements of persons already registered and who have paid a fee, the creation of a rapid turnover by splitting fees with employers or foremen, or by inducing workers on various pretences to change employment, sending of applicants for employment to non-existent or immoral posts.

Anyone who has had experience of the working of employment agencies in this country can say that practically every one of these headings has provided ground for complaint here. When I was secretary to the Trades Hall in Perth, seldom a week went by but some complaint was brought to me that came under one or other of the headings set out in the Geneva report. Wherever these agencies have been allowed

to go on as profit making concerns, almost every country has experienced the same trouble. On page 27 of the report we find the following:—

Provisions stipulating the total or partial abolition of fee-charging employment agencies to be immediately or gradually carried out, are at present in force in Bulgaria, five provinces of Canada, namely, Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan, in Chile, Danzig, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Rumania, the U.S.S.R., and Yugoslavia. In addition, power to abolish such agencies is conferred by law upon local authorities in France.

All these countries at that time passed a law that Western Australia has so far failed to enact. The scope of the law in the different countries differs materially. Under this heading the report says—

The scope of the application of the prohibition differs widely from country to country. In Bulgaria, three provinces of Canada, Danzig, Finland, the Netherlands, Poland, and Russia it is of a general character, covering all occupations and the whole of the national territory. In Germany, exception is admitted in respect of concert and lecture agencies of a higher artistic and scientific standing; in the Province of Saskatchewan in respect of agencies furnishing posts in connection with educational institutions. In Hungary the prohibition is confined to agencies catering for agriculture; in Italy to employment operations in occupations for which public employment services have been established. Moreover in Italy and Yugoslavia the prohibition applies only to localities and districts served by the public employment offices, while in the Province of Nova Scotia the Governor is given power to allow, by means of regulations, for such exceptions as he may deem fit.

Quebec amended its law in May of last year. This repeals those sections which permitted private employment offices to operate under license, and prohibits the keeping of such offices except those established and maintained by religious congregations or societies for the placing of their proteges; workers' societies for the study, defence and development of the economical, social and moral interests of employees; charitable and development societies, and employers who have their own employment bureaux. In all cases a permit must be obtained from the Minister for Labour. Such permit is issued free of charge and is good for one year only. It may be cancelled at any time. No remuneration may be exacted from the seeker for employment, and a register must be kept in the form prescribed by the Minister. A further amendment provides that any person working under a contract of lease and hire of work, or of apprenticeship, may register free at the Government employment bureau established under the Act. Penalties are provided for contravention of the Act. In the Canton of Geneva, Switzerland, a recent Act obliges the publishers, directors and editors of newspapers and periodicals which insert advertisements relating to employment to keep registers of the names, addresses and occupations of the persons inserting them. We do not go so far in this Bill. I have here a list, compiled by the Geneva office, of countries which have ratified the convention up to June of this year. From it hon. members will see how the Australian States have lagged behind, how they have defaulted as compared with other nations which are parties to the treaty. The list reads—

International Labour Conference, 1919.

Unemployment (Labour Exchanges) Convention.

Progress of Ratification at June, 1933.

Argentine.—Ratification recommended. Legislation in progress or in preparation.

Austria.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Belgium.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Brazil.—Ratification recommended.

Bulgaria.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Chile.—Approved. Legislation passed.

Czecho-Slovakia.—Ratification recommended. Legislation in preparation.

Cuba.—Ratification recommended.

Denmark.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Esthonia.—Ratification registered. Legislative or other measures in force before Convention adopted.

Finland.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

France.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Germany.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Great Britain.—Ratification registered Legislative or other measures in force before Convention adopted.

Greece.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Hungary.—Ratification approved. Legislation passed.

India.—Ratification registered. Legislative or other measures in force prior to adoption of Convention.

Irish Free State.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed prior to ratification.

Italy.—Ratification registered. Legislative or other measures in force prior to adoption of Convention.

Japan.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Latvia.—Ratification recommended.

Luxemburg.—Ratification registered. Legislation in force prior to ratification.

Netherlands.—Ratification registered and legislation passed.

Norway.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Paraguay.—Ratification recommended.

Poland.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Rumania.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

South Africa.—Ratification registered. Legislative or other measures in force prior to adoption of Convention.

Spain.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Sweden.—Ratification registered. Legislative or other measures passed prior to adoption of Convention.

Switzerland.—Ratification registered. Legislation passed.

Uruguay.—Ratification recommended. Legislation in progress or in preparation.

Yugoslavia.—Ratification registered. Legislation in force prior to ratification.

Mr. Latham: Has anything been done in the Australian States?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: So far as I know, only in Queensland, which has abolished private employment agencies altogether and has established Government agencies throughout the State. The Bill does not go so far as the first Bill which I brought down, but is in effect a repetition with two or three slight alterations, of the measure I brought down on the second occasion. It cannot be argued that this matter has cropped up merely because of the advent of a Labour Government. We regard this legislation as a moral obligation on Parliament. Western Australia is years behind other countries in this respect, and consequently there is a reflection upon us. The Bill proposes to transfer from the licensing court to police or resident magistrates sitting in courts of petty session the function of hearing applications for licenses, and the granting of certificates for the issue of licenses to brokers. The original arrangement may have been, and no doubt was, all right when there was a local licensing court in each of the various districts. Now, however, one licensing court has been established for the whole of the State, and may not pay a particular district a visit for years on end. Therefore it is not convenient or logical to continue the system.

Mr. Latham: We may abolish the licensing court this year.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Government have no present intention of doing that. The Bill also enables the clerk of courts to refer applications to the court if he is of opinion that the proposed place of business is unsuitable for the conduct of an employment agency. I have personal knowledge of complaints which have been made by other tenants in chambers where an employment agency has been carried on. When the labour market is in such a condition as it is at the present moment, if there is a vacancy advertised by the employment agency the corridor is so blocked with applicants for the position that the tenants of other offices off the corridor cannot carry on their businesses. At times application has been made to register little back rooms and dilapidated premises not considered at all suitable for the conduct of an employment agency. Such a fact will in future be an objection to the granting of a license. It may be said that at the moment employment agencies in the city of Perth are reasonably well housed, but that has not always been the case; hence this provision is deemed necessary. Additional grounds of objection under the Bill are that the applicant has suffered a previous forfeiture or cancellation of a license, that the reasonable requirements of the district do not warrant the granting of the application that the premises are unsuitable, or any reason the court may deem sufficient for refusal to grant a license.

Mr. Latham: That is the drag-net provision.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. It would be difficult to set out all the grounds on which a court might refuse an application.

Mr. Latham: Why not give the court discretionary power, saying that the court may refuse an application for any reason they think fit?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is what we are doing. Take this case. There is carried on in this city now by the same person in the same room, with merely a wooden partition between the two offices, an

employment agency and a matrimonial agency.

Mr. Latham: A very suitable combination, I should think.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Will hon. members listen to these advertisements and tell me whether they are advertisements inserted by a matrimonial agency or an employment broker? This one appeared quite recently—

Housekeeper, widower, two children, between 25 and 30, £1 per week.

That appears under the heading "Matrimonial." Was the man offering to pay a housekeeper £1 a week, or did he want a number of housekeepers—between 25 and 30 of them?

Mr. Latham: That must have been a marriage settlement.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Here is another advertisement under the heading of "Matrimonial"—

Country housekeeper, widower, one son, £1 per week, between 35 and 45.

Is the widower between 35 and 45, or is the housekeeper, or does the country widower want between 35 and 45 housekeepers? Here is another advertisement of the same kind—

Farmer 28, acquaintance lady 24, view to above.

Mr. Latham: That is not published in one of our leading papers?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, it is; but I am not going to say which way the paper leads. It is not right that advertisements of that character should issue from an employment agency. The Bill further empowers a road board, in addition to a municipal council, to object to the granting of a license. At present only municipalities have that right. There are many consequential amendments. The Bill will prohibit the charging of a fee to persons seeking employment. In future no fee is to be chargeable to any person seeking employment. The Bill prohibits the broker from receiving any deposit, fee, reward or remuneration from the employee, and from charging, or receiving from, the employer any fee other than those prescribed by regulation, and the amount of out-of-pocket expenses actually incurred in respect of telegrams and long-distance calls.

Mr. Latham: You should set out in a schedule what the broker is permitted to charge.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have no objection to that course; but I thought that if it was done by regulation, the regulation would have to be tabled here, and then, if considered unfair, it could be disallowed.

Mr. Latham: I think we ought to know what is a reasonable thing.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. At present the law provides that the scale of fees must be hung in the employment broker's office in a prominent place, but there is no power to regulate the fees a broker can charge. The Bill provides that the prescribed scale of fees must be hung in a conspicuous place in the broker's office. The Bill also provides for the recovery of any fee illegally charged by the broker, notwithstanding that he may be liable to prosecution for a breach of the Act, and the penalty provided is £20. When introducing the first Bill dealing with this question, I gave a long list of local abuses of which the department had records. Hon. members desiring to look them up will find them on page 1075 of "Hansard," 1925. Those cases all came from the departmental records. I do not propose on this occasion to go through a list of other local abuses of which the department have records, but I want to put one or two cases before the House, so that hon. members will see that at the moment the position is not entirely what it should be. The chief inspector has supplied me with one or two recent cases. One was where an employee reported that a job had been advertised in the country, and that upon making application he was advised by the broker that he required applicants to register and deposit an amount of 10s. to £1. It appears that the applicants tossed up to determine who should get the job, the successful applicant paying the additional fee, and the broker retaining the other deposits until a job was eventually secured. Although inquiries which were made disclosed that the collecting of deposits was a regular practice and that deposits were refunded upon request to unsuccessful applicants, no offence against the Employment Brokers' Act was disclosed. The Bill prohibits indulgence in this practice. I notice from the files that one complaint was received by my predecessor in office of an instance in which a situation for a girl was advertised. Over 100 girls made application for it, and each of them had to lodge a deposit of £2 with the broker.

