

if he has still not recovered from his injury, makes him payments from the second of the funds I have mentioned, namely, the distressed and disabled jockeys' fund. In one case a jockey has been receiving payments from this fund for nearly seven years. That is different from the position under the Workers' Compensation Act. Taking it by and large members will find that the jockey has been paid at least as much as he would have received under the Workers' Compensation Act. In another case recently assistance was rendered to a former trainer although he had not been connected with the sport for over nine years. In a third case the sum of £25 was given to the parents of a deceased apprentice towards the cost of a headstone over his grave.

As has been pointed out by the member for Nedlands, the members of the Western Australian Turf Club put in a considerable amount of their time without any fee or reward and do the best they can to conduct racing properly. That is all I have to say in regard to the criticisms raised against the Bill except in connection with one matter referred to by the Leader of the Opposition concerning Clause 4. With regard to the inquiry of the Leader of the Opposition as to whether there was any particular transaction in mind to which the retrospective operation of the Act might refer, I am able to assure the House that the clause has only been put in as a general precaution in view of the fact that the club has, over a great number of years, entered into many transactions concerning the validity of which there may have been some doubt. Furthermore, there is the agreement that the club has entered into which has to be completed by the 31st December this year which necessitates the payment of a certain amount of money. That in itself is an act which the club may or may not have the authority to perform. Mr. Stow, the agent for the W.A. Turf Club, referred to this very matter when he gave evidence before the Select Committee. He said—

The Western Australia Turf Club operates under the 1892 Act, which was passed principally with a view to establishing a club to conduct the racecourse known as the Perth Race Course or Headquarters, the land for which had been granted to the club by the Crown. In the intervening period the area of the course has been extended by the purchase of adjoining land. The club has purchased its

city property at the foot of Howard-street, and now the question has been raised as to its power to do so.

Those are the full facts in regard to this Bill. It simply seeks to remove any doubts as to whether the West Australian Turf Club can purchase these racecourses.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 10.53 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 29th November, 1944.

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

ELECTORAL—SWEARING-IN OF MEMBER.

The PRESIDENT: I have received the return of a writ for the vacancy in the South-East Province caused by the death of the Hon. H. V. Piesse, showing that Anthony Lloyd Loton was, on the 18th November, 1944, duly elected. I am prepared to swear-in the hon. member.

Hon. A. L. Loton took and subscribed the oath and signed the roll.

BILL—TOWN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Honorary Minister and read a first time.

BILL—MORTGAGEES' RIGHTS RESTRICTION ACT CONTINUANCE.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—RURAL AND INDUSTRIES BANK.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [4.40]: It is not quite a month ago since the people of this State were being urged, appealed to and pressed to support the second Victory Loan. In support of that appeal it was quite rightly pointed out that the more strenuous part of the campaign against the Japanese was yet to come. It was also pointed out that it was certain a year or two would have to elapse before we could expect victory. It was further stated that Australia more than any other country was concerned in seeing that the war was waged to such a satisfactory conclusion that no-one could possibly expect any recurrence of the menace to which Australia has been subjected for so many years. The Commonwealth has done what has been possible to conserve all its resources primarily for the purposes of the war. In view of that fact one is justified in asking whether this Bill cannot be described as premature. Its object is the establishment of a bank with a capital of some £12,000,000, which is designed to come into operation immediately and obviously will extend its operations beyond that of the farming industry to any other field of commerce that the bank may desire.

There is another question with regard to the opportuneness, if I may use that word, of the introduction of the Bill. The arguments advanced in support of the Victory Loan were indisputable and, until the end of the war is much closer than it appears to be today, those arguments remain paramount. There is another angle. It is recognised by all economists—at any rate all their reports refer to this phase—that immediately upon the conclusion of hostilities and for some time thereafter the demand for

agricultural products will be such that the market will be extremely advantageous for those operating in that industry. It is urged today, for example, that we should assist in the production of many of those food commodities that are required in connection with the conduct of the war.

