

BILL—KALGOORLIE HEALTH AUTHORITY LOAN.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—PETROLEUM ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

House adjourned at 11.32 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 25th September, 1940.

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

QUESTION—EDUCATION.

Perth Technical College.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER asked the Chief Secretary: In regard to the additions to the Perth Technical College, 1, What funds have been provided by (a) The Commonwealth? (b) The State? 2, Were tenders called? If so (a) under what system (day labour or piecework)? (b) What amounts were tendered? 3, If tenders were not called, why not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, From the Commonwealth Youth Employment Fund, £15,000; from the State Loan Funds, £31,922; from Jubilee Fund, £13,200; total, £60,122; 2, No; 3, This is a matter of policy.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK.

Farm Valuation Basis.

Hon. A. THOMSON asked the Chief Secretary: Will he place upon the Table of the House the basis upon which the Agricultural Bank determines the value of farm properties under its control?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: Valuations of securities are mainly based on the situation of the property, rainfall, value of improvements, and productive value, varying according to locality. Details respecting basis adopted in each particular district cannot be disclosed as such disclosure would not be in best interests of the Agricultural Bank.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS.

*Free Transport for War Service
Personnel.*

Hon. H. L. ROCHE asked the Chief Secretary: As free passes over Government railways are being granted in other States to members of the A.I.F. when on leave, will the State Government grant the same privilege to Western Australian members of the A.I.F. in this State? If not, why not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: This matter is the subject of an understanding reached by the Premiers' Conference, and while one or two States have modified their attitude because of circumstances, this has not been done generally. It is estimated that the cost of granting the concession in Western Australia would be more than £150,000, and in these circumstances the matter requires grave consideration.

QUESTION—BETTING.

Fines Imposed and Paid.

Hon. J. CORNELL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, What was the total amount paid in fines by persons (a) conducting illegal betting shops, and by persons assisting therein; (b) street betting, for the financial years 1937, 1938, 1939, and for the months of July and August of the current year? 2, What was the total amount paid in fines during the abovementioned periods by persons (a) owning illegal betting premises; (b) leasing and then subleasing illegal betting premises; (c) within the precincts of illegal betting premises when the police

secured grounds for a prosecution against the occupier thereof? 3, Has the total amount of fines imposed been paid? If not, what proportion thereof remains unpaid, and is it considered to be recoverable? 4, Has imprisonment been imposed upon any person found guilty of illegal betting? If not, why not?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, (a) and (b) For 12 months to 30th June, 1937, £13,777; for 12 months to 30th June, 1938, £19,963; for 12 months to 30th June, 1939, £28,534; for 12 months to 30th June, 1940, £29,521. In Perth and Fremantle districts for—July, 1940, £1,719; August, 1940, £1,267. 2, The department has no information in this regard. 3, No. The amount outstanding is £618, but prospects of recovery are hopeful. 4, One case at Fremantle on 27th July, 1939. The question of fine or imprisonment is one which rests entirely with the magistrate or justices hearing the case.

QUESTION (2)—AGRICULTURE.

Bran and Pollard Supplies.

Hon. G. B. WOOD asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Is the Government aware that substantial sales for export of bran and pollard have recently been made from this State and that a shortage of supplies may occur? 2, In view of a possible shortage of bran and pollard, will the Government examine the position with a view to retaining sufficient stocks of offal in the State, thereby protecting the interests of the dairy farmers and poultry and pig raisers in respect to prices and supplies?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Under the National Security Regulations it is impossible to supply information of the actual quantity of bran and pollard exported, but it can definitely be stated that during the last few months the actual quantity exported by the State would not be sufficient to cause any great concern. 2, The quantity of offal available in the State is largely governed by the sales of flour overseas; if no such sales are effected then necessarily the quantity of bran and pollard available in the State will be reduced.

Hay Position.

Hon. G. B. WOOD asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Is the Government aware that a state of uncertainty still exists in the coun-

try in respect of the hay position? 2, Is the Government aware of the fact that if an assured price for hay is not announced at once, insufficient hay will be cut for the State's requirements? 3, Is it the intention of the Government to buy hay this year direct from the growers? 4, In view of the urgency of the position, will the Government make an announcement immediately as to the quantity of hay (if any) it intends to purchase, and will it pay a price comparable to £8 10s. per ton for chaff in Perth?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The Hon. G. B. Wood may recollect that he was one of the persons invited to the conference to deal with this matter and that he participated in it. In addition to certain conclusions being reached at this conference at which he was present, which conclusions completely answer his questions, the matter has been fully dealt with in to-day's issue of the "West Australian."

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT (No. 1.)

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [4.41]: The Bill contains provisions that most members will be prepared to support, but there are others that I hope will be amended. Therefore I am prepared to vote for the second reading with a view to amendments being made in Committee. The first part of the Bill meets a defect in the Act insofar as a candidate may put the country to the expense of a further election through his disqualification to sit in Parliament. In those circumstances we should endeavour to avert such a possibility. Clause 3 deals with circumstances arising during the conduct of an election. Subclause 1 covers withdrawal and seems to be quite in order, but it is with Subclause 2 that I find fault. I do not think there has been an instance in this State of a candidate having died between nomination day and election day. In any event we should remember that elections are fairly expensive. A candidate might have incurred all the expense of contesting an election only to find himself confronted by additional expense through having to fight

practically a second election. I do not think that is just, and on that and other grounds I oppose the provision that there must be a fresh election if a candidate dies between nomination day and election day. At the same time I wish to acknowledge that the Commonwealth Electoral Act contains a provision of this kind. Under that Act, if a candidate dies between nomination day and election day, the election must be declared void and another election must be held.

Hon. J. Cornell: Does that apply to both Houses?

Hon. H. SEDDON: No, to the House of Representatives. With that precedent the Government has an argument in favour of the Bill, but I do not think the principle is a right one and for that reason I shall oppose that provision. When a candidate dies after the poll has started, the circumstances would be on all fours with the case I have just cited. The next provision deals with the death of a candidate on polling day after the poll has closed. In those circumstances there is justification for holding another election. Those are all the remarks I have to make on the Bill, except to repeat that I do not think we would be justified in accepting the amendment contained in Subclause 2 of Clause 3.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [4.45]: Although I realise that this Bill will pass the second reading, I should like to take the opportunity to reply to some of the points raised in opposition to certain features of the measure. Sir Hal Colebatch yesterday suggested that the second part of the Bill savoured of the introduction of a steam roller to crack a nut; in other words, that the House was asked to provide for an emergency that had never arisen in the whole course of the State's history. Because something has not occurred in the past, that is no reason why there should not be a provision in our legislation to meet an emergency of the kind when it does occur. As was pointed out by Mr. Seddon, the Commonwealth Electoral Act makes provision for the procedure to be followed in the case of the death of a candidate for election. It is rather interesting to note that the provision made for the Senate is different from that for the House

of Representatives. Section 83, Subsection 1 of the Commonwealth Electoral Act, reads—

If after the nominations for an election for the Senate have been declared and before polling day any candidate dies and the candidates remaining are not greater in number than the candidates required to be elected, they shall forthwith be declared to be elected and the writ returned.

The appropriate provision for the House of Representatives is as follows:—

If after the nominations for an election for the House of Representatives have been declared and before polling day any candidate dies, the election shall be deemed to have wholly failed.

The Chief Electoral Officer of the State has suggested that the reason for this discrimination between the two Houses of the Commonwealth Parliament may be as follows:—

(1) In Senate elections a number of candidates have to be returned at the same election.

In other words, there is more than one member for the one electorate.

(2) A Senate election necessitates a State-wide poll.

(3) There is no provision for a by-election for the Senate, casual vacancies being filled by resolution of the Parliament of the State in which the vacancy occurs.

(4) The Constitution contemplates that the Senate shall be mainly a non-party Chamber safeguarding the interests of the States, whereas the Government is usually formed by the party predominating in the House of Representatives.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It is a pity that the Senate is not a non-party Chamber.

The **CHIEF SECRETARY**: In other States of the Commonwealth there are varying provisions to meet a contingency of this sort, and it might be of interest to members to have a full knowledge of the facts before adopting the principles of this Bill. In New South Wales, for instance, the appropriate section of the Act known as the Parliamentary Electorates and Elections Act of 1913, Section 187, reads—

If after the nominations for an election in any district have been declared, and before polling day, any candidate dies, the election shall be deemed to have wholly failed, and a new writ shall forthwith be issued for an election in the district.

Hon. J. Cornell: That only applies to the Assembly in New South Wales. It does not apply to the Council.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Are there not some nominated members in the Council in New South Wales?

Hon. J. Cornell: No. The Assembly elects the Council.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The point raised by Mr. Cornell is of course interesting, but it does not affect the principles here in question. In South Australia it is provided by Section 69 of the Electoral Act, 1929-1934—

If a nominated candidate dies before or on polling day the election shall be deemed to have wholly failed.