Mr. Latham: What was said about that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The excuse given by the employment broker was that the deposit was necessary as a guarantee that the girl chosen would keep the appointment with the employer.

Mr. Sleeman: A very lame excuse.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: As though the girl chosen would not go to see the employer, when she found out who he was! That employment broker held £200 belonging to those girls.

Mr. Latham: What happened to that money?

Mr. Needham: Were the deposits refunded?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Some of them. Some of the deposits were held because the broker said he would retain the money until he found positions for the girls.

Mr. Thorn: He worked on their money.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, he financed his office on the money of those girls.

Mr. Griffiths: That is high finance.

Mr. Latham: What did the department do about that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is no power in the Act to enable the department to do anything. The Crown Law Department advise that no offence was committed. My predecessor referred the matter to the Crown Law Department and he was advised that the existing law does not cover such a transaction. We propose, in Clause 15, to insert a new section making it a statutory obligation on the part of the employer, who is effecting an engagement through a broker, to pay the fare of the servant from the place of engagement to the place of employment, and when the service is terminated at any time for any reason other than wilful misconduct, to pay the servant's fare back to the place where the engagement was made.

Mr. Latham: An employer might secure an inexperienced man, and yet he would be responsible for that expense.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not for inefficiency. I know of instances of unsuitable men who have applied for positions. But the fault is not all on one side. I know men have misrepresented their qualifications.

Mr. Latham: What if you wanted a good harvester driver and the man who applied for the job said he could do it? You could not trust him with a team of six or eight horses and the harvester.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, and there would be no complaint if that man were sent back on that score.

Mr. Latham: I do not know about that, in view of the wording of the clause.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I would not object to anything of that sort, but I do want the fares of these people paid in the circumstances I have indicated. The present practice is that the employee pays his or her fare from the place where the engagement is made to the place of employment, or the employer or broker advances the amount of the fare, and the amount is deducted from the wages of the employee. The terms of engagement usually agreed upon provide that after three months the fare is refunded to the employee if he or she has paid it. The trouble is that very often some fault is found with the employee just before the three months is up and she has no redress whatever. I want to get over that difficulty.

Mr. Thorn: But the wording of the clause is hardly fair.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not desire to do anything unfair; the fault is not all on one side. Men are anxious to get work in these days and sometimes they may claim to be able to do work that they are not accustomed to.

Mr. Latham: The Minister for Employment wants to make such men rogues and vagabonds.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I want to guard against abuses that exist at present, and I can give members instances to show what has happened. I know of some girls who were sent to the country and had to pay their own fares to centres a long way from Perth. They had not been in employment long enough to earn sufficient to pay their fares back to the city and were left stranded in those country areas. If it had not been for the police, some of those girls would have been completely stranded, because they had not sufficient with which to pay for accommodation.

Mr. Sleeman: There are a number of such instances.

Mr. Latham: There may be some, but you will not make the case any better by exaggerating.

Mr. Sleeman: That was no exaggeration.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There was an instance recently of a cook being engaged to go to a sheep-run. One of the conditions of her employment was that if she remained in the position for six months, and she proved competent, her fare would be refunded. She was perfectly satisfied to take the position but when she got to the station, she found that the job was available only while mustering proceeded. Mustering could not last for more than three months, yet the woman was promised the return of her fare if she remained in the position for six months. There was no hope of the job lasting that time.

Mr. Latham: That is probably an instance in which the broker made the arrangement with the woman, instead of the manager of the station making it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is one instance to show how misrepresentation occurs at the present time. It is impossible to prevent that sort of thing with the Act in its present form.

Mr. Thorn: It has to be admitted that the Act needs amending, but the clause is hardly fair.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am prepared to receive amendments to the clause because I do not desire anything that is not fair, so long as we can secure protection for the genuine worker. I will quote another instance that was brought under my notice since I have been in office as Minister. A hotelkeeper in the country, during a period of less than one year, engaged through one broker no fewer than 13 barmaids.

Mr. Marshall: They must have wanted a change of barmaids, all right.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: From each of those barmaids the broker collected half a week's wages. The broker was also supposed to collect half a week's wages from the employer, but I do not suppose any member of the House will suggest seriously that he insisted upon collecting from the hotelkeeper. Probably the amount was entered in the books, but seldom does the employer pay his share. On the other hand, the employee has to pay her share before she knows where the job is. That hotelkeeper has never employed more than one barmaid at any one time, and yet the employment broker collected, in respect of barmaids sent to that one hotel, £39 in fees. If I could get what I desire, I would provide a safeguard against collusion.

Mr. Latham: If the Bill be agreed to, there will not be much chance of collusion, because the employer will have to pay.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is so.

Mr. Latham: If a man has to pay, he will not trouble about collusion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I know how difficult it is to get direct evidence to prove collusion. It is one of the most difficult offences to prove. In the instance I have cited, I think there was collusion.

Mr. Latham: If the employer has to pay, that will obviate any suggestion of collusion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think so. At any rate, that is what is happening at the moment. The Chief Inspector has furnished me with another instance in which a girl was engaged as a waitress and assistant housemaid at a hotel in the country at a wage of 32s. 6d. per week and keep. The conditions of her engagement provided for 48 hours' notice to be given on either side, and her fare to be paid by the employer after three months' service. The employee received a week's notice after working for about two months and the reason given for dispensing with her services was slackness of trade. No complaint was made regarding her work or her conduct. The employer refused to pay the fare to the girl, although he was requested to do so both by the girl and the broker who made the engagement. In that instance, it will be observed, the broker acted in a satisfactory manner. The employer would not refund the fare, notwithstanding the condition of the employment that it would be refunded.

Mr. Latham: Who will take action in these instances? Will it be the inspector.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

Mr. Latham: The instance you have just cited suggests that if the matter had been taken to court, the girl could have claimed damages.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: But we must secure evidence and the law does not contain any provision enabling a perusal of records or even requiring records to be kept. An employer could say that any records he had, had been destroyed, and the inspector, in such circumstances, could not possibly get any evidence. There is another weakness in the position. In some instances it may operate quite genuinely; nevertheless, the interests of the employees are detrimentally affected. An employer in the country may require a domestic or a man,

and he may communicate with three different agencies in the city. Each agency communicated with may engage someone and send him or her to the employer in the country, without any communication passing between the employment brokers concerned. The position may be many miles away in the country and, in those circumstances, there would be three persons travelling to the job and two of them would have to return. Quite recently three girls were engaged for one position and all three were setting out to travel many hundred miles from the city. One of the employment brokers suspected that something was wrong and rang up the Chief Inspector. The latter had no power to interfere but nevertheless he stepped in and took action. Eventually one girl went to the situation but, because the other two did not do so, they forfeited their deposits to the broker.

Mr. Thorn: Someone should be made to pay for that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No action could be taken under the Act as it stands at present, and, in Clause 16, we propose to deal with it by providing that where an employer engages two or more brokers to secure an employee for him, he shall notify each broker of the fact and also state the names of the other brokers so engaged. It is also provided that no engagement shall be completed until the employer has notified all the brokers engaged that he has secured an employee.

Mr. Latham: Is there any penalty provided for a breach of that clause?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, a fine of £20. That sort of thing happens quite frequently. Another provision in the Bill makes the maximum penalty £50 or imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months where the broker induces a person to enter into an engagement by means of false representations, and where a person knowingly gives a false statement of facts to the broker with the intention that it be used for the purpose of inducing anyone to accept an engagement or to seek to obtain an engagement which, in fact, is not available or open. There have been instances showing the necessity for such a provision. Not very long ago two farm hands were sent to a farmer at Kondinin. When they walked on to the farm, the owner said, "I have no vacancies on the farm, and I have never advised anyone that I wanted hands." The first that man knew of anyone having been engaged for work on his property was when those two men spoke to him. Nevertheless, a broker collected fees from those men and sent them to Kondinin to fill positions that were never vacant.

Mr. Latham: Something should be done in such cases.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes.

Mr. Doney: Was any action taken in that instance?

Mr. Marshall: You can learn about that after dinner.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I was dealing with misrepresentation on the part of the employer or the broker when it comes to engaging servants, and I pointed out that there is a penalty of £50 or six months' imprisonment. It will be recognised that in order to protect himself the broker should keep all correspondence. If he is instructed by wire or by letter as to the terms of employment he should certainly save that correspondence in order that, if there be a dispute subsequently, for his own protection he shall have in writing the instructions he received from the employer. The Bill provides that the documents must be kept for six months and that they shall be open for inspection by an inspector. In the Bill an inspector is defined as an inspector under the Shops and Factories Act. Those inspectors are sworn to secrecy, and I do not think there has been any complaint that any of them has divulged information obtained in the course of his duties. Under both the Act which the Bill seeks to amend and the Shops and Factories Act, the inspectors have access to documents, but in no case that I am aware of has any of them disclosed information obtained in the course of his duties. As I said earlier, the Bill provides that the fees to be payable by employers to brokers shall be fixed by regulation. If the House should think it advisable to have the fees in a schedule to the Bill I am prepared to consider that alternative, because all we require is something reasonable. To-day there is no set price which either the worker or the employer is called upon to pay. In most cases it is half a week's wages, which means that the broker gets a full week's wages. It may be found necessary to alter the fees from time to time, and the idea was to fix them all by regulation, which has to be laid on the Table and

if either House deems it unreasonable it can be disallowed. However, I am prepared to consider the views of members if they think the fees should be embodied in the schedule. While it has been the general custom to charge half a week's wages, when it comes to piece work there are no fixed rates at all, some of the brokers charging 2½ per cent. on the value of the contract, and others charging 3d. in the pound. So there is no fixed rate for engaging men for piece work. It would be rather difficult to set out a rate in the schedule of the Bill, and then if it were found advisable to alter the fees, subsequently bring down an amending Bill. In the present circumstances it is believed that this business of employment brokerage is a pretty profitable one.