The Agricultural Bank as it now exists has power to assist experienced agriculturists to extend their operations, and therefore we may conclude that that power is sufficient to enable that aspect of war work to be carried on. In those circumstances there is no need for those activities of the bank to be extended into the spheres indicated in the Bill. Surely it would be far better to assist experienced agriculturists to carry on their work than to take the risk that has been demonstrated in the past of introducing inexperienced new men into the industry, and thereby building up losses of funds urgently needed in other directions to assist the war effort. There is a third and very important reason which prompts me to ask whether the introduction of the Bill is not premature. Australian economy today is such—

Hon. C. B. Williams: That it is based on the Commonwealth Bank.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I was endeavouring to say that Australia's economy today is such—

Hon. C. B. Williams: I am telling you where it is based.

Hon. H. SEDDON: —that there is no reconciliation between the internal economy and the external economy. We do know that Australia's policy has been such that until the near approach of war it was impossible to market oversea any manufactured product with any degree of advantage. We know that the policy was such that the primary industries were being forced more and more into a position where the pressure of internal economy was pushing them off the market so far as export industries were concerned. Farm finance is long-dated finance. If we make an advance in connection with that industry it is recognised that work so undertaken is really that which relates to the operations of a mortgage bank. We cannot look forward to any immediate return of the funds so lent, and must be prepared to allow a long period of time to enable the farmer to be established on a sound basis so that the money can be repaid

or at any rate some part of the capital advances repaid. But the policy of this country has not yet been determined.

Again and again the question has been asked as to whether Australia intends to become part of the international organisation being established by the Allied nations for two purposes. The first purpose is to assist in the feeding, clothing and re-establishing of those areas that have been occupied by the enemy. The second purpose involves the question whether we are prepared to join in the proposal for the establishment of an international organisation that will try to stabilise the currency of every country that has been engaged in the war, as well as the currency of those countries which have been over-run by the enemy. It is recognised, of course, that every country's currency will be in a most perilous condition when the war ceases. It is because of that that this international organisation is being established with a view to utilising the resources of the powerful nations to assist the weaker nations to arrive at a basis on which they will be able to maintain trade relationships between themselves on an improved and stable basis.

The first objective is to overcome that frightful state of affairs that existed prior to the war when one country after another established a series of tariff barriers against imports, that brought upon the people untold miseries because of their inability to receive from abroad those commodities that they could not produce themselves. Until a pronouncement is made as to whether Australia is prepared to participate in the international trade organisation and become part of a stable international economy, or whether on the other hand she is to continue the policy which has been characteristic of Australia for 40 years—a policy directed towards isolation—we shall not know the factors that will dominate this country's policy on the question of maintaining the established banking system.

Hon. C. B. Williams: It is plain that the Australian people like isolation.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Economic isolation, certainly.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Explain that! Do not make bald statements.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I am pointing out that Australia's economy today is such that nobody can say just exactly how far

the policy of tariff on the one hand and subsidy on the other has been carried; but we do know that every businessman today is in this position, that there are certain commodities concerning which he is being assisted and subsidised to enable him to market them at a certain fixed price.

Hon. C. B. Williams: A war is on! You are speaking of times prior to the war.

Hon. H. SEDDON: What is worrying me with regard to war economy is this. Just how far has it been carried, and how far is this country today on an artificial basis, with everything protected by tariff or subsidised in order to keep up its price? Now with regard to the present position. This State's economy particularly has been such that in 1930, when the debacle came, no-one could say exactly what the future was going to be. The bottom fell out of several commodities, and many people in Western Australia were faced with absolute ruin. It was only because of the Premiers' Plan that this country was able to keep up confidence at all. Had it not been for that Plan, this country would have faced an economic calamity greater even than that which it did experience. The whole progress since then has been that the prices level and the employment level have been maintained only by the borrowing of funds from every financial institution that had them available.