Thus we find New South Wales and South Australia with provisions somewhat similar to that of the Commonwealth and to that in this Bill. In Queensland the Elections Act of 1915, Section 47, provides—

If at any time after election day and before polling day any candidate dies, the returning officer shall forthwith report the fact of such death in writing to the Minister, and, where necessary, may do so under the Telegraphic Messages Act of 1872. Thereupon the writ shall be deemed to be vacated, and a new writ shall be issued, and all proceedings in connection with the election shall be had and taken anew.

So that there is another State which has the same provision as that which Sir Hal Colebatch likens to taking a steam roller to crack a nut. The case of Tasmania shows a variation. Section 76 of the Electoral Act, 1907, reads—

If after the nominations have been declared and before polling day any candidate dies, and the candidates remaining are not more than the number required to be elected, they shall forthwith be declared to be elected and the writ returned.

It will be observed that the Tasmanian legislation is based on that adopted for the Senate, and probably for similar reasons, the Tasmanian electorates for the lower House being multi-member divisions.

Hon. J. Cornell: Each of them returns six members.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: New Zealand legislation goes a little further by rendering the election void only if the death of a candidate occurs before the close of the poll, whereas elsewhere the election becomes void if the death occurs before polling day. New Zealand legislation contains various provisions dealing with the matter, and for the purpose of record I will read them to the House—

(1) If a duly nominated candidate, who has not withdrawn, dies after the day of nomination and before the polling day, the returning officer shall, upon being satisfied of the fact of such death, countermand notice of the poll.

(2) If any such candidate dies upon the polling day before the hour of closing the poll, the returning officer, upon being satisfied of the fact of such death, shall immediately close the poll, and declare the same to be null and of no effect.

(3) All proceedings with reference to the election in either of such cases shall be commenced afresh in all respects as if the writ had been received by the returning officer on which proof was given him of such death: Provided that it shall not be necessary to nominate afresh any candidate who at the time of the countermand or closing of the poll was duly nominated.

(4) Where the proceedings in any election are to be commenced afresh in consequence of the death of a candidate, the returning officer shall, previous to their commencement, indorse on the writ the fact of such death, the date of the proof thereof, and of the countermand or interruption of the poll in consequence, as the case may be.

(5) Where any poll is interrupted in consequence of the death of a candidate as aforesaid, all ballot papers placed in the several ballot boxes shall be taken out by the several deputy returning officers and, being made up into sealed packages, shall be sent by them, respectively, unopened to the returning officer, who shall forthwith, in the presence of a magistrate or a justice, burn or otherwise destroy the sealed packages unopened.

That, then, is the New Zealand provision. It appears that in every case quoted by me provision is made more or less as we are endeavouring to make provision in the Bill before the House, with the exception that we go into a little more detail, and provide, in effect, that where a candidate dies between the closing of nominations and the counting of the poll there shall be a new election unless as the result of the count of the poll it is indicated that the candidate who has died would not have succeeded.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Chief Electoral Officer has made one omission, in not stating whether or not the provisions apply to both Houses. I know that they do not.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: What, in the other States of the Commonwealth? I have not submitted this information to the House as being the case in the whole of the States. I am merely giving hon. members information supplied to me concerning cases where similar provision to that in this Bill applies at the present time.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: There is no Council in Queensland, for instance.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Wherever the Council is elected, the same provision would apply.

Hon. J. Cornell: No.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I say it must be so. However, this Chamber should have a knowledge of the position in the other States.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It would be funny if the New South Wales Assembly elected a dead man to the Council.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No doubt it would. Another point—raised, I think, by Mr. Cornell—had reference to the provision in this Bill for the use of the same roll at the new election. The hon. member suggested that if there was to be a new election, it would be desirable to start afresh in accordance with the provisions of the Electoral Act as they stand, thus delaying the election for a period, and of course allowing other persons to come on to the roll, finalisation of all the various activities prior to an election thus being delayed by the preparation of a new roll. Commonwealth legislation provides that in a new election, necessitated by the death of a candidate, the roll to be used at such new election shall be the roll prepared for the election which failed. I consider that only fair. Further, the Bill now before us has received the recommendation of the Chief Electoral Officer in this State who, in summarising the position, comments thus—

I consider, in view of existing legislation, in the Commonwealth and the other States, and bearing in mind that which is the most important consideration, namely, to give effect to the wishes of the majority of electors, it would appear advisable to bring the Act more into line with the Commonwealth provisions and I recommend accordingly.

Reference was made by Sir Hal Colebatch and Mr. Cornell to a reply I gave to a question asked in this House that we have no record of any case where a candidate had died between the day of nomination and the closing of the poll, and Sir Hal Colebatch referred to one case which might very easily have come within that category, but the full particulars of which I am not aware of. There was, however, one instance in the Commonwealth sphere when Senator Forsyth died in 1929 while conducting his campaign. He died between nomination day and polling day. I understand also that there is another case on record but I have not been able to obtain particulars of it. However that may be, I do think in view of the experience we have had in the last year or two in this State as well as what has happened in the other States, we will be doing the right

thing by amending the legislation in the direction we now propose. So I still hope that when the Bill is in Committee members will agree with the point of view which has been advanced and which I have shown is in line with the legislation existing in most of the States and the Commonwealth.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time

In Committee.

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

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 87:

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I am prepared to admit that there is some reason for the clause but I am still of the opinion that we are likely to run into danger by agreeing to it as it is. There may be a long contested campaign and if on the eve of the election a candidate who may not have any chance of being elected dies, the election will have to be conducted over again. I know of one candidate who made his opening speech in a lion's cage not long ago. There are two or three amendments that should be made to Subsection (2) of proposed Section 87. After the word "dies" in the fourth line the words "and not more than one candidate remains" should be inserted. If there were more than two candidates and one should happen to die, the election would go on uninterrupted. My amendment I admit will not entirely meet the position that the Government wishes to bring about. I move an amendment—

That after the word "dies" in line 4 of proposed new Subsection (2) the words "and not more than one candidate remains" be inserted.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The easiest way out of the difficulty would be to strike out all the words down to the third proposed subsection. The first proposed subsection could be left in. We are in the fiftieth year of responsible Government and an emergency such as that for which provision is sought to be made has never arisen.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We have not had 50 years of motor traffic.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The only case that has been referred to by the Chief Electoral Officer was that of the late Brigadier-General Forsyth who died after nomination day. The Commonwealth Parliament

amended the House of Representatives portion of the Electoral Act but allowed the existing Senate position to stand. In that way there was recognition of differentiation between the two Houses. In this State there is a difference between the two Houses inasmuch as the 50 members of the Assembly carry out an election at the one time, whereas in connection with the Legislative Council Chamber only one-third of the members face the electors on the same day. Again, there is compulsory enrolment and compulsory voting for the Assembly and that has made the job easy as far as getting the electors to the poll is concerned. With regard to the Legislative Council, enrolment is still voluntary and the franchise is entirely different and it is not compulsory for the elector to record his vote. Thus there is a fundamental difference. We are going to say now that the same principle shall apply to what we might call the continuous House as applies to the House which entirely disappears at general election time.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why not?

Hon. J. CORNELL: What is the necessity for it? I do not consider there is any need for it.

Hon. G. FRASER: The amendment suggested by Sir Hal Colebatch does not appeal to me because it does not remove the difficulty we set ourselves out to overcome when the Bill was drawn up. There may be half a dozen candidates and he said that if two or more were in the field the election would go on. That, however, does not show that the remaining candidates might be suitable candidates. It does not remove the difficulties we set out to overcome. It has been said that there have been no instances of deaths occurring in this State to justify the measure. Such an experience has, however, befallen other States, and in the last year or two similar incidents have nearly occurred in Western Australia. It is no use looking back over 50 years and saying that the Act has been in operation all that time without any need having arisen for this amendment. Electioneering is entirely different to-day from what it was in the past, and the possibility of candidates being killed during a campaign is much greater than formerly. Provision must be made for the majority of people in an electorate to have an opportunity to return the candidate they favour. To-day it is possible for a person who ordinarily

would have no chance of being elected to obtain a seat fortuitously. If a mistake occurs with relation to the Legislative Council it cannot be rectified for six years. If, as Mr. Cornell said, there is no need for the Bill, there can be no harm in placing it on the statute-book.

The CHAIRMAN: There are two amendments before the Committee, one from Sir Hal Colebatch and another from Mr. Cornell.

Hon. J. Cornell: I have not yet moved mine.

The CHAIRMAN: Sir Hal Colebatch's amendment is to insert after the word "dies"—

Hon. J. CORNELL: My amendment comes first.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: I will withdraw my amendment for the time being.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Mr. Cornell wants to wipe out the clause.