Mr. Stubbs: They get fees both ways.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. I asked the inspector to go through the advertisements in the newspapers and see if he could get an idea as to what the income of the brokers is likely to be. He reports that the advertisements of one broker—selected at random—over a period of one week during the current month were examined, and it was found that if each position advertised had been filled by the broker and the fees to which he was legally entitled were collected, his income for the week would amount to £140 15s.; and the inspector said he doubted whether it would cost £10 per week to run the broker's office. So they have a pretty profitable business, if the advertisements in the newspaper are any indication of the value of the business they are doing. Personally I have grave doubts whether the advertisements are a true reflex of the business being done; I suspect that the brokers advertise positions merely with a view to getting business, that they are not in all cases genuine vacancies. There are just two other provisions, one to enable the schedules of the Act to be amended by regulation in order to bring them into conformity with the amendments made, and the other to provide that any reprint of the Bill shall include all the amendments, which will save another consolidating measure later. Those briefly are all the provisions the Bill contains. But it is not solely on account of the position we find locally that I want the House to accept the Bill favourably. I am disappointed, and I think the House will feel disappointed, when they peruse that long list of nations I read out as having passed laws conforming to the decisions of the International Labour Conventions and find that the name of Australia is missing from that list. And a great number of the nations in that list are what we would term backward nations. Yet all the nations in that list have passed laws either abolishing the fees charged for brokerage, or regulating them and precluding fees from being charged to the employees at all. In all that long list we can search in vain for the name of Australia. Only one of our States has lived up to the obligation. In my view we should have been amongst the first nations in the world to pass those laws, for we stand prominently in the view of the officials at Geneva, who impressed upon me that they regard us as one of the leaders in democracy. We have led the world in many phases of industrial reform, but on this occasion all the nations in that long list are in advance of us. This is the third time I have asked that this law be approved; this is my third request, and I hope that my luck will turn on this third trial. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Doney, debate adjourned.

BILL—PLANT DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE (Hon. H. Millington—Mt. Hawthorn) [7.40] in moving the second reading said: This is a very small amending Bill which has been asked for by the orchardists. It is an amendment of Section 18 of the principal Act, and it deals with abandoned or neglected orchards. At present there is not sufficient power under the law for the superintendent of horticulture to take action against those who neglect their orchards and so help to spread disease amongst the other orchards. I think it will make it clear if I read Section 18 of the Act, which the Bill is to amend. It reads as follows:—

If any inspector shall report to the Minister that any orchard has been abandoned, the Minister may publish in the Gazette and in a newspaper circulating in the locality wherein such orchard is situated, a notice of the receipt of such report, and may therein state that unless within three months good cause is shown to him why he should not exercise the powers conferred by this section, he will

order all plants in such orchard which are deemed by an inspector to be likely to spread or capable of aiding in the spread of disease, to be destroyed.

It appears that it is a very simple thing to comply with the existing law. Where an orchard is to all intents and purposes abandoned, it only means that the orchardist need come along and do a little work, and the inspector or superintendent of orchards cannot proceed against him. The utmost difficulty is experienced by orchardists owing to abandoned or partially abandoned orchards. It will be noticed that the Bill applies to an orchard or part of an orchard. Therefore, if any part of an orchard is neglected the inspector can proceed, for the Bill gives him that power. Also, the orchardist is protected by being given the right of appeal to the Minister. A good deal of disease has been spread amongst orchards in the past because the law has not given sufficient power to the officials to proceed against those having neglected orchards. The Bill has been approved at conferences of growers, and it is thought it will give all the power necessary. It is a very reasonable request, for it merely gives power to the inspector to proceed against those who have neglected orchards, and compel them to put their orchards into proper shape. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Thorn, debate adjourned.

BILL—WILUNA WATER BOARD LOAN GUARANTEE.

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [7.43] in moving the second reading said: The Wiluna district has been made a water district, and a water board has been created. It is desired to put in an improved water supply, and the board have been offered the money required to be borrowed for construction works, namely £8,000. But the money is available only conditionally on the water board having the guarantee of the Treasurer. It is found that the Treasurer has no power under the existing law to give such guarantee. The Bill is to give power to the Treasurer to supply the bank with a guarantee for the money which the Wiluna water board propose to borrow. I will deal only briefly with the water supply position in Wiluna, leaving the member for the district, who has all the local knowledge, to enlarge upon it. The Wiluna Road Board financed the water board to an extent, and the Government helped a little. That provided a limited water supply and gave reticulation to a portion of the town, but there has been such a growth of population that the existing supply is quite inadequate. Further, it has been found that the source of supply from the Caledonia shaft is contaminated and it has been condemned, not only by the local medical officer, but by the Government bacteriologist. Since the contamination, the water has been treated by the local health officer, but in view of the contamination continuing from surface drainage and also the possibility of the seepage of water from contaminated shafts adjacent, the main source of supply must be condemned as unfit for human consumption. That is the advice, not only of the local medical officer but of the Government bacteriologist. The House will agree, I think, that an important and growing population such as that of Wiluna should be assisted in the effort to obtain a decent water supply, especially in view of the climatic conditions prevailing there. The water board will function just as do other water boards throughout the State. Two different propositions were submitted, and after a thorough investigation with the assistance of the Government engineers, the cheaper of the two schemes has been decided on. It is estimated that the £8,000 will be required. It will be necessary to recoup the road board for the money advanced last year, approximately £2,000, and for the equipment of the new supply the £6,000 will be needed. The Commonwealth Bank has agreed to lend the money at the rate of 5 per cent. interest, and the principal is to be repaid by half-yearly instalments over a period of ten years. The bank, however, insist upon the Treasurer guaranteeing the repayment of the loan. The population within the area now served is 1,200, and we are advised that it is likely to be materially increased very soon. Many buildings are in course of construction, and within the reticulated area it is said that within a short time there will be 1,500 souls. The water board will have £6,000 available for a new source of supply and to extend the reticulation,

and ultimately a population of 2,500 will be served. Four hundred people are receiving supplies direct from the mines as well as 70 houses. The mines have a supply of their own. The scheme is financially sound. Based on a rate of 1s. 9d. in the pound on the annual value, the estimated revenue is £1,800 per annum and the operating expenses £380, leaving £1,420, which is quite sufficient to pay interest and repay the loan within ten years. That calculation is based on a rate of only 1s. 9d. and the Act provides for a rate up to 3s. Hence there is plenty of margin for the board to finance and meet the full obligations. Notwithstanding that favourable position, the bank insist upon the State Treasurer's guarantee. There cannot be any question of Wiluna lasting for ten years. The Minister for Mines can give the House details of the prospects, if that point be raised, but I do not suppose any part of the State can look forward with greater certainty to a period of prosperity than can Wiluna.

Mr. Patrick: They might want a bigger scheme before then.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is so.

Mr. Latham: Are they getting water from the mine's well also.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Nearly 1,000 men are employed on the mine.

Mr. Marshall: The exact number is 940

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The company have spent over £1,500,000 of their own capital. There is plenty of evidence that the district is sound. The Mines Department officials state that the huge development from which ore has not yet been taken assures work for many years.

Mr. Stubbs: One pound shares are up to £3.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Up to 75s.

Mr. Doney: What is the soure of the new supply, underground or catchment?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Wells. The company expect to treat 40,000 tons of ore per month.

Mr. Marshall: They did so last month for the first time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is a tremendous tonnage, and it shows that the district has a great future. I do not think the Government are incurring any risk whatever. The scheme is sound at a rate of 1s. 9d., and the board may rate up to 3s. The Government have no fear whatever that they will be required to pay. We are not asking for general powers to guarantee any water scheme; we are merely asking for power to guarantee this particular scheme. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Doney, debate adjourned.