Every financial institution today has had to place all its available funds in the hands of Governments to enable them to carry on. Therefore I again ask: How can we justify in the face of those facts the establishment of a new bank to take the place of the Agricultural Bank, the establishment of a bank whose sphere according to the Bill is to be extended to assist manufacturers, to assist people generally, and to provide overdrafts for persons? The argument which has been adduced, by the Minister who sponsored the Bill in another place, in support of the establishment of the bank is that the time is now opportune for reversing the policy of the Agricultural Bank. The Chief Secretary instanced—and the figures which he placed before us in answer to questions are on record—the tremendous losses made by the Agricultural Bank not only during the period in which it operated before the inquiry into its activities but also those which have taken place since—and he

pointed out that a sum exceeding £8,000,000 had been written off, through the Agricultural Bank and the various institutions associated with that bank. Now, the total capital provided for the Agricultural Bank, including also the Soldier Settlement Scheme, the Group Settlements and the Industries Assistance Board, was roughly £19,500,000; and of that sum, we are told, nearly £9,000,000 has been written off.

In the course of his remarks the Minister pointed out that there would probably be a further £1,000,000 to be written off before the Bank could finally say that it had adjusted all its accounts. In those circumstances, I ask, are we justified in placing on the statute-book a Bill with such wide powers, a Bill of such extreme importance as this measure purports to be? Yesterday Mr. Parker pointed out that there is a very great difference between the administration of this proposed bank and the administration of the Agricultural Bank. I well remember that at the time of the introduction of the Agricultural Bank Bill into this Chamber, in 1934, the objective was that the control of the Bank and its accounts should be entirely in the hands of the Commissioners. But the outstanding feature of this Bill is that in every case the Minister is the dominating factor. I am inclined to ask what other factor is at work, what other reason can be advanced for the introduction at this time of a Bill which seeks to establish what is to all intents and purposes a trading bank.

As far as the agricultural economy of the State is concerned, as far as Australia's activities with regard to the war and as Australia's relationships are affected, the Bill is premature. What reason can justify its introduction at the present time? What are the factors influencing its introduction now? When every other factor is so important for the conservation of Australia's financial resources, why are we being asked to support a Bill which, if it means anything at all, means an extension of the activities of the State Government? In putting to ourselves that question, particularly in view of the plain statements of the Minister, and particularly in view of the acknowledged policy of the party which comprises the Government of the State at the present time, is not one justified in asking whether the reason for the introduction

of this measure at the present time is not that of putting into operation the party's financial policy for this State? We can find a great deal of evidence supporting the contention that that is the real reason behind the introduction of the Bill. The measure provides among other things that this bank may take deposits. I assume that the Government of Western Australia has in mind the policy which was adopted when the Commonwealth Bank was established.

Members may recollect that when that bank was established it was started off as a bank without capital. It was started off because of very large sums in the possession of the Commonwealth Government. Those sums were lodged with the Commonwealth Bank. They provided a very large amount of what, in effect, was capital; and the institution was able to carry on its operations as a Commonwealth Bank. I take it that it would be quite competent for the Western Australian Government, and probably is the intention of the Government, to bank in this proposed new bank the trust funds which at the present time are in the hands of the Treasurer. The Minister in another place, referring to the finance of this bank, indicated that there was the sum of something like £300,000 at the Treasury which it was intended should be placed at the disposal of the new bank. Therefore it is quite reasonable to expect that the Government, which has other trust funds, would place other trust funds also at the disposal of this bank, thus making those moneys available for the Bank's purposes. Again I desire to sound a note of warning so far as regards repayment of agricultural advances within a very short time.

The bank will have power to give overdrafts. I take it it will endeavour to operate on the same lines as are followed by the Associated Banks. In other words, it will be in a position to allow overdrafts to any client who banks with it. They may be businessmen, an organisation, a union, a friendly society, an association of employers, any of those things, and, provided they bank with the institution, the Commissioners will have power to make overdrafts in their favour. I take it that any person who opens an account with this bank will claim to be as much entitled to an overdraft as would be the case with regard to any

other client of the institution. Now, we know that Labour Ministers are not free agents, and that they have their policy dictated to them from outside. I want to point out this important aspect, namely, that the functions to be performed by the bank will come directly under a Labour Minister. Everything is to be referred to him, and that Minister may be instructed to follow a certain course of action in regard to the overdrafts.