Hon. J. CORNELL: No, I do not. I am referring to Subclause (2). If my amendment is not agreed to, Sir Hal can then move to insert further words. I move an amendment—

That subclause (2) be struck out.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Mr. Fraser went to some pains to improve the knowledge of the House on this matter, but he only confused the issue. I agree that Subclause (2) should be deleted. There is not the slightest reason for it. Mr. Fraser tries to justify its inclusion on the score that it will restrict the electors' choice. It may do so, but that does not justify an amendment of the Act that will create more drawbacks and lead to increased cost. The idea is that if there are six or seven candidates and one dies, there should be another election, but who is to say that the candidate who died was the most important candidate? Why expect candidates who have taken part in a campaign to have to go through it all again on account of the unfortunate death of one of the contestants? The political issue can be disregarded. We should take the reasonable view, which is to consider the position of the men who contest an election and not do anything that would put them to further expense and effort.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I support the clause. Mr. Baxter has said there is no logic in

Mr. Fraser's argument, but I think there is a good deal of logic in it. We have only to consider the election before last.

Hon. G. Fraser: And the last Commonwealth election, too.

Hon. G. W. MILES: This is a non-party House, but the other Chamber is not. There one political party selects a candidate to contest a seat. The other parties are not satisfied to enter one candidate to oppose him, but have two or three contestants. If the candidate chosen by the first political party dies, that party then has no opportunity to have one of its representatives returned. There is more likelihood of candidates being killed through motor accidents to-day than formerly was the case. One of the best members we had in another place and the most respected woman member of Parliament we had died just after a recent election. Had she died before or on polling day the electorate would have been represented by a man opposed by the majority of the constituents. For that reason, the legislation should be amended.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The subclause should be struck out. It appears that the electors, who are the people that really matter, have not been considered. Surely they should have the right to say which party they wish to represent them in Parliament. As Mr. Miles has pointed out, if this provision is eliminated and a candidate for a safe seat dies, the district will be represented by somebody not approved.

Hon. J. Cornell: Does that reasoning apply to the Council?

Hon. L. CRAIG: I am speaking particularly about the lower House. It applies to the Council but not to the same extent. Here we have two parties representing one province; but I am sure the people of the South-West would be horrified if a member of the Labour Party were to represent them in this Chamber. I might be standing for election the year after next, and the Labour Party, in its folly, might select a candidate to oppose me. Afterwards I might die. Honourable members can imagine the horror of the people of the South-West if the other candidate were elected. It would take them almost a generation to forget the event. The people of a constituency have the right to elect the representative

they desire. The people more particularly concerned are the electors. I hope, therefore, the clause will not be interfered with.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The fundamental principle of democracy is that the people shall be allowed to elect their own parliamentary representatives. For that reason I think it would be wrong that a candidate should be permitted to win a seat through the death of his opponent. The man who won a seat in those circumstances would not be a valuable asset in either Chamber, and would not enjoy the confidence of his fellow members or of his constituents. It is possible, of course, he might have proved the popular candidate had the other man survived. I support the suggestion advanced by Sir Hal Colebatch.

Hon. J. Cornell: Fremantle is one illustration indicating the will of the electors.

Hon. H. S. W. PARKER: The electors have made their choice there.

Hon. G. Fraser: That has not yet been proved.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Previous speakers have referred to the choice of candidates being left to the electors. I point out that Labour representatives are brought into the arena by selective ballot amongst the Labour organisations. In such instances the electors have to accept as a candidate the man who is put before them. Many people vote for Labour candidates who are not really entitled to record a vote.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Mr. Fraser put forward the right viewpoint, and spoke very sensibly and adequately. I do not think the Committee would agree to the suggestion of Sir Hal Colebatch. Unless the clause is passed, the electors will be disfranchised. That is the point at issue. The proposition, after all, is fair enough. I should be sorry for the five candidates if the sixth man were to die on the eve of an election, but that would amount to the fortune of war.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: The suggestion advanced by Sir Hal Colebatch is a good one. If there are more than two nominations for a seat and one of the candidates dies, the electors then have a choice from amongst the survivors. That would be in accord with my view.

Hon. H. SEDDON: There is a great deal in Mr. Baxter's argument. By means of the selection ballot the electors have a limited choice in certain directions. Admittedly, any person who wishes to do so may

nominate, and that gives people greater freedom on the one side than they enjoy on the other. A candidate is often faced with heavy expenses. It might be possible to compel a man to withdraw from an election because he could not bear the additional cost imposed upon him. By that means a good man may be kept out of Parliament.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I deprecate the introduction of politics into the debate. They have nothing to do with the Bill. Every State of the Commonwealth, with the exception of one, and the Commonwealth itself, has made a somewhat similar provision, and we need not worry too much, therefore, about the other aspects of the case. The point raised by Mr. Seddon is not a very important one.

Hon. A. Thomson: It is of importance to the candidate.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Bill merely provides that the date of the election shall be postponed. The candidates are not obliged to go through the whole campaign again. The only additional expense involved in the case of people who have already lodged their nominations would be consequent upon deferring the election for a week or a fortnight beyond the original date.

Hon. J. Cornell: Under the existing machinery the election could not be held for a month.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That would not be so under this Bill. The issue would not affect the man who died, but it would affect the electors. The Bill has not been introduced as the result of any political pressure, and I trust, therefore, the amendment will not be agreed to.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Most of the arguments in favour of the retention of the subclause have been directed at the Legislative Assembly. There is a fundamental difference between a continuous House, and one that is not continuous.

The Chief Secretary: Not in principle.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes. In the last election for this Chamber the Labour Party handpicked its seats. It had a chance in three and went for those three. It was not concerned with the other provinces. Had my opponent in the last election died before polling day, I would have been faced with considerable financial loss. The Chief Secretary said there would be little delay as a consequence of this Bill. Assuming that the candidate died just before polling day,

the election could not take place for at least three weeks; but actually a month would have to elapse, and that would mean additional expense to all the candidates concerned. The provision could be made to apply to the Assembly only. In fact, if the Assembly insists upon this provision, that House can be notified that the Council does not want it.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	7
Noes	..	..	..	19
Majority against	..	..	..	12

AYES.	
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. J. Nicholson	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. H. V. Ffiesse	Hon. C. F. Baxter
Hon. H. Seddon	(Teller.)
NOES.	
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. J. J. Holmes
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. E. M. Heenan	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I move an amendment—

That after the word "dies" in line 4 of proposed new Subsection (2), the words "and not more than one candidate remains" be inserted.

I am free to admit that the amendment will not entirely meet the position, but I cannot see how that could be done without causing still greater trouble. If the amendment be agreed to, the electors would have some choice should one candidate die.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment. The issue involved is a matter of principle. If we are to reach a decision on that basis, the principle must apply irrespective of the number of candidates at the election.

Hon. T. Moore: Or what it costs?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is so. There is no need to go over the arguments already advanced. If they were valid regarding the previous amendment, they are equally so now.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	17
Majority against	..	..	..	8

AYES.	
Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch	Hon. G. U. Wood
Hon. J. Nicholson	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. H. V. Plesse	(Teller.)
NOES.	
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. J. A. Dimmitt	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. W. R. Hall
Hon. J. J. Holmes	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I remind members of the discussion regarding the difference between the conditions affecting the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council respectively. The Federal Parliament has recognised the difference between the House of Representatives and the Senate. The very fact that the difference is recognised regarding the Senate impels me to move an amendment, which I propose to insert in the first line of proposed new Subsection (2).

Hon. G. Fraser: That amendment could not be accepted. We cannot go back, and we have already dealt with an amendment in the fourth line.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Then I will move to recommit the clause.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What do you want?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I want to insert a provision making proposed new Subsection (2) apply to the Legislative Assembly only.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You cannot do that. Are not members of the Legislative Council as likely to die as members of the Legislative Assembly?

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: More likely.

Hon. J. Cornell: No. We are like Johnnie Walker.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the hon. member could insert his proposed amendment at the end of the first paragraph.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I think it will be necessary to add it to the end of the clause. In order to get over the difficulty, I intend to move that a proviso be added to the clause; but I shall do so after Sir Hal Colebatch has moved his amendment.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I move an amendment—

That at the end of paragraph (f) of sub-clause 2 the following words be added:—“In the event of such withdrawal the candidate's deposit shall be returned.”

As the clause stands, a candidate who has contested an election that is declared void is

entitled to withdraw his nomination, but only in accordance with Section 81 of the Act. That section, however, says that if he does withdraw his nomination he shall lose his deposit. Suppose a candidate has fought an election and that then, owing to the death of one of the candidates, another election is to be held, he should be entitled to withdraw and his deposit should not be forfeited. It may be that the election has gone far enough to show that he has no chance of winning. I cannot see that any good purpose would be served by compelling him either to proceed with the election or to forfeit his deposit.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot agree to the amendment. Sir Hal Colebatch, when speaking on the second reading, quoted a case within his own knowledge, where a person was dissuaded from nominating on the ground that he did not have a chance of winning the election. The candidate who did nominate died before election day. Therefore, the person who did not nominate decided, rightly or wrongly, to nominate for the second election. He did so and lost his deposit.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Quite right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Suppose that candidate had nominated in the first election, knowing full well that he had no chance of winning it. He would put the State to the expense of an election because he wanted to contest it. Would it be right that he should be allowed to withdraw his deposit on the death of his opponent? He had no hope of winning the election and had put the State to the expense of conducting one. If Sir Hal Colebatch had his way, the candidate could say, “I have tried myself out and realise now that I have no chance of winning the election, and therefore I will withdraw.”