BILL—METROPOLITAN WHOLE MILK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 12th September.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [7.53]: I am pleased to be able to support the Bill. The Minister has explained the various amendments proposed, and has told us that the amendments have been asked for by the Whole Milk Board after seven months' experience. The Minister said the amendments were not of a contentious nature, but would really make for the smooth working of the board, and would not affect the policy. It is only to be expected that amendments should be required to what was really a piece of experimental legislation. I was glad to hear the Minister express his satisfaction with the work of the board, and satisfaction, I believe, has been expressed in all quarters. The board undoubtedly had to face a most difficult period. They had to handle an industry that was thoroughly disorganised. The producing section were very dissatisfied and there was dissatisfaction all round. The legislation has given satisfaction not only to a large body of producers, but to other sections of the community. It is claimed, and I think rightly so, that the work of the board has given the consumer a fair deal; it has ensured a better milk supply without additional cost. While I do not expect any opposition to the Bill, I hope the Minister will agree to accept the amendments of which notice has been given by the member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Ferguson). It is necessary that the board should have control over all whole milk entering the metropolitan area and produced in the metropolitan area. There is no idea of price-fixing; members need not be afraid on that score, but control is essential so that the board may know what becomes of all the milk. A consider-

able quantity of milk is received for manufacturing purposes, including the manufacture of ice-cream, and it is difficult for the board, under existing conditions, to know that the milk is actually used for the purpose for which it is purchased. The only way they can know is by being given control of that milk so that those who purchase it may be held responsible to satisfy the board what becomes of it. The member for Irwin-Moore has given notice of another amendment relating to ship's milk. I have heard it said that such milk could be controlled by regulation. The difficulty is that the milk is purchased from producers at a rate lower than that paid for milk sold in the metropolitan area. A buyer goes to a producer and says he wants to purchase ship's milk, and the producer has no protection. He sells it at a lower rate and the purchaser may dispose of it as ship's milk, or may not. I cannot see why a ship at Fremantle should be allowed to purchase milk at a cheaper rate than can people in the metropolitan area. If we could overcome that difficulty, it would help the board to deal effectively with all milk entering the metropolitan area. I hope the Minister will agree to extend the life of the board. Some people, only a few, anticipate that the board will go out of existence in 1935. Certain improvements to dairies have been requested, and the people concerned claim that they should not be asked to incur the additional expense as there is no guarantee that the board will continue to exist after 1935. The Minister indicated the other evening that it was almost certain the board would be continued. In order to clear up that point I hope he will accept the amendments appearing on the Notice Paper. I shall reserve any other remarks I may have to make until the Committee stage.

MR. THORN (Toodyay) [8.1]: I should like to give my support to the Bill. I have had an opportunity to go through the amendments contained in it, and I agree that they are very necessary and quite in order. As the previous speaker said, this Bill has been in operation for seven months, and the board has had the opportunity to find out what is necessary in the carrying out of this legislation. Complaints are being made by the retailers. That is to be expected. Their profits have been fixed. Under the Act, however, they have been allowed a reasonable trading margin. Prior to the Act coming into force, they were doing practically as they liked with the milk producer. The protection that has been afforded to the producer of whole milk was long overdue. The Minister for Lands the other night referred to the question of orderly marketing. This is the only method by which that principle can be carried into effect. To-day people are asking what we can do with the surplus labour that is available. Suggestions have been made that men should be placed on the Peel Estate to produce more milk.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is getting away from the subject.

Mr. THORN: Yes, but I was pointing out that whilst we are going in for more production we refuse to give the producers the facilities for orderly marketing. Although in other circumstances I would not agree to the Governor having power to appoint the chairman of the board, I think, on account of the large amount of work involved in carrying out the provisions of the Act, it is necessary that the chairman should be kept in his position as long as possible because of his experience. I admit that the control of the whole milk business is more difficult than the control of dried fruits, and far more complicated. That is a sufficient reason for retaining the chairman in his position for as long a time as possible. I congratulate that gentleman upon the manner in which he has stuck to his job in the face of fairly strong opposition. He has proved himself to be quite capable of handling the business. I also congratulate the board on the very good work they have done. In Committee I intend to move one or two amendments on behalf of the member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Ferguson). It is not necessary for me to say any more at this stage, because the matter has been discussed fully on previous occasions.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Sleeman in the Chair: the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

Clause 5—Amendment of Section 21:

Mr. NEEDHAM: I should like further information from the Minister on this clause. There is some confusion in the minds of

vendors as to its exact meaning, and in the course of the second reading speech the Minister himself was not very explicit concerning it. It is feared that this will injure the vendors or otherwise restrict their activities.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: According to Section 21, no person other than a licensed dairyman or licensed milk vendor shall treat milk.

Mr. Latham: Do you mean, cool it?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. Latham: There are many other things that he can do as well.

Member: Put water in it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I was not going to say that myself.

Mr. Latham: He might pasteurise it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The average dairyman would have a plant with which to treat the milk from his own herd. It is desired to relieve such men so that they will not have to pay first of all a levy on the milk they produce, then a levy for treating it, and finally a levy for selling it. Without this amendment it would be possible for a man or a company with a big treatment plant to evade the tax for treatment. This clause will relieve the small dairyman who is cooling his own milk of the obligation to pay, and will also provide that the milk depot will have to pay the full fee for the treatment of the milk.

Mr. Latham: A man cannot sell milk in the city without first cooling it, can he?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think he would last long in business if he did. The practice is to milk, cool at once, and deliver quickly.

Mr. Needham: Can a man treat milk for sale other than the milk from his own cows?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It would be possible to do so, but only in a small way. The reason for bringing down this Bill was mainly to ensure that the levy could be collected legally. Had it not been for that point there would have been no urgent need for the measure. This clause seeks to remove the possibility of the ordinary producer being charged a levy when he treats milk from his own cows.

Mr. CROSS: It is provided that a depot cannot treat milk except with the authority of the board, which means that no person can treat milk except with the authority of the board. Are we empowering the board to refuse such authority to certain men and thereby give a monopoly to other men? The milk retailers are an important link in the industry, joining producers and consumers. I greatly regret that the retailers have no representation on the board. The board's activities must be closely watched, because this legislation is of an experimental nature.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Amendment of Section 25:

Mr. NEEDHAM: I think there is a clerical error in this clause. Should not "funds" read "fund"?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: No. There is the compensation fund, and the other fund for providing the levy.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—New sections:

Mr. CROSS: Proposed Section 26(a) empowers the board to charge each section of the industry 2½ per cent. every time it handles the milk, or a total of 7½ per cent.

Mr. Thorn: The compensation payment comes out of that.

Mr. CROSS: Possibly, but I hope that with care the maximum amount of 7½ per cent. need never be reached.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The board will be allowed to charge up to 2½ per cent. first of all to the producer, and that will be on the 1s. 1d.; and then the board will be permitted to charge 2½ per cent. on the 2d. which the depot keeper takes, and then 2½ per cent. on the distributor who buys the milk from the depot keeper at 1s. 3d. and sells it at a maximum of 2s. 4d. It is not correct, therefore, to say that 7½ per cent. will be charged, the 2½ per cent. being only on the amount of the turnover. The board have now had an opportunity of assessing their running costs, and are doubtful whether this charge will give them a sufficient amount, as there is a good deal of policing to be done. If the costs lessen as the board get into their stride, they will certainly not charge more than is necessary, and the percentages may then be reduced.

Mr. RAPHAEL: There has been pinpricking of the distributors of milk. The Act has been mal-administered by the so-called health inspectors. The Minister should by regulation, if not by Act of Parliament, authorise people to sell milk under the hygienic conditions under which they

have sold it in the past. Deputations to the Minister on this phase have had no result.

Mr. LATHAM: The proposed section authorises the board to collect certain percentages. I fear that under the proposed section the board will collect too much money. If too much money is provided, a board or a department will build up far too large an organisation. I want to see more milk used in the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Health: Heaven knows, it is cheap enough now!

Mr. LATHAM: Many people cannot afford to pay 3½d. a pint.

The Minister for Health: It is obtainable for much less than that.

The Minister for Agriculture: Nearly half the cost is in delivering.

Mr. LATHAM: If the board get hold of money, they may spend it. I have been surprised to see the numerous staff the board already have. The Minister should keep a tight hold on the financial section. If the board are going to standardise milk——

The Minister for Agriculture: What do you mean by standardising milk?

Mr. LATHAM: It is no use having one sample of milk with 2½ per cent. of butter fat, and another with 5 per cent. If we can standardise at 4 per cent. or 3.8 per cent.——

The Minister for Agriculture: Milk is standardised at 3.2.

Mr. LATHAM: No; that is the minimum.

The Minister for Agriculture: Well, that is the standard.

Mr. LATHAM: If milk is uniformly standardised at, say, 4.5 as in London, there can be no argument as to who shall supply a particular customer. I refer to pasteurised milk.

Mr. Raphael: But pasteurisation will not provide standardised milk.

Mr. LATHAM: The hon. member may know something about some matters, but he does not know much about this question. Of course pasteurisation does give a standard because it is treated and brought to the same quality.

Mr. Raphael: Of course, after processing.

Mr. LATHAM: It must be processed. The milk supplied to Parliament House is the best, I think, in the city.

Mr. Hegney: And it comes from Bayswater.

Mr. LATHAM: I know the board will require to have revenue in order that it may function, but the more times milk is handled, the more money will the board get. I do not know where the shopkeepers will come in in the list of those that will handle the milk.

The Minister for Agriculture: It goes straight to them from the depot.

Mr. LATHAM: It may not. I know of some instances where the distributors supply the shops direct. I know the Minister's views, and I know he is anxious to give the people milk of a good quality at a price they can afford to pay, and at which they will be encouraged to use more. It is strange that the people of Perth consume a small quantity of milk compared with what one would expect. The clause will provide the board with a fairly large sum of money, and I am doubtful whether the Minister will have adequate control over the position.

Mr. McLarty: The board will not collect more than is necessary.

Mr. LATHAM: I like that; I am surprised at the innocence of the member for Murray-Wellington. If the board can collect the money, they will do so and spend it. Quite apart from the board, there are the executive officers and the more money they can get and spend, the more will they demand. I want the board to be in a position to supply milk that they can recommend to the people. I remember a statement made by the Chief Health Inspector of the City of Perth to the effect that there was no need to prosecute persons in the city because the milk supply was so good. When the department had a check inspection, I believe I am right in saying that practically a fourth of those from whom samples were taken had to be prosecuted.

Mr. Raphael: On many occasions the City Council officials have taken samples of milk and have not had occasion to launch one prosecution.

Mr. LATHAM: And I do not know of one instance in which the Health Department had a check inspection that we did not have a prosecution.

The CHAIRMAN: At any rate, that matter is not under discussion under the clause.