We know that Ministers do receive their instructions from Caucus, and we know it is possible for this particular Minister to receive instructions in regard to the overdrafts the bank may grant. Members must realise what is involved in that aspect of the administration of the bank. It appears to me, so far as I have been able to follow from reading the debate on the measure in another place, that there is no ground for urgency so far as the Agricultural Bank is concerned, or so far as any of the other activities with which the State is associated are concerned, apart from the one aspect that this proposal fits in with the announced policy of the Labour Party. I wish to draw attention to the report of the Royal Commission on the Agricultural Bank issued in 1934. It makes interesting reading. It points out that the success of the Bank was noticeable chiefly in the early years of its operations. Mr. Hamersley, in the course of his speech, pointed out what a wonderful job the Bank had done until its constitution was altered by the amendment of 1912.

We know the path on which the Bank started at that time, the path which was more or less made for it by the economic policy to which I have referred, a path which demanded that any man who started farming in the wheat areas had to face a larger and larger capital expenditure before he could get his holding established and brought to a state of profit. Those were the days when the Agricultural Bank started upon the career which resulted in such disaster to the country. One must ask oneself whether conditions will be altered compared with what they were in those days, or whether we have to be prepared to face the heavy losses which have been incurred in the past and are likely to occur in the future unless the operations of the bank are brought within a greater measure of control. There is a

provision in the Bill that limits the loans that are to be made on any security to 70 per cent. It is expected that the 30 per cent. margin will provide sufficient cover to enable the account to be safeguarded. In the report to which I have referred, it was stressed over and over again that the Commissioners, who were supposed to be independent, were themselves pressed into adopting unsound practices.

Hon. J. CORNELL: They were supposed to give full advances in connection with the 3,500 farms scheme.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Whilst that may stand as part of the constitution of the new bank, there is also a clause which enables the Commissioners to exceed that safe margin by operating on what is known as the agency section. Thus we have all the conditions laid down for a repetition of the experience which has characterised the Bank in the past. There is another point. The Commonwealth Government has started a Rural Bank, and that Rural Bank, which is now in operation, is extending its activities into this State. In fact, it has been stated, and not denied, that the Commonwealth Bank today, following that policy, has been acquiring the premises of other banks which have been closed as a result of the manpower requirements of the Commonwealth Government for war purposes.

Loyally the Associated Banks have assisted the Commonwealth authorities by closing many branches throughout the country, closing branches which, but for the war, they would not have regarded as being necessary to close, and that action has now been exploited by the Commonwealth Bank to the extent of giving advances to people and opening branches of the Rural Bank in districts from which the Associated Banks, as a result of pressure, were forced to withdraw. Such a state of affairs should give food for much thought on the part of members. There is a provision in the Bill whereby by this institution, may appoint any other bank as its agent. There is a further provision whereby it may also become the agent of any other bank. That is ordinary banking practice. In view of the policy that has been definitely announced by Federal Ministers, one can visualise that the Rural Bank, instead of operating more or less independently of the Commonwealth Bank, may well work in close co-operation with it.

We may find that the agencies of this bank which have been established in the country may be operated by and used in conjunction with the Commonwealth Rural Bank, and enable it to extend its operations throughout the length and breadth of the State. There is one aspect of this question which I think should be explored. I refer to Australia's relationship in regard to overseas financial matters. I want to bring this closer home to members. When we examine the statistics in regard to imports and exports as affecting Western Australia, we find that this State's market for exports represents something like 90 per cent. of its primary production. Western Australia's imports comprise about 90 per cent. from the Eastern States. Under existing conditions, our exports carry a 25 per cent. exchange premium on all goods sold overseas. That gives us a very considerable credit overseas on account of the sale of those products. Instead of that credit being preserved to us, and our having a first call upon it for the advantage of Western Australia, it becomes part of the general credit of Australia overseas. The result is that those credits which have been established overseas through the sale of our primary products are made available to the Eastern States for the benefit of their imports, notwithstanding that nearly the whole of our imports come from the Eastern States.