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: That is a remote possibility.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is a case within the knowledge of Sir Hal Colebatch. Take the case of two candidates contesting an election, one of whom is so unfortunate as to die on election day, and suppose there is proof positive that the candidate who did not die had no hope of winning the election, naturally he would say, “I will not go on with it and would like my deposit returned.” On the other hand, if he were running close and a new election would bring forward a candidate unknown in the electorate, the candidate

who did not die would consider he had a better chance than he had had previously and naturally would stay in the election. We must not forget, however, that the State would be put to the expense of conducting that election. In fairness to all parties, it is equitable that the candidates who are left in an election which is declared void should continue in the new election. If they wish to withdraw, they should be governed by the provisions of the existing Act. That is the logical way of looking at the matter.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I am surprised at the Chief Secretary's opposition to the amendment. Having got all that his party wants, apparently he is not prepared to recognise that a candidate's chance of election under this new principle might be seriously prejudiced and he might have to fight another election. The Bill, as it stands, is entirely inconsistent with the statement that in this event the election is void. Yet the man who has fought through that election and who may have abundantly saved his deposit, but who sees he has no chance of winning a fresh election, is not to be allowed to withdraw and receive his deposit. The Chief Secretary has misunderstood the meaning of the amendment. If there are several candidates and the election has proceeded so far that three or four of them realise, after having spent a great deal of money, that they have no chance of winning, surely the Chief Secretary would not insist that they must fight another election at the risk of losing their deposits, and possibly putting the country to the expense of an election which otherwise would have been unnecessary.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I support the amendment. I maintain it would not be legal to forfeit a candidate's deposit and force him to fight another election in the circumstances mentioned by Sir Hal Colebatch. I am surprised at the Chief Secretary's attitude.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I also am rather surprised at the Chief Secretary's attitude, because generally he is logical. We must recognise that the Bill fundamentally alters the principal Act, inasmuch as it provides that if in future a candidate dies before the finish of the count, there shall be a new election. If there are only two candidates, however, and one dies no election will take place. The surviving candidate would be declared elected.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If a candidate is prepared to go on, he would not have to put up the deposit a second time.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That was pointed out. It is not right that he should lose his deposit, because it is not the fault of the surviving candidate that the other candidate died. I hope the Committee will not agree to the amendment.

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope the Chief Secretary will reconsider his decision and accept the amendment, which appears to me to be fair and reasonable. The Chief Secretary has said that a person who nominates may find that he has no chance of winning an election. Then why put the country to the expense of an election? Why not allow him to withdraw and receive his deposit? In that way a fresh election would be obviated. The candidate may force an election by allowing his £25 deposit to remain.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This is not a question, as was suggested by Sir Hal Colebatch, of a party having secured practically all that it wants. I have already said that this is not a party measure and I deprecate any suggestion that the Bill is brought down to further the interests of any one political party. The suggestion has been made that my argument is neither reasonable nor logical. I am still of the opinion that it is both. The Bill provides that forthwith after the death of a candidate the election is wholly void and a new writ shall issue; and it gives those who were candidates in the first election the right to continue as candidates in the second election.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: It does not give them the right; it compels them to do so.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Bill also provides that the fresh election shall be fought on the roll that was prepared for the first election. Therefore the only difference is that the date of the actual election is delayed. I contend that if a candidate goes so far as to nominate for an election and the election is not completed until a date later than that originally fixed, he should not have any rights other than those which apply to the first election. Those rights are governed by the Act, which provides that after a certain date a candidate cannot withdraw his nomination except by forfeiting his deposit. I fail to see anything illogical in the argument I have submitted, neither do I consider it to be unreasonable.

I have no feeling in the matter at all. Even if the Bill includes the proposed amendment, it will be better than is the principal Act; but I am putting forward the best argument I can for the Bill. Nothing has been said so far to convince me that there is anything wrong with the Bill and particularly with the clause we are debating.

Hon. J. Cornell: If a candidate paid his deposit seven days before the second polling day, would not he be entitled to have it refunded?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Act would apply as it now stands. A writ is issued forthwith, the day for the closing of nominations is fixed forthwith, the day for the election is also fixed forthwith; any person who desires to fight an election under those conditions would not wish to withdraw his nomination before the election.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I am sorry if my remarks suggested that I considered there was any party significance in the Bill. If what I said suggests that, I gladly withdraw it.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I direct the Chief Secretary's attention to the words in the proposed new Subsection (2), "such election shall, by reason of such death, be deemed to have wholly failed and the writ issued in respect thereof shall be deemed to be vacated." Yet a candidate who has been put to the expense of fighting an election is to be compelled to fight another. That seems to be quite unfair.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I have not fought an election for 25 years, but what used to happen was that a parasite or two would hang around on nomination day to see whether something might miscarry and entitle him to the nominee's deposit. That cannot happen now. A man might take a chance by nominating, although everybody might know that he had no hope of being elected. If one of the candidates died during the election, according to the Bill, without the amendment, the other candidates could nominate again and would not have to pay a second deposit.

The Chief Secretary: The original nominations would stand.

Hon. L. Craig: The original candidates must stand again; they could not withdraw.

The Chief Secretary: They could withdraw, but would lose their deposits.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If one of the candidates discovered that he had no chance of being elected, and wanted to withdraw, it would not be fair that he should receive his deposit. The country would be put to the expense of holding an election. I oppose the amendment.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Under paragraph (f), if a candidate dies within the period in question, the election is void and a new election has to take place. All the procedure laid down in the Act must be followed. A writ must be issued, at least seven days must elapse between the issue of the writ and nomination day, and at least 14 days must elapse between nomination day and polling day. Any person who had not nominated for the voided election might nominate for the new election, but all the candidates at the first election would be automatically nominated for the second election.

Hon. L. Craig: Whether they desired it or not.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes. If any candidate desired not to stand for the second election, he might withdraw at any time not later than seven clear days before polling day, but his deposit would be forfeited. A re-nominated candidate would be in the same position as before in the matter of withdrawing.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Then the amendment is not necessary.

Hon. J. CORNELL: That is so.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: The candidate would not receive his deposit back.

Hon. J. CORNELL: No, he would lose his deposit.

Hon. H. TUCKEY: I cannot understand the opposition to the amendment. If a candidate has given months to campaigning and incurred expenses of several hundred pounds and the election is cancelled, he should have the right to withdraw and should have his deposit returned.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I wish to be clear on this provision. A candidate dies and the election is void. Therefore the position of the other candidates would be as if nothing had happened. That being so, surely any of the candidates should have the right to withdraw from any subsequent election and obtain his deposit.

Hon. A. Thomson: I agree with that.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Then all deposits would be returned.

Hon. L. CRAIG: They should be. The whole of the proceedings would have been voided, and the money should be automatically returned to the candidates. To facilitate matters for those who have nominated, we provide that the original nomination will suffice, but anyone who does not wish to nominate for the second election should be able to get his money. That would be only reasonable.

Hon. G. FRASER: The amendment would make it possible for a candidate to withdraw at any time right up to polling day. That cannot be intended.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Make it nomination day.

Hon. G. FRASER: That would be better.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: A candidate could not withdraw before he had nominated.

Hon. G. FRASER: But the candidates in the first election would be automatically nominated for the second election.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I have no objection to the substitution of the words "nomination day" for "polling day."

Hon. J. CORNELL: I suggest that paragraph (f) be struck out. Paragraph (d) provides that "all proceedings in connection with such new election shall be had and taken anew."

Hon. G. Fraser: The only difference it will make is that the other candidates will have to re-nominate.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Yes, and then all candidates will be on the same footing.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If Mr. Cornell's proposal is adopted, every person who desires to contest the new election must nominate, and any one of the original candidates would have one week in which to withdraw his nomination without forfeiting his deposit. From nomination day to polling day, if he wishes to withdraw his nomination he must forfeit his deposit. I do not raise much objection. However, a further provision will be needed for the return of the deposit to every candidate.

Hon. J. Cornell: What would happen to the deposit of the candidate who dies? Is there any machinery for returning it?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We are getting rather involved. In view of the discussion which has taken place, further con-

sideration of the clause might well be postponed. Let us be perfectly sure of what we are doing.

Hon. L. CRAIG: "Null and void" surely means "as if nothing whatever had taken place." Then all the money must be returned. Surely it belongs to the candidates.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Bill provides that in a case of the kind we are discussing the writ shall be issued forthwith. There is little time between the declaring of the election null and void and the issue of the writ. Thus there is little opportunity for consideration by a candidate who might be in the North-West. He would, moreover, find it difficult to get his new nomination in within the seven days. Again, for many reasons a candidate might not be aware of what was taking place; he might be travelling, for instance, between the Eastern States and Western Australia.

Hon. Sir HAL COLEBATCH: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment, temporarily.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move—

That further consideration of the clause be postponed.

Motion put and passed; the clause postponed.

Clauses 4, 5—agreed to.

Progress reported.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Kalgoorlie Health Authority Loan.