Mr. LATHAM: But we are dealing with charges and part of the money collected will be spent upon inspections in the interests of the community.

Mr. Raphael: For the protection of the milk and the persecution of sellers.

Mr. LATHAM: The board know the views I have ventilated, and I think Parliament should be careful in handing over to the board what may be an unnecessary amount of money.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I believe the tax of 1½d. on every 5s. of the gross proceeds is too high. If the board are able to make such a levy, I am afraid a large organisation will be built up. I can understand the producers of milk, who are on such a good wicket compared with the producers of butter fat, being prepared to pay the amount without a squeal. To-day there are restrictions, and we have an over-supply. I do not think the Act will be in force more than another year because I am of the opinion that the producers scattered around the metropolitan area can supply the requirements of the people from Midland Junction to Fremantle. As the dairy farmers themselves have not raised any objection I shall not do so, but I think a tax of 6d. in the pound on the gross returns is too much.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It would be as well to clear up the question regarding the levy. The board have undertaken the task of altering a system that has been in force in the past and to establish a measure of control over the production and distribution of milk. I hope no one is under the belief that any system of control is cheap. We hear talk of orderly marketing. If we examine every scheme in operation in Australia—I have in mind particularly those operating in Queensland and New South Wales—for the control of the marketing of butter, eggs, milk, fruit or any primary produce, the scheme will be found enormously expensive. The scheme in each instance benefits the producers but someone has to pay for it.

Mr. Thorn: They generally pay for it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The producers are not paying for it in this instance.

The Minister for Health: Eventually the consumers pay for it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In view of the respective prices for butter fat and whole milk, the producer who is able to secure the larger return for whole milk is fortunate. The Act demands some policing because everyone is anxious to get the advantage of the larger price. If members think the board have an easy task, they should disillusion themselves. That is why it is an expensive matter to administer the Act. Everyone has to be watched. Producers are trying to beat each other to take advantage of the better price, and some depot keepers are not giving the price required.

Mr. Stubbs: Do you say the producers are getting 1s. 1d. a gallon for whole milk?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. Stubbs: Then it is extraordinary that the consumer should pay 3d. or 3½d. a pint.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: There are more extraordinary things about this matter than that. I assume that everyone desires the producer shall get the return fixed by the board. We have ascertained that supplies have been purchased at Harvey, for instance, for as low as 7½d., whereas the board fixed the price at 9d. That milk has been brought to Perth by one depot keeper—incidentally he has an allowance for spillage, although I do not know where it comes in; he is a fairly well-known man, too—and naturally he could compete advantageously with other depot-keepers in the metropolis. That upset the whole situation for the time being, but I am informed by the members of the board that they have corrected it now. When members talk about an army of inspectors and an expensive office staff, they must remember that when we set up such an organisation, that is inevitable. When we set out to revolutionise the distribution of milk, someone has to pay for it, and in this instance the producer is getting the benefit, but the consumer has to pay something extra. As to the maximum amount the board are allowed to levy, it must be recognised that the board have not yet completed their organisation, particularly that required for the country districts. Some difficulty has been experienced regarding inspections and actually that is still the work of the Health Department, which means that it has to be undertaken by the local health authorities so far. Naturally, the methods of inspection are not satisfactory to the board. The producers in the metropolitan area claim that they are carrying out their work under conditions approved by the board, but that those producing outside that area are without the same degree of supervision. That necessitates a considerable extension of the board's work. As to the duplication of effort, I had the chairman of the board to assist me when a deputation waited upon me to complain that their dairies had been inspected by the

local health inspector and then by an inspector from the board. I informed them that if the inspectors did the same work, it was wrong, but that was not the position. Members will realise that the board have to obtain records to show where the milk is produced, whether the producer is producing his quota, and so on. No one else can supply the board with that information. Now they have a fairly complete record, which I understand shows that 9,000 gallons per day is distributed in the metropolitan area. From that quantity they have to get their revenue, and on that they base this amount. They say it is necessary. If it should become less expensive as the organisation is completed, the amount will be reduced, but the chairman of the board is doubtful whether this amount will meet the expenditure of the board. As for the expense, the producer is getting the advantage, and he does not object. There are two representatives of the producers on the board, and this is their proposal. The amount is to be collected on the gallon basis.

Mr. Latham: Cannot they collect it from the source of supply only? It does not matter how it is collected; it is still added to the price of milk.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If they collected it from the source of supply, they would have to charge the producer the whole amount. At present they charge the producer 2½ per cent. of the amount he gets.

Mr. Latham: The more sources they have to collect it from, the more expensive it must be.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The board have given a lot of thought to this question, and this is the method they have adopted. The other method would be to take complete control of all the milk that comes to the metropolitan area, but for that they would require considerably more power than they have, and it would need permanent legislation. At present I am not prepared to accept any extension of the board's powers, nor any extension of the Act. The whole thing is still in the experimental stage, and until the operations of the board have extended over a whole year, we cannot tell what is going to happen. As for the other question raised by the Leader of the Opposition—the standardisation of milk—I attended an agricultural conference in Sydney where that question came up. When you standardise milk you process it. In Sydney, the consumers demand that milk delivered to them should be 4.5. I do not think the minimum standard is more than 3.25.

Mr. Latham: It is higher here.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes, but the fact remains that the depot-keepers who process and standardise the milk, certainly can milk the milk; and they do it. The agricultural conference declared against that practice. I am not going to say the producers who produce milk of a butter fat content of at least 4 per cent. should sell it at 1s. 1d., and that the processing places should get the advantage of that extra butter fat content. I cannot understand the producers suggesting that it should be raised higher than the present standard. There are, of course, more than the mere butter fat contents in the milk, for there are valuable solids in addition. What is required is that the milk shall be delivered in a clean and wholesome manner; that is what the board demands. If that is altered it will be done, not by the board, but by the Health Department. The main question in this clause is the levy. It must be remembered that the representatives of the producers on the board are not going to see the producers over-taxed. The depot-keepers and the distributors are not represented on the board, and therefore, considering that the producers and the consumers are so represented, that in itself is a safeguard against excessive tax. The Act was bound to be expensive.

Mr. Latham: We did not give the board all this power.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: But you thought you did. You knew they had to get their license fees from the milk sold. It turns out that under the Act they cannot do that, although under the Bill they will be able to do so. There is no other way to collect license fees, because it is impossible to calculate the quantity the producer or the depot-keeper is going to handle for the year.

Mr. THORN: The Leader of the Opposition, by interjection, raised a good point in reference to the collection of these charges. It would be quite possible for the board slightly to raise the price to the producers, and collect the whole of these charges at the one source.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is an artificial price now, and the higher we raise it, the more shall we encourage bushranging.

Mr. THORN: Nevertheless, the board at present are put to the expense of collecting the necessary funds from two or three sources, whereas they could collect at the one source, and so save considerable expense. I hope the Minister and the board will give that matter serious consideration.

The Minister for Agriculture: We will do that next year.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9—agreed to.

New clause:

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I move—

That the following new clause be added to stand as Clause 5.—

5. Section twenty of the principal Act is amended by inserting in subsection (1), after the word "business," in line two of this subsection, the words "or sell milk."

The board in practice have found that Section 20 does not give sufficient power. I may say the Act has been subject to close scrutiny by those who propose to contest it at law, so it is sought to insert in Section 20 the words "or sell milk," which means that milk shall not be sold except on the authority of a license issued by the board under the Act. This is in order to give the board the necessary power to prohibit a person from carrying on business or selling milk.

New clause put and passed.

New clause:

Mr. THORN: On behalf of the member for Irwin-Moore (Mr. Ferguson) I move—

That the following new clause be added to the Bill:—A new section is inserted in the principal Act, after section twenty-three, as follows:—

23A. Every person who produces for sale or brings into the metropolitan area for sale, any milk other than milk for use as whole milk, shall make application in writing to the Board in the prescribed form in each and every year, and shall submit to the Board at such times and places as may be required, returns giving information as to the quantities of milk handled and to the manner of its disposal. This shall not apply to milk used solely in the manufacture of butter.

Experience has shown that a great deal of milk coming into the metropolitan area for the use of the butter fat content, is so treated that the whole cream is separated from it and marketed as whole cream, and used in the manufacture of ice cream. It gets astray through many different channels. It will not be necessary for the board to charge a fee on this milk; all they require is that returns shall be made, so that they shall know what has become of this milk, and be sure that it is going into its correct channel.

Mr. McLARTY: If the board are to discharge their duties satisfactorily and the Act is to function successfully, the new clause is necessary. The metropolitan area is using about 10,000 gallons of whole milk daily, and the board should be given complete control. It is believed that some of the milk is not used for the purposes claimed.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot accept the amendment. Already the work of the board is difficult, and the new clause would involve additional work and policing.

Mr. McLarty: Very little.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It is remarkable that the new clause is not to apply to milk used solely in the manufacture of butter. There is more difficulty over that milk than over any other.

Mr. McLarty: It should also be included.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We should be satisfied to try out existing legislation. I am not satisfied that any large quantity of milk is used for cream and the manufacture of ice cream.

Mr. Latham: Will not the new clause assist the board to control the milk brought into Perth?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The board have not asked for the power because it will increase the work.

Mr. Latham: Do not the processing factories turn out butter also?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I think they do. That could not be prohibited; the milk could not be wasted.

The Minister for Health: What is to prevent milk brought in for processing being sold at a cheaper rate as whole milk?

Mr. Latham: I think the concluding paragraph would defeat the object of the new clause.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes The board have not yet completed their organisation. They have been favoured by the shortage of milk, and I hope they will be able to surmount the difficulties during the flush season.