My contention is that this is a good argument for a State bank at the appropriate time, namely, that these credits should be made available for Western Australia's demands first. The question may be asked, what are we to do with those credits? There is one thing we can do: We can redeem some of the loans overseas on the interest for which we are paying a 25 per cent. premium, amounting to about £500,000 a year. By that means we could get the full benefit of our overseas credit, which we are not getting now. It may be contended that the result of this would be that Western Australia's £1 would stand at a higher value than Australia's £1. That may be so, but the first call on this credit should be for Western Australia's benefit; it is not so now. The proposed bank is not in a position to open branches in London. All exchange at present is in the hands of the Commonwealth Bank. It is very doubtful, even if a branch of the bank were established in London to-

morrow, whether the Commonwealth Bank would allow our institution to control its overseas credit. Any question of making use of the best functions that could be carried out by a Western Australian bank is out of court at present, owing to war conditions. There, however, is the one avenue for exploitation which might be used for Western Australia.

Not only would the proposed institution have the right to make advances for rural purposes but other advances for manufacturing and even for mining purposes. It is to be in a position to make loans to persons about to become depositors so long as they run a current account with it. There is one thing I would like to point out, namely that it would not have power to issue cheques or buy gold. It will have power, under Clause 115, to compel other banks to accept its cheques. That is a very important power. At present it is competent for the Associated Banks to decline to receive the cheques of other banks unless they are satisfied with its stability and the conditions that control its operations. Under the Bill the banks will have no option, no matter what the policy of the Government institution is, but will be compelled to receive and recognise any cheques issued by it. They will be compelled, if the Commissioners desire, to receive them at the meetings of their association, and allow them to take part in determining the policy of the Associated Banks. Enormous powers are to be conferred on this institution, which was established ostensibly to provide for the development of our primary industries.

It is proposed to give it powers which will enable it to enter into full banking operations, and it will be equipped with powers which are definitely mandatory and therefore should be severely criticised before being assented to. For these reasons I am taking the line I am today in criticising the bank. Already the Agricultural Bank has power to enable it to give our primary industries all the assistance they require to carry out their part, not only in the war effort but in putting themselves into a sound position for post-war purposes. In these circumstances I cannot see any justification for the establishment at the present time of a bank with such wide powers, nor can I see any justification for giving these mandatory powers with regard to the position which the bank occupies

in relation to the other banks. Therefore, I am opposed to the second reading.

On motion by Hon. C. B. Williams, debate adjourned.

BILLS (3)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Western Australian Turf Club (Property) Private (Hon. H. S. W. Parker in charge).
- 2, Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.
- 3, University of Western Australia Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly.

BILL—CONSTITUTION ACTS AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. E. M. HEENAN (North-East) [5.20]: This is a measure to provide a solution of the deadlocks which occur from time to time between the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council with regard to legislation initiated by the former Chamber. The time is overdue for the passing of such a measure, because our Constitution is undoubtedly out-dated in this regard and lags behind the Constitutions of other States and those of the other parts of the Empire.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is what Dr. Evatt said about the Commonwealth Constitution.

HON. E. M. HEENAN: We are well aware of the fact that before any measure becomes the law of this country it has to be passed by the two Houses of Parliament. We are also aware of the fact that throughout the years the two Houses have frequently found themselves in direct opposition to one another and, from time to time, measures which the Legislative Assembly puts forward are either defeated or drastically amended by this Chamber. It is no exaggeration to say that this House delayed the passing of measures which when they were subsequently passed proved of great benefit to the State and to the people in the State. In saying that I recall the great battle that occurred over a number of years to have the State Insurance Office legalised. I do not think any member of this House will now say that that measure and all the implications that go with it have not been of great

benefit to this country. It is therefore a truism that for the number of years that that measure was defeated the people of Western Australia were deprived of a piece of very wise legislation.

Under our system we have the Legislative Assembly which is elected by the people. Every adult person over the age of 21 years, with few exceptions, has a right to vote for the members who constitute the Legislative Assembly. It is claimed, and in my opinion rightly so, that that Chamber to a large extent represents the men and women of this country. Against that statement certain members will argue that the distribution of seats is effected in such a way that some parts of the State have more power than others. For instance, they say that the electors on the goldfields and in the north of Western Australia have more power than the electors around Perth or Fremantle. In a way that argument has a substantial amount of truth in it, but the fact remains that every man and woman over the age of 21 years in Western Australia has a right to select a representative for the Assembly. It is the Assembly which constitutes the Government of the day.