2, Petroleum Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [7.58] in moving the second reading said: In introducing this short amending measure I believe that most members of the Chamber will agree that there is little room for difference of opinion as to the objects the Bill seeks to achieve. Since being a member of this Chamber I have had it brought to my notice repeatedly that when electors have attended polling booths to record their

votes, either through a clerical or a printer's error they have found their names omitted from the roll. That this fact has been noted by the Commonwealth Electoral Department for some years is proved by the provision which has been made to meet such cases. I introduce this Bill at the request of people who have been deprived of their votes in the circumstances I have stated. It may surprise members to know, as it surprised me, that the following numbers of people have been enabled to exercise the franchise by reason of the Commonwealth provision to which I have referred:—Forrest division, 225 in 1931, 243 in 1934, 127 in 1937; Fremantle division, 87 in 1931, 277 in 1934, 149 in 1937; Kalgoorlie division, 111 in 1931, 166 in 1934, 168 in 1937; Perth division, 264 in 1931, 192 in 1934, 251 in 1937; Swan division, 290 in 1931, 229 in 1934, 100 in 1937. I am informed by the Commonwealth Chief Electoral Officer that those people voted under Section 121. I have here a declaration that must be signed by a person who claims that his name has been wrongly or in error removed from the roll. The person must satisfy the Chief Electoral Officer that the claim he makes for enrolment is in order, and provision exists that anyone who is not entitled to vote shall not be enrolled. I have that claim here and any member who desires to see it may do so.

Hon. G. Fraser: They can vote under a section of the Commonwealth Electoral Act, but the vote will not necessarily be accepted.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Bill requires no further explanation, because that is all there is to it. Members have the opportunity of perusing it and satisfying themselves that what I have stated is all it contains. I do not think there is any one of us who would do anything that would deprive an elector duly qualified to vote of his right to exercise the franchise. The Bill will apply to both Houses, that is to say, the provinces of the Council and electoral districts of the Assembly. There can be no room for difference of opinion on the subject. My one desire, I repeat, is that those who are entitled to vote shall not be deprived of the right to do so. Through the medium of the Press electors are urged to see that their names appear on

the rolls, but we know that many do not avail themselves of the opportunity to make that check, and on going to the booth find that their names are not included on the roll. Last Saturday I went to the Town Hall at Geraldton to record my vote, and a young fellow there, looking at me with a smile on his face, said that my name did not appear on the roll. He asked for my full name, and when he did so I thought he was joking. The presiding officer, however, was able to find it. As the Bill will be bound to meet with the approval of every member in the Chamber, I have no hesitation in commending it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

BILL—RESERVES (GOVERNMENT DOMAIN).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [8.5]: On two occasions when similar Bills were presented to this House I voted against them. I did so principally for the reason that I considered that the House had not been supplied with all the evidence that was necessary to enable us to arrive at a decision on a question that involved the expenditure of a good deal of money. As a result of the participation in the investigations of the Joint Committee appointed by both Houses and a study of the voluminous evidence that was taken by that committee, I saw the necessity for early action to end a state of affairs that is more or less deplorable. I make no apology for having changed my mind. It was the correct thing to do. I think also that had it been possible to put before the House the evidence that was submitted to the committee, the Bill would probably have been passed on a previous occasion. However, that course was not followed. The members of the committee were given the opportunity of hearing first-hand from responsible officers just how the position stood. Before I go further I wish to say that I realise that there are two questions involved, one being the embarking on considerable expenditure at the present time, and the other the desirability of coming to a decision regard-

ing the site. It is on the second question that I propose largely to address my remarks. What concerns me most on the question of the site and the recommendations of the Joint Committee are certain allegations made in this House yesterday. Members will recall that the members of the committee representing this House were elected by vote. I feel sure that every member of that committee enjoyed the full confidence of the House in the task allotted to him to inquire diligently into the question, and it was expected that a recommendation would be made that would be in conformity with the evidence tendered. With, shall I say, studied gravity and a great deal of emphasis, Sir Hal Colebatch said last evening that it might be suggested as presumption on his part to set his opinion against the unanimous recommendation of the Joint Committee representing all political parties, and he added that he could only say that his opinion was in complete accord with the evidence submitted and that not one witness's evidence could be interpreted as supporting in any way the proposals embodied in the Bill. I propose to prove from the report from which Sir Hal quoted, and which I presume he read carefully, that his opinion is not in complete accord with the evidence submitted, and I am afraid that a very deliberate attempt was made to damage the committee in the eyes of the people of the State. Sir Hal said that not one witness gave evidence that could be interpreted in any way—I want members clearly to understand that these are his own words—as supporting the proposals contained in the Bill. I do not suggest that the hon. member has not a perfect right to express his views and opinions on this, or any other matter, but I do submit that it was presumption on his part, in fact something much worse, to make statements which I shall prove from the report are utterly, totally and grossly inaccurate. Sir Hal suggested that Parliament might be constituted into something in the nature of a grand jury to visit the place of the contemplated crime. That is a serious statement, and I take it as a direct reflection on the members of the committee who made the recommendation. I think members should be very careful in using terms of that description lest some other people use them also when replying, as I have said, to totally inaccurate statements. Sir Hal Colebatch first referred to the wit-

nesses. He detailed the number who gave evidence and divided them into sections. I say here that a number of the witnesses called had no opportunity and were not expected to voice any opinion regarding any site. Some of them were invited to attend the committee to elucidate the varying phases bearing on the question, and not one gave evidence that could be interpreted in any way as supporting a particular site. I shall quote their words and leave it to the House to determine who is telling the correct story. The hon. member, I am sorry to say, made a deliberate attack on the committee, and that attack has been given publicity in the Press, an attack that I think will be condemned by any fair-minded person. It is quite impossible to quote all the evidence of the various witnesses. I propose first to refer to that of Mr. Clare, the Principal Architect, and then to ask hon. members whether or not his statements can be in any way interpreted as being against the proposal. I consider that right through his evidence he made it clear that the site recommended by the committee was the most desirable one. But before turning to his evidence, I wish to refer to a matter which had a considerable bearing on my change of opinion, namely, the deplorable conditions in which a great portion of the civil service is working. In dealing with the proposal to provide additional accommodation for various departments, Mr. Clare said (question 60)—

We propose to give the Titles Office an increase of about 75 per cent. on the present area. I do not know whether you have investigated that department, but it is grossly overcrowded and is very scattered. Part of the storage accommodation is in the Supreme Court buildings, and another part is in the old Savings Bank building. It would be impossible to carry on much longer under the conditions obtaining in this department.

I have been informed that most of the documents housed in the Titles Department are of considerable value.

The Chief Secretary: An actual value cannot be placed on them.

Hon. W. J. MANN: That is so. They are of very considerable value, and it is highly essential that steps should be taken without any further delay for their proper preservation. The fact that they are scattered around the city is a circumstance that should not be allowed to continue. One never knows what might happen to a batch of documents even in the Supreme Court buildings. If by

chance they were damaged or lost, chaos would be caused in a number of directions. As a result of his investigations Mr. Clare provided for an increased area for the Department of Agriculture of 114 per cent.

He said—

That again is due to the fact that the existing offices are entirely inadequate and are scattered all over the city. There is one part in the Observatory building, another part in the Chief Secretary's Department, and another part in the Lands Department.

That is in addition to the portion in St. George's Terrace. So there we have a department whose activities are spread over four different areas. I think it is within the knowledge of most members that the main portion of the Agricultural Department is little less than a rabbit warren that could be easily destroyed by fire. If any justification is needed for my change of opinion, the condition of those two departments is surely sufficient.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: You do not claim that Mr. Clare supported the Government Domain site, do you?

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes, I do.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: In view of his evidence?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I will prove it from his evidence. If the hon. member will listen carefully he will hear it. On page 10 appears the following, in question 109—

I feel that the first thing to be decided is whether you are to have a block of centralised Government buildings. The next point to be determined is the location of those buildings. I consider they should be located as near as possible to what will be the centre of the city in the future, so far as we can gauge it at present. The block of buildings should also be central on the main business and professional axis of the city. In Perth we have a wonderful waterfront and in addition we have a splendid foreground extending upwards of 500 feet in depth. Along that foreground beautiful gardens could be constructed, thus giving us a wonderful frontage for any scheme of Government buildings. I feel that in selecting the site we should make use of the water frontage.

Then he goes on to say what occurs in other parts of the world. Later the Chairman asked the witness, "You place much value on the aesthetic feature of the problem?" And Mr. Clare replied—

Yes; we have a real liability to posterity to adopt that attitude. We should not saddle them with great bare buildings without any appropriate setting, especially as with the expenditure of a very little more we could erect attractive buildings in beautiful surroundings.

This would add to the beauty of the city and mean improved working conditions for those employed in the public offices. Moreover, space would be provided where people could go in the heat of the day and sit in the shade that would be found in the gardens. Most certainly such a scheme would be a definite contribution to the beauty and attractiveness of the city and could be provided at very little more cost than would be entailed in the construction of bare, naked buildings.