Mr. MOLONEY: I oppose the new clause. It savours of an over-zealous reformer seek-

ing to secure something that will spoil the whole measure. The industry should not be regulated out of existence. I should like the mover to converse with some of the shopkeepers of Subiaco and learn their opinion. Everything possible is being done to harass them, and the new clause, instead of helping them, will cause greater confusion. Users of milk are not so much concerned about the butter fat content as about getting it at a fair price. Every innovation with restrictions of this kind merely adds to the cost. The Act already contains sufficient requirements and restrictions. The people who are suffering most under the legislation are not entitled to representation on the board. The fewer the restrictions imposed upon industry, the better. The board would soon advise the Minister if they considered the new clause necessary. Members are claiming greater knowledge than the board possess.

Mr. Latham: That is the right of members.

Mr. THORN: It would take too long to explain where the member for Subiaco is wrong. The new clause would help the board; it merely asks that returns be submitted. The board need not police the matter unless they desired.

The Minister for Agriculture: Once the milk was brought in, they would have to follow it.

Mr. THORN: It comes in now. Milk purchased for butter fat is paid for at a lower price than for whole milk, and there is grave suspicion that milk purchased for butter fat has been sold as whole milk.

The Minister for Health: There is not much doubt of that.

Mr. THORN: The Minister desires to help the board and I hope he will reconsider his decision.

Mr. WISE: But for the concluding paragraph, I would support the new clause.

Mr. Thorn: It can be deleted.

Mr. WISE: That paragraph would defeat the object of the new clause. It would add greatly to the work of the board. Probably thousands of gallons of milk are brought to the city for use other than as whole milk and butter making. Some of it is used for the manufacture of ice cream——

Mr. Latham: And sweets.

Mr. WISE: —and in other ways. The concluding paragraph would be dangerous. If milk is used in the production of certain commodities, it is not being used as whole milk. If the final words of the proposed new clause were deleted, it would have my support.

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment to the new clause—

That the words "this shall not apply to milk used solely in the manufacture of butter" be struck out.

If the board do not desire to police the milk supply, they can secure valuable information by studying the returns referred to in the proposed new clause.

Amendment on the new clause put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The object of the board is to obtain control of all milk brought into the metropolitan area. An enormous quantity is coming in other than that which is purchased for resale as whole milk. I believe that a fair quantity of this is being sold at whole milk prices. That is defeating the object of the board. If the board knew how much milk was coming into the metropolitan area, they might be able to control it, but I cannot find anything in the Act giving the board power to acquire that knowledge. It seems to me, that a clause of this nature should be included in the Act. Unless the Minister can advise me to the contrary, I will support the new clause.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: We should be satisfied to give the board time in which to try themselves out. They have not yet completed their organisation for the control of whole milk. The Leader of the Opposition does not realise how much supervision is required to police the Act. I am afraid the proposed new clause will impose additional duties upon the board, which after all is not a controlling body, but I think we might give way on this matter.

New clause, as amended, put and passed.

Mr. THORN: On behalf of the member for Irwin-Moore, I move an amendment—

That Section 30 of the principal Act be amended (a) by adding the word "control" after the word "the" in Subsection 1; and (b) by adding to paragraph (c) of Subsection 1 the words "which shall include the Fremantle Harbour Trust."

The hon. member's desire is to enable the board to have control over ship's milk, so that the shipping people shall pay as much for their milk as others have to do.

The CHAIRMAN: I rule that the amendment is out of order. The Bill does not provide for the board being a control board, and the proposed paragraph (b) would extend the area beyond that which is covered by the Act.

Mr. THORN: I bow to your ruling. The member for Irwin-Moore also has on the Notice Paper another new clause to provide that Section 42, dealing with the duration of the Act, shall be repealed. The board have proved themselves, and there should be no necessity for their existence to come up for review so soon as the Act provides. There is no doubt milk production will continue to increase in volume and the necessity for the board will exist for a long time. It would also be a waste of the time of Parliament to have to review all this business once more after so short an interval.

The CHAIRMAN: I must rule that amendment also out of order. It would be attempting to make permanent that which is only a temporary Act. It would not be permissible for the hon. member to do that.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—FIRE BRIGADES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 19th September.

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [9.30]: As one who has been associated with fire brigades work in the past, I am naturally interested in this legislation. I consider that the Title of the Bill should describe it as a measure for the increase of salaries. I am sure the Premier cannot feel altogether pleased at the introduction of a measure which will increase expenditure by some £500 a year.

The Minister for Agriculture: No; by £25 a year—from £250 to £275.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: But there are nine members of the board. What is the salary of each member?

The Minister for Agriculture: It is £25 a year.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Then the calculation is wrong. My great objection to the measure is that it proposes to increase the number of members from nine to ten. An additional member is to be appointed to represent the Fire Brigades Industrial Union of Workers, Coastal District. The board have functioned well and harmoniously in the past. Then why should the number of members be increased?

The Premier: That might increase the harmony.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Perhaps the proposed increase is an echo of the trouble which occurred at Midland Junction some time ago. If the union must have a member, why not reduce the representation of the insurance companies from two to one? Lastly, there should not be an increase in expenditure while everybody is suffering decreases.

MR. CROSS (Canning) [9.33]: I support the Bill, which however contains some provisions that are open to review. Firstly the Bill empowers the board to declare the whole or any road board or municipal area a fire district. In the past the procedure which had to be adopted by the board was so complicated as to be almost ridiculous. The second amendment provides that a practical fireman shall find a place on the board. The board as at present constituted does not comprise a single member with practical experience of fire fighting. The insurance companies, naturally a strongly interested party, have two representatives on the board. Road boards have a couple of representatives. The municipalties of Perth and Fremantle have two representatives. By no stretch of imagination could it be said that any of those representatives are even aware what fire hydrants are required. The secretary of the Volunteer Fire Brigades Association represents the volunteer firemen on the board. He has the nearest approach to experience in fire fighting possessed by any member of the board. Neither of the two Government representatives on the board possesses any such experience. Years ago the chairman of the board served as a volunteer fireman in the country.

Mr. Marshall: Never in his life! He never saw a bonfire in his life.

Mr. CROSS: While the members of the board have the advantage of the advice tendered by the chief officer of the brigade, not one of them has any actual experience in fire fighting. Fire fighting can be described as an industry, and it differs very much from any other industry in the world. Actual firemen are in a position to give advice to the board. From actual firemen numerous changes in the building by-laws have re-

sulted, and various regulations for the protection of life and property have been issued as the result of experience gained by firemen on the job. No one would be more capable than practical firemen of saying what fire hydrants were required in a district. If a fire took place in central Hay-street, probably not one member of the board could say where the nearest hydrant was. In a large proportion of the metropolitan area there is at present a grave insufficiency of fire hydrants. The same thing applies to thickly-populated areas in Canning and South Perth. Hydrants should be readily accessible in the event of the outbreak of fire. Very few members of the present board know anything of the intricate equipment used in present-day fire fighting. The representative suggested in the Bill would supply the board with that knowledge at first hand. In some other States a similar course has been adopted, and with highly beneficial results. The board here have to spend the considerable sum of nearly £60,000 a year in fire protection services. Most of the suggestions which have resulted in improvements have come from actual firemen. That is one reason why there should be a representative of the firemen on the board. Practical firemen consider that this Bill does not go far enough. Almost without exception the permanent staff hold that the time has arrived when the whole of the metropolitan area should be constituted a single fire district. While the metropolitan area comprises many fire districts, it is actually worked as one fire district. Until about a year ago the chief officer had no power to send firemen out of one district into another. He only got that power by getting a new regulation. The present system of having numerous first districts is creating a position in which certain local bodies are hiding behind the well-equipped brigade of the metropolis in order to strike a low fire rate. It is only commonsense that the strength of the fire protection services in the metropolis and the greater metropolitan area is only as strong as the weakest point. At present certain municipalities could declare that they would have no fire protection service at all. When they had dispensed with their fire protection services and a fire took place, and men and machines had to be sent to their aid from the city, the city would be left correspondingly unprotected. Like education and police, fire protection is a service which should be treated as essential, the stations, the men and the equipment being allocated so as to afford adequate protection to the whole of the area. The duties of a chief officer prevent him from obtaining first-hand knowledge in certain directions, and that is not the case with men who actually fight fires. The addition of another representative to the board would involve a very slight increase of expenditure—only £25 per annum; and of that the Government will be called upon to pay only one fourth. The member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) said he would oppose the Bill on the ground of economy.

Mr. Griffiths: I now withdraw that statement.

Mr. CROSS: Members of the Fire Brigades Board are rendering excellent service to the community in return for a very small payment. Another provision of the Bill sets out that when the representative of a local governing body is defeated he shall be removed from the Fire Brigades Board. That is quite reasonable.

Member: It is not.

Mr. CROSS: At the present time, one of the Government representatives on the board is not now a member of this House. I do not know whether he has attended meetings of the board, but he could not attend regularly.

Mr. Sleeman: Who is that?

Mr. CROSS: I refer to Mr. Angelo. It is not possible for him to attend meetings of the board regularly, seeing that he lives at such a great distance from the city, and it would be costly for him to travel to Perth in order to be present. I think provision should be made that when a member of the board is defeated in Parliament, that member, sitting as a representative of the Government, should be removed from the board as well. I hope the Bill will be agreed to, and I believe, as a result of the experience and knowledge of a practical fireman being available to the board, a considerable saving will be effected in carrying out the duties of that body.