Therefore I submit that the members of the Assembly more truly represent the people of Western Australia; and they can claim to do so. Here in this House I am sure that taking into consideration the personal equation members suffer in no way in comparison with those in the other place. But we must remember this that the Legislative Council is a House of Privilege. Right throughout our history it has been intended to be so. People, unless they had extensive property qualifications years ago, did not have the right of voting. Down the years the franchise for the Legislative Council has been liberalised, and I want to be quite fair by saying that in my opinion it is a fairly liberal franchise at present. But we cannot get away from this vital fact that the electors on the roll for the Legislative Council are only 29 per cent. of the electors on the Assembly roll.

Hon. L. Craig: Another 29 per cent. could go on.

Hon. G. B. Wood: What is the reason for that?

HON. E. M. HEENAN: There are a number of causes for it; I am simply stating a fact that cannot be gainsaid. Now that I

have been asked a reason I would say, first and foremost, that it is because the franchise does not give the vote to every adult man and woman.

Hon. G. B. Wood: The real reason is that it is not compulsory.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: The real reason is that there are many thousands of men and women over the age of 21 in this country who are not married, who are not householders and are not property owners. I would say that is the predominant reason. The second reason I would give is that the qualifications are surrounded by such obscurity and difficulty of comprehension that a vast number of people who are actually qualified to be on the roll are not aware of the fact.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is a reflection on our present-day education.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: That might be so. Those, in my opinion, are the two chief reasons, but we cannot escape from the fact that the people who elect the members of this House comprise well below one-third of those who vote for the Legislative Assembly, and under our system only about one-half of them vote. At the recent by-election—and here I digress to offer my warmest congratulations to Mr. Loton—less than 50 per cent. of the people on the roll for the South-East Province voted. In my opinion this Chamber is fading into insignificance. The public has lost interest in its doings.

Hon. L. Craig: And in the Lower House also.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I would not say that. People definitely are not interested in the doings of the Legislative Council, because those who vote for this House form such a very small minority of the people of the State. Sir Hal Colebatch, in the course of his remarks, made a statement akin to the remarks made by Mr. Craig, namely, that people who enrol for the Legislative Council are those who take a real interest in public affairs. When we analyse that statement, we must admit that it is hardly correct.

Hon. J. Cornell: I do not think it will bear analysis.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: In the by-election at which Mr. Loton was returned, less than 50 per cent. of those enrolled exercised the vote. I say with the greatest sincerity that members of this House lost a golden opportunity by not agreeing to adult franchise. There seems to be a dominating idea that

the immediate goal of the Labour Party is the abolition of this House.

Hon. G. W. Miles: That is clearly shown by the Bill you are discussing now.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I submit that if this House agreed to adult franchise, we could have one roll for both Houses; all the expense of getting people on the roll would be obviated; all the complaints about wrong enrolments and all the misunderstandings that are so great a handicap would disappear.

Hon. G. B. Wood: What do you think of the constitution Bill?

The PRESIDENT: Order! We are discussing a Bill to lessen the power of the Legislative Council, not the franchise.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I agree with you, Sir, but I think my remarks are apropos of the Bill because they deal with the respective franchises of the two Houses. I intend to connect my remarks with the Bill by saying that measures submitted by the Assembly for the approval of this House should not have been vetoed as they have been down the years. As the two Houses are at present constituted, this Chamber has the final and ultimate say, and can emasculate or defeat any measure sent to it by the Assembly, which House, I claim, represents the voice of the people of the State more so than does this Chamber.

Hon. J. Cornell: That has been going on for a long time.

Hon. T. Moore: And the time has arrived when it should be stopped.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I should say that the very fact of a wrong having been done for a long time is a very good reason why the wrong should be righted. I think members must be fair and realise that this House, under the existing Constitution, has greater power than has the Assembly. We have to appreciate that the Assembly is elected by the great majority of the people, whereas our electors comprise 29 per cent. of the people, and only half of them vote. The people of this State, I repeat, have lost interest in the activities of the Legislative Council.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: You do not know what you are talking about.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I should sum up the attitude of the public by saying it is one of bitterness.