If Mr. Clare in those remarks did not very definitely show a preference for that site, I am unable to understand English.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Provided you include the Christian Bros. College site.

Hon. W. J. MANN: The hon. member cannot bring in provisos. I suggest that he made a statement last night that he is now sorry for—the statement that not one witness gave evidence that could be interpreted in any way as being in favour of the proposal. Now he wants to quibble about possibilities. We shall probably hear some more of his quibbles later on. Referring in question 120 to the departments being spread over the city, Mr. Clare said that if the Government Domain site were utilised—

We would not have that trouble because we would have wide roads running round the buildings and the Terrace would be widened at that point.

Question 121 and the answer are as follows:—

You are now referring to the site in the Government Domain?—Yes, or in that vicinity.

There again is a definite indication that the Government Domain site was uppermost in his mind and was preferred by him. Then Mr. Holmes asked a question—I believe he was being facetious at the time—and the witness replied, as follows:—

You emphasise the importance of gardens and surroundings; but we cannot live on views?—No, but if it would cost very little more to create beauty, why not do so? It will not cost very much more.

All this points to the studied conclusion of Mr. Clare that the Government Domain site was the one he preferred.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Conditionally. He made an absolute condition.

Hon. W. J. MANN: He made no conditions at all. He was not there to make conditions. He was there as a Government officer to accept whatever conditions the committee or the Government said he should design buildings for. It would have been presumption on his part to dictate to the

committee where the site should be, but he was of great assistance to the committee when, with his professional knowledge, he expressed his view as to the most desirable site. There is much more that one could quote from Mr. Clare's evidence, but I propose now to turn to that of Mr. Davidson. Mr. Davidson gave evidence at considerable length. He took the committee on a journey all round the world and—

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Came back to the Government Domain site.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes. He expressed some rather remarkable ideas, but I presume that as a town planner he had a right to express them. The end of his answer to Question 236 was as follows:—

If public buildings to accommodate public servants are erected on the two flanks, there is nothing at the present time to stop any person from starting a manufactory adjacent to the site, and this could be prevented only by costly resumption.

Then occurs the following:—

237. Would that not apply to any site?—That does not apply to one site at least. The site near the Christian Brothers' College has none of those disabilities because the Crown controls the land round it.

Does Sir Hal Colebatch pretend that Mr. Davidson did not regard this as a desirable site?

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Read his answer to Question 274.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I will read plenty of answers before I am finished. I have quite a lot to say. I sat quiet for the little while I was here during the hon. member's speech. Unfortunately I did not hear all of it.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Look at Question 274.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Am I to address the House, Mr. President, or must I put up with a running fire from a man who cannot take his gruel?

The PRESIDENT: I must ask the hon. member to allow the speaker to proceed.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I paid Sir Hal Colebatch the compliment of remaining quiet during the portion of his speech that I heard, though it was very difficult for me to do so. I presume he will do the same for me. He will have an opportunity later to refute what I am saying and to prove whether not one witness in any way supported the committee's recommendation. I was speaking of Mr. Davidson's evidence and pointing out

that he declared the site near the Christian Brothers' College had none of the disabilities he had referred to, thus inferring very completely, without any equivocation whatsoever, that that was the site he favoured. Let me now turn to Question 274. Mr. Davidson was asked—

Are you satisfied with the proposed site at the eastern end of Government House Domain, or do you think there is any alternative site we would consider as challenging it either for suitability or preference?—I can find no rival to it on actual facts, provided we acquire the area held by the Christian Brothers. It is the only site we can secure and capitalise that will give us the requisite area and the permanent light. It is the only site that provides for growth in the next 50 or 75 years.

That statement envisages taking over the Christian Brothers' College. When Mr. Davidson made it he was referring to the fact that it was proposed originally to take only two acres from Government House domain, quite a different proposition from what followed. Neither he nor Mr. Clare in his most sanguine moments thought that the committee or anyone would be courageous enough to say, "Take eight acres from Government House domain if that is necessary in order to do the proper thing." I discussed the matter with Mr. Davidson and I know what was in his mind. He never dreamt that the full area would be recommended, as indeed it was. The taking over of the Christian Brothers' area would give the full extent of land required. I am speaking for myself when I say that when the acquisition of the Christian Brothers' College was considered, together with the acquisition of other properties elsewhere in the city, the committee examined a number of sites, all of which I think, with the exception of three, meant the resumption of expensive buildings. Some of the suggestions of witnesses were so far-reaching that no committee would have dreamt of accepting them. One was that the State should resume that portion of land north of the railway station that lies between Beaufort-street, William-street and as far back as Newcastle-street, a huge area that would cost a large sum of money to acquire, seeing that it contains the Swan Barracks, the Museum, schools, etc. That was put up as a suitable site by one witness. One of my first ideas before I knew what area was required was that the site at the top of Beaufort-street bridge,

between Forrest-street, James-street, Stirling-street and Beaufort-street, portion of which belongs to the Railway Department, might be usefully employed, as it comprised four acres. In view of the evidence submitted, I had to change my mind. More is necessary than just the land on which to erect the buildings, and we therefore had to look ahead. Mr. Clare and others said we must provide traffic facilities such as parking, and other factors. After viewing a number of sites and suggested resumptions, the committee tentatively came to the conclusion that it was advisable first to explore the position with regard to Government Domain and Parliament House grounds, neither of which meant any resumption. The Observatory site was ruled out, largely because of its inaccessibility for this purpose. The fact that the committee did not recommend the Christian Brothers' site has no derogatory bearing on the site or the building, or on what it may have cost. There is evidence by one witness, the senior valuator for the Government, that we would have to pay something like £75,000 for the Christian Brothers' College site. I am not here to debate that point. The committee considered it as we considered other things, and decided first to explore the two sites to which I have referred. Although the college is mentioned several times in the report, it is always mentioned—I think I can truthfully and honestly say—with the original proposition in mind.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That was only two acres.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes. Two acres would have been useless without the Christian Brothers' site. Had there been no more than two acres to add to the Christian Brothers' College site the question might have assumed a different complexion. Prior to the committee being formed, people whose opinions I value expressed to me the hope that the Christian Brothers' College area would not be resumed. I was told several times that the Brothers hoped the property would remain in their hands. I do not say that has any bearing on the situation, but I can truthfully say that the Brothers at no time did anything, to my knowledge, to suggest they wanted the Government to resume the property. It is fair to those concerned that I should make

that statement. Mr. Clare made the position clear, and I have proved by reference to Question 274 that Mr. Davidson was of the same opinion. I have selected the salient features of the statement of witnesses. I give them to members and have quoted the question numbers so that they may look them up and see how far that evidence is in accord with the allegations made yesterday. In Question 302 Mr. Summerhayes referred to several of the sites, chiefly the Town Hall. Some investigations have been made concerning a site for the Perth Town Hall. The witness said—

Then there is the question of the Government Domain land and the present suggested site at the eastern end of that block. If that scheme was proceeded with, I do not know whether it would be possible for the City Council to acquire the present Treasury Building site. That would make an ideal site for a town hall and municipal offices, provided the Government offices were within convenient distance, say, on the Government Domain site.

The witness thought it would be possible to place the Perth Town Hall on the block that was considered by the committee and rejected for Government offices. He went on to say that that site was possibly the best that could be used for Government buildings, and in saying that he was referring to the domain. Cannot members understand plain English? Can it be said that the witness was opposing the use of the domain site or was hostile to it? Mr. Summerhayes is an accepted authority, and says in plain words that this is possibly the best site that could be used for Government buildings. He further said:—

It has a river frontage across the Esplanade and buildings could be designed with an attractive appearance from the river. The site would be convenient to the municipal offices of the city; it would be convenient to the business community and the public; it would be convenient, also, bearing in mind the future development of the city, which I think must be eastward. That development should be considered as part of a complete scheme for the whole of the block, and not merely one end of it.

It was not within the province of the Joint Committee to consider the ultimate utilisation of the whole block. I know what was in the minds of members of the committee; it was that ultimately the whole of the block would be utilised. I will not defer to Sir Hal Colebatch or to anyone else in my love for old buildings and landmarks. But when I say that, I do not suggest I do

so without regard to the march of time and the ravages of antiquity. If any member were to inspect the Government House building and look carefully, he would see definite evidence of the ravages of time. Decidedly it will not be very long before much money will have to be spent on the building or it will drift into a state of decay. The building is very old and is definitely showing signs of wear and tear. I, and many others, are of the opinion that the existing site is not ideal for a vice-regal building. There is no necessity for Government House to be in the centre of the city. In many parts of the world where I have been, vice-regal buildings are situated outside the city confines, and I believe that, provided a suitable site can be obtained, we shall ultimately follow that example in Perth. The proviso that "development should be considered as part of a complete scheme for the whole of the block and not merely one end of it" sets out exactly what was in the committee's mind. I am sure that each member of that body will support me wholly in that suggestion. Mr. Summerhayes went on to say—

The Government House site is too valuable and important to Perth as a site for the Governor's residence.