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [9.47]: In my opinion, the provision for the appointment of a fireman on the board is long overdue. I wonder what the milk producers would have said had we set up a whole milk board, on which the milk producers did not have representation? In this instance a board has been established for some time

without a practical fireman, experienced in actual fire fighting, as a member. It is true that one of the members of the board has given much of his time to fire fighting; I refer to the representative of the volunteer fire brigades. But his experience has not been gained in connection with big city fires.

Mr. Latham: To whom do you refer?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Mr. Critchley.

Mr. Latham: What about Captain Prunster?

Mr. SLEEMAN: He is the representative of the local governing bodies, and he has also had considerable experience in connection with fire fighting in country towns.

Mr. Latham: So has Mr. Campbell.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I have not heard him profess to have had that experience.

Mr. Latham: He was a very active volunteer fireman.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I cannot say he was not. At any rate, no member of the board has had experience of fire fighting in the metropolitan area, which is of such importance.

Mr. Latham: The board do not do that work.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I know, but the members of the board have to legislate regarding fire brigade work. The members of the Whole Milk Board do not do the inspectors' work, but they control the production and distribution of milk. I do not know what our legal friends would say if we set up a barristers' board without lawyers having any representation on it.

Mr. Marshall: The board would be so much the better.

Mr. Latham: I do not think the Barristers' Board has a layman on it.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I think the public should have a representative on that board. At any rate, the time is long overdue for the appointment of a fireman on the Fire Brigades Board. The volunteer firemen have their representative, and the men who have to cope with the big city fires should also have their representative. As to the proposal to remove the representative of a local governing body because he happens to lose his seat, I do not know that that is altogether wise. The person alluded to by the Minister, although he lost his seat on a local governing body, has served for many years in municipal life, and he understands the requirements of municipalities. At any rate, he knows them quite as well as the man who will take his place. I do not know that because a man may lose his seat this month, and may be re-elected in a month or two, he should be forced to resign from the board. I do not know that it is wise to stipulate that the representative of a municipality must necessarily be a member of a municipal council. There are men who have spent a considerable time in connection with local governing activities, who could quite adequately represent them on the board. The late Mr. James Hickey served for many years on the board as the representative of certain municipalities and road board districts.

Mr. Marshall: He was never a member of any of the bodies he represented.

Mr. SLEEMAN: That is my impression; but he represented them successfully for a considerable period. I do not know that we should adhere strictly to the letter of the law and make a member resign merely because he loses his seat on a local governing body.

MR. LATHAM (York) [9.51]: I shall not oppose the second reading of the Bill, although I hardly see the necessity for it. I presume that, owing to the alteration of boundaries, the board found it necessary to ask for legislation, but the remainder of the Bill is, in my opinion, quite unnecessary. Members sitting on the Government cross benches have endeavoured to submit a case in support of the increased membership of the board, and have tried to indicate why the Fire Brigade Employees' Union should have representation on the board. Those members are certainly most inconsistent. They would not agree to a master builder being a member of the carpenters' union.

Mr. Sleeman: There is nothing to prevent that.

Mr. LATHAM: I cannot imagine that being permitted. I cannot picture the members of the Tramway Employees' Union holding their meetings with the manager of the Government Tramways sitting on their executive. If we are to have this sort of thing on one board, why not make it apply to all organisations?

Mr. Sleeman: We shall see that it is done.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course, the unionists would not agree to employers of labour being members of the employees' organisations. The representative of the union, who is to be made a member of the Fire Brigades Board, will be placed in an invidious position. I do not know why he should desire

to sit on the board. Better service will not be secured merely by virtue of a member of the union stiting on it.

Mr. Sleeman: The board will have the benefit of a practical fireman's experience.

Mr. LATHAM: If I may judge the position from the remarks of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Sleeman), the elevation of a representative of the firemen to a seat on the board will not assist them at all.

The Minister for Agriculture: The idea is to assist the board.

Mr. LATHAM: The Minister knows that it will not assist the board at all. The chief officer and the executive officers of the board are available to advise the members. The board represent the go-between in the affairs of the fire brigades themselves, and of those who find the money.

The Minister for Agriculture: And the people who do the work.

Mr. LATHAM: But they are paid for doing it.

The Minister for Agriculture: They are anxious to make the job efficient.

Mr. LATHAM: I will not allow the Minister to dare to suggest that the men are not proficient. They are proficient. I have not heard the slightest complaint about them, and I do not know that we can increase their efficiency. Certainly we cannot increase it by placing a member of the Fire Brigade Employees' Union on the board.

The Minister for Agriculture: I think we can.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course, that is not so.

The Minister for Agriculture: If I wanted to get advice on fire fighting, I would go to a fireman.

Mr. LATHAM: And if I wanted that advice, I would go to the Chief Officer, Mr. Connolly. He knows all about it. We could not get a better officer for that purpose than Mr. Connolly.

The Minister for Agriculture: There are some firemen who know something about it.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course, and when Mr. Connolly goes, there will be someone to replace him from within the fire brigade service. I assure the House that this move will not improve the relationship between the board and the firemen.

Mr. Sleeman: I think it will.

Mr. LATHAM: The effect of this will be to have a unionist on the board, and he will always be suspect. I should think he will be a most unhappy individual.

Mr. Sleeman: Nothing of the sort!

The Minister for Employment: That is the Leader of the Opposition's conception of a trade unionist! The House will not accept that. You say he will be suspect!

Mr. LATHAM: I know the position the unionist will be in on the board. I know what I would feel if I were in such a position. In fact, it is unfair to place such a man on the board. It is still worse to provide by Act of Parliament that that shall be done. Government members would not agree to a master builder being a member of the executive of an industrial union.

The Minister for Employment: The difference is that you have the employers on the board already.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course that is so.

The Minister for Employment: Then why not allow the workers to have a seat on the board as well?

Mr. LATHAM: I listened to the Minister when he moved the second reading of the Bill, and he did not introduce one argument to show how the efficiency of the board will be improved. Most decidedly it will not be improved.

Mr. Cross: That is your opinion.

Mr. LATHAM: All that this particular provision will do is to place the representative of the union, who is a member of the board, in an invidious position.

Mr. Sleeman: You do not know anything about it.

Mr. LATHAM: As a member of the board, he may find decisions arrived at that are in conflict with the views of his union.

The Minister for Agriculture: Why have the volunteer firemen a representative on the board?

Mr. LATHAM: There must have been some reason.

The Minister for Agriculture: They wanted some practical man.

Mr. LATHAM: Was that the reason?

The Minister for Agriculture: I should say so. Since then, the fire fighting in the city has been carried out by permanent men.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not think that was the reason. I should say it was that the volunteer firemen gave their services free to the community.

The Minister for Agriculture: No.

Mr. LATHAM: Then the Minister and I disagree. I should have said that the volunteer firemen were given representation on the board because of their services being rendered without remuneration, and, in

order to show that they were not being exploited by the board, representation was given to them accordingly. In this instance, however, the member of the board will be at the same time a servant of the board. I cannot see how that can tend to improve the position. It will set up a wrong precedent, and the Government should remember that it can operate from a reverse standpoint.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is not your objection; it is that this proposal is new.

Mr. LATHAM: You, Mr. Speaker, and I know that it is not new.

Mr. Lambert: Why you and the Speaker? Why should we not know, too?

Mr. LATHAM: Because the Speaker happens to be a very important member of a board on which this has been done before.

Mr. Lambert: Then you could state the facts for our information.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not know that we need do that. I will give the member the information outside.

Mr. Cross: Why have the permanent men been given representation on the Fire Brigades Board in New South Wales?

Mr. LATHAM: For goodness' sake, let us forget about New South Wales!

Mr. Cross: It has worked satisfactorily there.

Mr. LATHAM: I am sick and tired of hearing that we should do something because someone else has done it.

The Minister for Employment: Why not get away from that?

Mr. LATHAM: I believe the people of Western Australia have quite as much brains as those residing elsewhere, and simply because some mistake is made elsewhere, we should not be asked to follow their action. We hear of what other States are doing, but that does not improve matters from the standpoint of members of this Chamber. If we do not do this we shall save the additional £25 the Minister is asking for. I agree with the member for Fremantle. If a member of the board is elected by the municipalities and road boards as set out in the schedule, that member, the Minister said, will report to the municipalties or the road boards. The only one, I find, which he reports to is the one of which he happens to be a member for the time being. We cannot imagine this man going around them all reporting.

Mr. Sleeman: He would want a lot more than £25.

Mr. LATHAM: Of course he would. After all it is not a life appointment, but merely an appointment for two years. I know the case which the Minister quoted.

The Minister for Agriculture: He definitely represents those bodies.

Mr. LATHAM: Only one of them. There are on the board two Government representatives, two representatives of the fire brigades, and one of the volunteers, one of the City Council, and representatives of three other parts of the State. Take Part III.: There we get the municipalties of Boulder, Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie, Kanowna, Leonora, Norseman and Southern Cross, and the road districts of Kalgoorlie and Menzies. What earthly hope would he have of keeping in touch with all those local authorities? Of course with £25 a year he could not possible do it. He will be responsible to the one authority alone, and the rest will have no control over him. I remember the late Mr. Hickey. There was no keener man in the State for inspiring the younger members of the volunteer brigades. He was a member of the board. I hope the Minister will not insist upon that amendment, because it will not give him any better service. The man must have been elected originally for the reason that he had the best qualifications. Take the district I know best, namely, York. We have there Councillor Prunster, a very keen volunteer man. If he were defeated for the York municipality, I doubt if it would be possible to get another men to do the work he does. He has a very big district to cover, extending all the way from Albany to Meckatharra.