Hon. J. Cornell: The public does not care at all.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: I am expressing what I deem to be the views of the great majority of the people. There is undoubtedly a feeling of indifference towards the Legislative Council. The people do not bother about it, and when such an attitude is adopted towards one branch of the Legislature, it must prove fatal. I repeat that a golden opportunity has been lost by not granting adult franchise. Had adult franchise been granted, we would have been in a position to claim that we were as fully representative of the people as are the members of another place.

Hon. L. Craig: And then could demand to exercise the same power.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Another place might reasonably claim to have just as much say on a measure as we have, but under the existing Constitution, that cannot occur, because we set ourselves up as a House of superior power. When measures are brought forward representing the views of the people, we sometimes amend them drastically or defeat them.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: You mean representing the views of the party, not the people.

Hon. E. M. HEENAN: Consequently a measure such as this is needed, and I hope that the second reading will be passed.

HON. H. L. ROCHE (South-East): What I have to say on this measure will not take long, but I think it is a matter on which I should express an opinion. I propose to support the second reading, though not because I favour the Bill in its present form. My view is that the measure, in the form in which it has been submitted to this House, is quite unacceptable, but I refuse to accept the view that this House is incapable of amending the Bill to bring it more into conformity with what I regard as being the reality of the position. Although there has been considerable argument and seemingly considerable exaggeration by those speaking for and against the measure, I believe that, after the lapse of years, it would be well worth the time of the House to devote its attention to the objections and criticisms that have been raised and so amend the measure as to dispose of such of those objections as may be legitimate.

To attempt to draw a comparison between this House and the House of Lords is so much waste of time. Whether cham-

pions of the Bill approve of the Legislative Council or its methods is immaterial beside the fact that this House does represent 80,000 people. The House of Lords, on the other hand, is an hereditary and appointee body responsible to nobody but itself. I have heard it suggested that provisions along the lines of those in the Commonwealth Constitution to deal with a disagreement between the Senate and the House of Representatives could well be adopted here. For the life of me I cannot understand why anyone should feel a threat of any great danger to the status or authority of this House if such provisions were accepted and embodied in the Bill. If similar provisions were adopted, then so much of the measure as has been put over for purposes other than genuine amendment could be deleted. I shall vote for the second reading in the hope that something worth while can be devised in Committee. If that cannot be done, I and others who think as I do will have our remedy when the third reading is moved.

HON. L. B. BOLTON (Metropolitan): Like the preceding speaker, I have very little to say, and that little I hope will be to the point. I definitely will not have one line of the Bill and will vote against the second reading. The measure seems to set out with one object in view and one object only, namely the abolition of this Chamber. Almost from the commencement of the session, the Government has done little but bring in measures amending or attempting to amend the franchise, the Constitution Act, or anything else in such a way as to make it detrimental to the Legislative Council. I can view this Bill only from one angle, namely, that it is something in the nature of a red herring to distract the minds of the people from the unfortunate position in which the Government finds itself in the working of the departments.

Hon. G. Fraser: The Bill has been brought in because the people at the last election returned the Government to bring it in.

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: My experience is totally opposite to that of Mr. Heenan, who says that the people are crying out for the abolition of the Legislative Council. To my mind that is ridiculous. In my opinion, there never was a time more than today

when the people desired the retention of this House as a safeguard to the measures that are brought in. I am definitely opposed to the measure and intend to vote against the second reading.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why not vote for the second reading?

Hon. L. B. BOLTON: I am not prepared to do even that, as I think it is a waste of time, nor am I in favour of certain amendments which have been suggested. I hope the Bill will not reach the Committee stage.