That bears out exactly what I have said—A much more appropriate place for that would possibly be on the Observatory site, or somewhere up there. That is not a development for the moment, but could be visualised for the future. If that alteration could be made, and the development of the whole of the domain could be considered as one entity for the housing of Government offices, etc., I think that would be an ideal site.

I ask Sir Hal Colebatch if that has not a great bearing on the matter. Is that not a straight-out statement?

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Read some of his other answers, too.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I am dealing with the questions. Sir Hal Colebatch quoted those that he wanted to place before the House, and I am following suit. I am quoting passages that will bear no other construction than those I suggest. The statements are very definite, and disprove altogether the allegations that have been made. Then, again, we find in Question 308 the following:—

Yesterday evidence was given that placed great stress on the importance of public buildings being erected to face the water front. Do you hold that view?—Buildings facing the

water front are very attractive, but from the appearance point of view more than anything else. In other cities every possible advantage has been taken of water fronts. One of the most outstanding examples of that is the Stockholm town hall, a delightful structure. In the United States are to be found many developments along the water frontages, and wherever possible the authorities endeavour to utilise such frontages. Perth possesses a beautiful water front. This should be further developed, and buildings could be erected there to enhance the appearance of the city. I do not know whether you have noticed the, to my mind, remarkable improvement in the appearance of Perth since the erection of tall buildings. Coming round the Mount in the morning, one finds that to be one of the most striking features—the effect of the buildings rising out of the city; that is, just looking across the water to them. The same thing would apply to the Government buildings here.

What Mr. Summerhayes says there very definitely indicates his preference for this site. I cannot understand the suggestions that have been made on this point; they pass my comprehension altogether. I cannot regard this evidence as in conformity with statements such as we have heard. Then, again, the question of parking accommodation was very important in the selection of a site. It had to be borne in mind that there would be an aggregation of departments in one area, and there would be naturally a lot of traffic. People who wished to transact business at the Government offices would require to leave their motor cars in a parking area, and therefore the committee had to give attention to the question of parking. In reply to a statement by Mr. Styants, Mr. Summerhayes said—

The development today, however, is to provide one's own parking wherever possible. To my mind the Government Domain is an ideal one to provide for sub-basement parking into which the motors could be run.

That provides further evidence that this witness favoured the site. In Question 314, which I put to Mr. Summerhayes, the report says—

From the general trend of your evidence, I take it that two things stand out. One is that you consider Parliament House building should dominate the city from an architectural point of view?—Yes, I agree with that.

I may say in explanation that Mr. Summerhayes, like most of us, was keen that nothing should be done to detract from the appearance of Parliament House. Hence my question. Mr. Summerhayes agreed that Parliament House should dominate the city from an architectural point of view. Now

I ask members to follow closely the words, which they will find in my Question 315, and Mr. Summerhayes' reply, which were as follows:—

The other point is that you are definitely favourable to the Government Domain site?—Yes, with the provision that the whole of that block should be conserved for future development.

The very thing that was in the mind of the committee! For any member of this Chamber to turn round and insinuate, or allege, that the Joint Committee had brought down a recommendation that was definitely not in accordance with the evidence, is to me inexplicable. I cannot find any term adequately to express my opinion of such a suggestion. I have quoted a definite statement that cannot be controverted. If English means anything, that answer I have just quoted is a definite reply to the statement made by Sir Hal Colebatch.

Hon. Sir Hal Colebatch: Read Questions 316 and 317.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I have many that I wish to deal with, and I have already been speaking for about an hour. I do not want to be too voluminous in my effort.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: You ought to make it short, sharp and shiny.

Hon. W. J. MANN: I have now dealt with three witnesses, and the next I shall refer to is Mr. Fyfe, the Surveyor-General, whom we hold in high esteem and whose opinion is worth having. Mr. Fyfe's evidence dealt largely with valuations and changing valuations occasioned by the erection of buildings, the opening up of certain thoroughfares, and so on. In question 356 I put this to Mr. Fyfe—

Have you in the past ever had in your mind what you considered an ideal site for a block of Government buildings?

Mr. Fyfe's reply was—

Yes, at the time when Foy & Gibson's were offering for sale at £66,000 a large area between Mill-street, St. George's-terrace and Bazaar-terrace and when the Technical School was owned by the Crown as it is now, the land intervening could have been acquired at a reasonable price. That block from the east side of the Technical School area to Mill-street between the Terrace and Bazaar-terrace would have been an eminently desirable site for public buildings. However, that is past history, and developments since the time that was on offer at that price prevent consideration of the block at the present time.

In other words, that property had increased in value to an enormous extent.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It had been built upon.

Hon. W. J. MANN: Yes, and it was very doubtful indeed if the Government would now dream of resuming that area because of the vast expenditure that had been incurred in the erection of buildings there not long before. Mr. Fyfe went on—

Consequently I favour the proposal approved by the Legislative Assembly to place buildings on the Government Domain site.

There is witness No. 4, yet we were told that the committee had brought forward a recommendation for which the evidence provided no support. There again we have a very definite statement. Mr. Fyfe's original idea centred upon the site around Mill-street. I can tell the House that that particular site was also mentioned and a further proposal that Mill-street might be continued right through to Murray-street and that the land between the new street to King-street might be utilised. That was another project that was quite out of court because a small fortune would be required to resume the properties affected. We considered many sites, and we brought to bear on the investigation, within the comparatively short period at our disposal, all the energy and investigatory powers we possessed, to the fullest extent possible. Members should realise that another committee sat years ago—I believe for three years—without producing a recommendation. I believe it suggested four sites, but Parliament House and Government Domain sites were excluded from the investigation. The instructions on that occasion was that those two sites should be preserved and not considered for Government offices. I shall quote Question 373 which was also addressed to Mr. Fyfe—

From the point of view of suitability, the sites resolve themselves into two in number, the Government House Domain and the Parliament House grounds. If that is so, which of the two areas would be your choice?—I should say the Government Domain site. The Parliament House site is at the western end of the ultimate development of the city, whereas the domain site is more likely to become central in 50 years or so.

There is another definite opinion. Of the two sites he definitely plumped for Government Domain. Then we had evidence from Mr. Parry, another architect. I shall not weary members by quoting further. I think I have offered a complete answer to Sir Hal Colebatch's allegation.

Other witnesses gave the committee valuable evidence. Mr. Harold Boas, architect, gave us very useful evidence, but I think his No. 1 site was north of the railway station to Newcastle-street, taking in the Art Gallery and other buildings. Of course that site could not be considered. Mr. Millen, chairman of the State Transport Board, gave valuable evidence about the city traffic. Mr. Allingham, President of the Perth Chamber of Commerce, told us that the Chamber had no views as to any particular site, but expressed the opinion, in effect, for what it was worth, that we were incapable of coming to a decision and that the matter should be referred to a technical commission. Sir Hal Colebatch, just before I was called out yesterday, referred to one matter on which I agree with him, namely, the Perth Hospital. I think the present site is a shocking one for the building being erected on it, and if the joint committee had had an opportunity to suggest a site, I am sure it could have done very much better.

I wish to make one other reference concerning a sub-heading in the newspaper regarding this matter of the site for Government offices. The sub-heading was "Wanton Vandalism." According to the report, Sir Hal Colebatch spoke of the need for removing some trees in order to give effect to his project. I have known the eastern end of Government Domain for 44 years. I walked over it half-a-dozen times during the sittings of the committee, and I looked at it again to-day, and I say that for a long time it has been and still is a disgrace. True, much of its disgraceful condition is now concealed by the sand that has been dumped on the site, but for years it was nothing but a mosquito farm with a lot of decaying debris lying about. The greater portion of the site was not used, though a cow might have wandered into it occasionally if it could have got through the scrub, but the area had nothing to commend it as a beauty spot or an ornament. It was merely the end of the domain on which Government House stands. At the nearer end the picture is more pleasant, but the few trees that would have to be removed in order to give effect to this project would, in a very few years, fall down if they were not chopped down. The back portion is used for a manure dump and a few potting sheds for the Government gardener. There is no

question of vandalism; there is no question of any contemplated crime. Rather would I say, with due modesty as a member of the committee, that the report is a carefully studied one, and the recommendation is one with which I am proud to be associated. I regret exceedingly that Sir Hal did not read the report as he should have done. If he did read the report, I can only regret that he should have been so unfair as to neglect to quote the very definite references I have given to the House.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [9.9]:

I have only a few words to say on the Bill. Last year and the year before I was one of those members who opposed this site for Government offices. I did so because I considered it was inadvisable from the historical aspect and from the aspect of the beauty of the city to interfere with Government House grounds. After a very keen debate, this House appointed representatives to act on a joint committee with members of another place to consider the whole question. An important condition under which the appointment was made was that a verdict must be arrived at by three-fourths of the members comprising the committee, and there were on the committee some members who had been very strongly opposed to the Government Domain site. The committee has made its report, and its findings have been elaborated in masterly fashion to-night by Mr. Mann. Having remitted the matter to a joint committee, I for one feel that we must abide by the conclusions and recommendations of the committee. I listened to the remarks of Sir Hal Colebatch last night as to the effect the Bill would have in improving the value of the land owned by the Christian Brothers. Obviously, in making that remark, Sir Hal had in mind the possibility that the Government later on would need to purchase that site, but I think Mr. Mann's remarks have proved that, in arriving at its decision, the committee simply considered the Government's requirements. In providing for the new road shown in the plan, the committee was merely actuated by the consideration that it was essential for the Government offices. The fact that the Christian Brothers' property will benefit is beside the question. In the circumstances, I am prepared to accept the findings of the committee and will support the Bill.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [9.12]: I have no desire to record a silent vote on this question. At the same time I do not wish to lay myself open for another lecture by Sir Hal Colebatch through merely exercising my undoubted right to speak in this Chamber. I think the committee's decision was subject to an undeserved attack by a member who should have known better, one who repeatedly turned round during the course of his remarks and addressed me instead of the Chair. I would have risen to a point of order had not I realised that the hon. gentleman has had much more experience in this Chamber and in other places than I have had. Still he nearly provoked me to commit a breach of the peace.