The Minister for Agriculture: It would be a case of taxation without representation.

Mr. LATHAM: But he is not there for life.

The Minister for Agriculture: Members do not remain here for life, but they are just as good men after they leave here.

Mr. LATHAM: Outside one may make mistakes, but this House is not permitted to make mistakes.

The Minister for Agriculture: I guarantee the hon. member has not been requested by any of these parties to take up his present attitude.

Mr. LATHAM: I do not take my orders from outside, I hope. But I have a certain

amount of commonsense, and I am expected to use it. If ever Councillor Prunster were tossed off the board someone else not nearly so competent would be put in his place. I cannot imagine a man remaining a member of the board for merely £25 if he were not wanted.

The Minister for Agriculture: Neither can I.

Mr. LATHAM: He would tender his resignation. As the Minister said, there are but three principles in the Bill. The first is the alteration of boundaries. I wonder the Minister did not amend the schedule, for it certainly requires to be brought up to date. The second principle is one we ought not to encourage, for under it we shall have a representative of the union becoming a master.

Mr. Cross: You do not believe in having a practical man on the board?

Mr. LATHAM: The hon. member is not going to lead me astray like that. I did not say anything of the sort. The hon. member must not twist things. I do not know what would be the position if one of these men happened to be a councillor or a road board member, and they were to say, "We will elect you." I presume he would have to go on. What I suggest to members who are so keen on this sort of thing is that they should get one of their members elected to the local authority, and then make sure that he wins a seat on the board. I do not mind giving those members that tip.

Mr. Clothier: They might require plural voting to do it.

Mr. LATHAM: Do not talk about plural voting, for we know something about the A.W.U. in that respect. The other principle is that of finding the necessary finance. On account of the first part of the Bill I will agree to the second reading, but I hope the Minister will not insist upon the second principle.

MR. NEEDHAM (Perth) [10.8]: I would not have risen to speak on the second reading but for the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition. I have never before known a man struggle so hard to find an excuse for what he had to say in opposition to the provisions of a Bill. I was somewhat astounded at the contradictory nature of the hon. member's utterances. First he opposed the new principle, as he called it, of putting a member of the fire brigades union on the board. Then he said it would be making the employee a master. In the next breath he said, "Why do not you get one of those union members elected to the road board or municipality, and get him appointed to the Fire Brigades Board in that way?" Apparently the man would not then be a master. You see, Mr. Speaker, how contradictory is the attitude of the hon. member. The hon. member, I believe, was opposing this principle because he thought it was new. It is not new. Already this principle is in operation in New South Wales, where a member of the Fire Brigades Union has a seat on the board, and the board are able to do more effective work by reason of the presence of that gentleman. Another argument used by the hon. member was, how would we like to see a master builder on the executive of the Bricklayers' Union? There is no analogy between the two. A master builder and a bricklayer have organisations that deal entirely with their own domestic business, the protection of their own particular industry, and the conditions of labour attaching to it. That is the object of the two organisations, that of the employer and that of the employee. The Fire Brigades Board have an entirely different function to perform. They have to protect the interests of the whole community. They have to make provision for the protection of human life and of property. In making arrangements for that protection, who is better qualified to assist than the practical man? The Leader of the Opposition will not deny that the board have to rely considerably on the advice of the chief of the fire brigades. Is not the chief of the fire brigades a practical fire fighter? Has he not almost invariably worked his way up from the ranks of firemen, and, because of his experience as a fighting fireman, been placed in charge as leader or chief. The Fire Brigades Board would not turn aside the advice of the chief. When they are guided so largely by the advice of the chief, will not they be considerably assisted in their deliberations by having in their midst a practical fighting fireman—a man who, in the course of his occupation of fighting fires, has discovered structural weaknesses in the building he is trying to protect from fire or in the building on fire? It is as a result of these observations that he can give sound advice to members of the board. The more we consider the proposal, the more we

find it necessary that such an appointment be made, and I am indeed surprised at the opposition offered. I realise that the opposition is not altogether serious. The member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) started off by basing his opposition on expense.

Mr. Thorn: He was wrongly advised.

Mr. NEEDHAM: When he discovered that the expense amounted to only £6 10s., he withdrew that part of his objection, if not the whole of it. With part of the speech of the member for Canning, I do not agree. He complained that the member of the board who had originally obtained his position as representative of the Government because he was a member of Parliament was still on the board. If that man is attending to his business and giving good advice to the members of the board I see no reason why he should discontinue. I do not consider it essential that the representative of the Government on the board should be a member of Parliament. The Government can get a representative outside of Parliament to render faithful service and be a useful member of the board.

Mr. Cross: The previous Government changed the representation very quickly.

Mr. NEEDHAM: If the previous Government set a bad example, we should have no desire to follow it. We are not here to follow bad precedents. It is not essential that the representative of the Government on the board should be a member of Parliament, and if the one-time member for Gascoyne is rendering good service, I see no reason why he should not continue.

Mr. Hawke: He would do better on the board than here.

Mr. Griffiths: Then keep him there.

Mr. Lambert: That is a doubtful compliment.

Mr. NEEDHAM: I welcome the Bill and am glad the Government have had the courage to propose amendments of this kind.

MR. LAMBERT (Yilgarn-Coolgardie) [10.16]: In supporting the second reading, I direct attention to a fact possibly overlooked by the Leader of the Opposition, namely, that we make a certain contribution to the board and it is nearly time that we reviewed our relationship with the board. It has always appeared to me anomalous that while the fire insurance companies, under the direction of the Fire Underwriters' Association can charge what they like for effecting fire risks, we make a contribution to their funds of one-fourth. I am prepared to say, apropos of the cost of an additional member, that the board have been for a considerable period probably one of the most extravagantly run boards in the State. Apparently the limit of their extravagance is measured only by the extravagance of the premiums charged for fire risks. If the Leader of the Opposition desires to protect the finances of the State, he might consider that under the parent Act the Government contribute approximately £12,500 to protect fire risks, from which the fire insurance companies and they alone profit.

The Minister for Employment: He only wanted to protect the feelings of the trade unions.

Mr. LAMBERT: I know he has a great regard for the trade unions. I am distinctly disappointed with the Bill. The Act should have been amended to alter, not only the constitution of the board, but the amount of contribution that makes the board possible. I think it is disgraceful——

Mr. Cross: The board are receiving considerably less now than they did previously.

Mr. LAMBERT: Even so, the State should not be paying anything at all.

Mr. Cross: Make the insurance companies pay?

Mr. LAMBERT: There is no doubt whom I would make pay. I would make the insurance companies pay. I would allow them to continue operating as insurance companies only so long as the common sense of this House permitted them to do so. Although it may not be possible yet for us to bring into wider application the principle that must appeal to all men of common sense, the Treasurer at least could say whether or not we should continue this contribution. The Leader of the Opposition must know the trend of the control of executives all over the world. The idea is to utilise on such executives the counsel, the wisdom, the practical knowledge and experience, and the mental capacity of those who have devoted most of their lives to the particular industry concerned. The most successful executives in England to-day are those on which are found representatives of the employees themselves. It is absurd for a man who may be only a member of a municipal council or a road board to think he possesses the knowledge necessary to deal with such matters as

fire brigade control. The suggestion is absurd, and I am surprised that the Leader of the Opposition should make it.

Mr. Latham: When you were a young fellow you did not invite one of your employees to join your board of directors.

Mr. LAMBERT: On all the executives on which I served I have had an outlook both from the employers' and employees' point of view, and such point of view has been properly expressed. There was no need to call in an army either of employers or of employees when the right viewpoint had to be expressed. I am sorry to have heard such a lamentable speech from the Leader of the Opposition. I thought he would have found some semblance of excuse for opposing the second reading of the Bill. In his present position he must put up some opposition to everything that is suggested.

Mr. Latham: That is something new.

Mr. LAMBERT: His remarks suggested he considered that was a function of the Leader of His Majesty's Opposition.

Mr. Latham: I do not put up opposition on this side of the House, and then change my views afterwards.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know to what the hon. member is referring. The time has arrived when executives in control of our railways, fire brigades, or other activities in which public expenditure is involved, should have serving upon them one representative of the employees who has a practical everyday knowledge of the problems associated with the industry concerned. Such a principle operates in the big executives in America and Great Britain, and has been found to lead to the very much more successful operation of the industries concerned.

Mr. Latham: They have advisory councils there.

Mr. LAMBERT: Many of the employees are serving on the boards of directors.

Mr. Latham: If they are shareholders!

Mr. LAMBERT: Are we not shareholders?

Mr. Latham: You have two representatives on this board.

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member means the Government representatives. I am speaking of the employees engaged in fire fighting.

Mr. Latham: Do not the Government represent them?

Mr. LAMBERT: I am speaking of the employees. The nominees of the Government may express quite a different view from that of an employee actually engaged in the industry, and one who has spent his whole life in it. I regret the speech of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Latham: I am giving you the opportunity to stonewall the Minister's Bill.

Mr. LAMBERT: There is a sharp principle at stake in this. Probably this is the first instalment of a principle that will be enlarged considerably as the years go by. Our railways, the fire brigades board, and other activities in which the taxpayers themselves are greatly interested from the financial point of view, would greatly benefit by the everyday experience of one man who is elected by the employees of the industry concerned to represent them on the executive. Elsewhere in the world men who have been drawn from the rank and file have proved most useful on boards of advice or executives. This principle should certainly find application in all Governmental activities.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

House adjourned at 10.28 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 26th September, 1933.

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

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read, notifying assent to the Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Act Amendment Bill.