The **PRESIDENT**: The hon. member should have called attention to the matter at the time.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I did not know that I could do so; at any rate, I was too upset at the time. As a lady friend of mine once said—

The **PRESIDENT**: The question before the Chair is that the Bill be read a second time.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If I am given an opportunity, I will link up my remarks. We have just listened to a severe castigation by Mr. Mann of the hon. gentleman who lectured me the other evening as to what I should or should not do. I think that much of the discussion on this subject, if you, Sir, will pardon me for saying so, has been entirely out of order. We are not here to discuss the matter of sites; the question is whether we are prepared to authorise the Government to commit the State to great expenditure for the erection of public offices. I recognise, just as much as does any other member whose duties take him to the departments, the need for better accommodation. I know that many of our officers are badly housed and have to work under conditions that should not be tolerated. I sympathise fully with them. But I maintain that their conditions of employment and their housing conditions could have been improved years ago, and could be improved now, without committing the State to the expense to which we are asked to assent. We have been told the Government does not intend to proceed with the erection of all the buildings at once, but that the work will be done piecemeal. My opinion is that the Government will be forced to adopt the latter

course. Probably I shall be charged with narrow-mindedness, but my opinion is that whilst we as part of the Empire are engaged in the terrific struggle and are faced here at home with the deplorable position of our primary producers, a position unparalleled in the history of the State, this expenditure on public buildings should not be undertaken. I sympathise with the public servants; but I sympathise more keenly with the men and women in outback portions of the State who for years have been compelled to put up with infinitely greater difficulties and discomforts, in addition to extreme isolation. Is not the time opportune for the Government to consider the position of these thrice-unfortunate people outback? On calmer reflection members will, I hope, consider that the present time is not opportune for the proposed expenditure on office accommodation. Until the financiers of Western Australia have given consideration to our distressed primary producers on the land, I am in duty bound to oppose a Bill of this nature.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [9.17]: Whatever feeling of warmth has been introduced into the discussion on the Bill, I think the House should at least feel benefited by the fact that the debate has brought to light probably a fuller understanding of the conclusions arrived at by the Joint Committee than otherwise would have been possible. Sir Hal Colebatch, using that right which every member possesses, has seen fit to examine with a critical eye the evidence given before the Joint Committee, and has brought out important and salient points in that connection. But the very fact of his doing so gave Mr. Mann an opportunity, on behalf of himself and other members of the committee, to prove to Sir Hal Colebatch that there were other facts which operated to induce the committee to make the recommendations it did, facts which obviously must have been overlooked by Sir Hal. Not only is the House indebted to those hon. members for the care they have taken in bringing the subject before us, but each of them may now congratulate the other on having respectively been able to inform each other of facts which possibly had escaped their observation previously.

The purpose of the Bill is to excise from a Class "A" reserve a certain portion of land

known as the Government Domain. When the matter was before this Chamber last session, I in common with other members took the opportunity to oppose any action in connection with the matter, and also any proposed resumption of a spot which I regarded as one of Perth's historic land marks. I have a great reverence for old sites and old places. Certainly I felt, when the measure was before us previously, that it would be something almost in the nature of desecration to remove from that reserve the piece of land which it was proposed to remove. With other members I opposed the measure. But apparently the Government felt a certain amount of urgency in regard to the matter, and a suggestion was made and adopted to have a joint committee of members of each House to examine the subject fully. We appointed our quota of the members of that committee, and I feel that all the members of the committee have faithfully discharged their duty. No one can make any allegation to the contrary. I would be the last to suggest that they have done otherwise. That being the case, and following the usual precedent and the usual custom when select or other committees have been appointed, I am constrained, and feel compelled, to acquiesce in this joint committee's findings. Indeed, I consider it would be wrong for us to make a departure from long-established custom even in connection with a matter of this nature, and in connection with the excision of this land from a Class "A" reserve to which I was absolutely opposed, and to which really I am still opposed. However, I feel bound, having regard to that established custom, to recognise that I must follow the precedent of former years.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Do not you think that portion of that land should be open to the public?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That might possibly be arranged afterwards.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It should be done now, in this Bill.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I am not, however, going to submit my acquiescence without making some comment on the Bill, and on the plan which is attached in the form of a schedule to the Bill. I observe that a road is now set out on the plan. That road was not indicated when the matter was discussed last session. The making of the proposed road on the present plan was not

brought to the notice of the House then. I certainly cannot, from what I have read of the evidence, see exactly why it is necessary to make, and have declared, a public road dividing this land from the adjoining land.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: One must have a road into the building surely!

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: There are two roads at the present time, one having a frontage to St. George's Terrace, and the other running down near the waterfront.

Members: No.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I understood it went right down to the waterfront. Surely it could be arranged to provide for a private road like the well-known private road at the Anglican Cathedral, where our public offices now have a frontage. There is no need that I can see to throw away as a public road this large portion of land, the surface of which will pass out of the immediate jurisdiction and control of the Government and, if declared as a public road, a highly valuable piece of land will be lost. A private entrance can be provided for the purposes of the building, with the necessary fence to retain privacy such as there is in Hay street at the present time in the case of the road I have referred to.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It is supposed to remain open for the use of the people.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The particular roadway I refer to is, as hon. members are aware, protected by posts at the Hay-street entrance.

The Chief Secretary: You do not want to perpetuate that kind of thing, surely!

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I do not see the necessity for driving in there. Anyone desiring to visit any office down the proposed roadway would walk down from the Terrace.

Hon. T. Moore: But people drive up the roadway you speak about—drive right up to the posts.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: In connection with the proposed road there is no mention of Government House.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: There must be a road either at this end of the block or at the other end. If at this end, it would be right up against Government House.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: There is one chain of frontage to St. George's-terrace which will be lost for all purposes.

The PRESIDENT: I suggest to the hon. member that this is a matter of detail affecting the Bill and that when we get into Committee it will be quite competent for him to move to strike out Subclause (b). That would cover the particular point to which he is referring. Perhaps that aspect of the question had better be dealt with in Committee.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I will follow your suggestion, Sir. I can but express the view that there are many matters relating to this Bill which perhaps can be dealt with more fully in the Committee stage. In the meantime I content myself with supporting the second reading.

On motion by Hon. J. A. Dimmitt, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.33 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 25th September, 1940.

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

QUESTION—PERTH HOSPITAL.

Administrative Costs.

Mr. NEEDHAM asked the Minister for Health: What was the amount of the administrative costs of the Perth Public Hospital (exclusive of the manager's salary) for the financial year ended June, 1940?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: The administrative cost of Perth Hospital for the financial year ended June, 1940, was £10,156.

QUESTIONS (2)—DROUGHT-STRICKEN AREAS.

Wheat for Stock.

Mr. BERRY asked the Premier: As the Government cannot be represented at the Federal conference on Friday, will he telegraph an urgent request that the Federal Government through the conference make available immediately sufficient money to purchase all wheat necessary to feed distressed stock in Western Australia's drought-stricken areas?

The PREMIER replied: As requested by the Minister for Commerce we have air-mailed our views regarding the hay and stock feed position and also particulars of measures taken or contemplated to cope with the present position in the wheat industry. In a communication to-day, Friday's conference is referred to as an emergency meeting and the wider problems are to be the subject of a further meeting to be held shortly.

Relief Measures.

Mr. BERRY asked the Minister for Lands: 1, How many sheep and lambs could the Government acquire and handle in cold storage at Wyndham Meatworks or elsewhere for canning or other economic purposes to aid the distress caused by drought? 2, Would the Government inquire from the Royal Commissioner on the pastoral industry, how many sheep, ewes preferably, could be grazed on unstocked areas in the north and north-west of Western Australia where adequate rain has fallen to justify such transfer? 3, How much 6-row barley for which the farmers have received only 1s. 11d. per bushel remains available for distribution as sheep feed (a) in Western Australia, (b) in Australia? 4, What arrangements as to price per acre and transport charges have been made to hire binders which will not be used by owners this season in drought-stricken areas, to cut hay in areas more favoured?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, The Wyndham Meatworks could probably