HON. C. F. BAXTER (East): This is a most extraordinary Bill, and it contains an exceedingly lengthy clause to deal with what could be done in a few sentences. I will come to that later. This is not the first attempt of the Government to bring discredit upon the Legislative Council, and one naturally looks for the reason for such action. With Mr. Bolton, I agree that we have not very far to look. We all know the position which has prevailed during the past four or five years. The Government has sat down and done nothing. It has allowed the assets of the State to go to waste. It has not undertaken necessary repairs. All it has aimed at is to show a surplus at the end of each financial year. The position arose in 1938, when the Government made no provision whatever for necessary railway repairs. The following year we entered upon the war period, with our engines, rollingstock and tracks in very bad order. The Government says that that is owing to manpower difficulties. Nothing of the sort! Our railway system is a first priority for manpower. It is very necessary in wartime. But what is the position of the railways today? They are on the verge of a complete breakdown.

Hon. T. Moore: The railways are very low in manpower.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Week after week we find that the railways cannot transport livestock to the market. Trucks are cancelled and stock that is needed in the metropolitan area is left to waste in the country. It was desired to transport old stock to the metropolitan area for dehydration purposes, but the trucks were not available. We cannot blame those in charge of the railway system.

Hon. G. Fraser: Are railways mentioned in the Bill?

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I think that comes beautifully from the hon. member interjecting! He himself talked everything but the Bill to his friends in the gallery.

Hon. G. Fraser: The same objection came from the hon. member last night as I am making now.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Government has not carried out that very necessary work for the Railway Department. Nor is that department the only department to suffer in that way. Every Government department is in similar straits. The Government is using the Legislative Council as a stalking horse in an endeavour to cover up the way in which it has mismanaged the State's affairs. The Bills brought in this session remind me of a case of bananas; some are green, some yellow and some darned rotten. The Bill now before us is green; it is immature. It has been badly prepared. It seems to me it was prepared in such a way as to get the Council either to reject it—in which case the Government could play on the rejection to the electors—or to trap the Council into making some amendment which would hamstring it and destroy its efficiency. That is what the Bill means. When I hear members of the calibre of Mr. Heenan talk such nonsense as he talked this afternoon I question whether he is expressing his candid opinion.

Hon. G. Fraser: He thinks the same about your stuff!

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The Bill as it stands comes to this Chamber like a great many more Bills, badly conceived and badly considered. This Chamber is always left to make the investigation and amend the Bills in such a way as to make them decent measures. In practically 50 per cent. of the measures that pass through Parliament the good work is done in this Chamber. If this Bill is placed on the statute-book, members are aware what endless interpretations will be placed upon our Constitution. The position will be impossible. There will be one interpretation after another. As a matter of fact, one cannot escape the conclusion that the Government, by this Bill, is attempting to abolish this House at the will of the party now in power.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The Title of the Bill is wrong.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: We have been working under a Constitution for a very long time. Where has all the trouble occurred?

I venture the opinion that there has been no trouble under the existing Constitution. Section 46, Subsection (1) of the Constitution deals with money Bills. It reads as follows:

The Legislative Council may not amend Loan Bills, or Bills imposing taxation, or Bills appropriating revenue, or moneys for the ordinary annual services of the Government.

That puts the position in a nutshell. What more is wanted than that? What more can be achieved? The same applies to the Commonwealth Constitution. Has any member heard of any difficulty between the Senate and the House of Representatives over money Bills? We have had no difficulty over money Bills in the past. Compare that concise provision in our Constitution with the definition of "Money Bill" in the measure before us. That definition reads as follows:—

"Money Bill" means a public Bill which contains only provisions dealing with all or any of the following subjects, namely, the imposition, repeal, remission, alteration, or regulation of taxation; the imposition for the payment of debt or other financial purposes of charges on the Consolidated Revenue Fund, or on money provided by Parliament, or the variation or repeal of any such charges; supply, the appropriation, receipt, custody, issue, or audit of accounts of public money; the raising or guarantee of any loan or the repayment thereof, or subordinate matters incidental to those subjects or any of them and on which there shall be indorsed when it is sent to the Legislative Council and when it is presented to the Governor for assent a certificate of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly signed by him that it is in his opinion a money Bill and that in this opinion he has the concurrence of a majority of the whole number of the Standing Orders Committee for the time being of the Legislative Assembly, which concurrence was obtained at a meeting of the members of such Committee convened by him for such purpose. The expression "taxation," "public money" and "loan" respectively do not include any taxation money or loan raised by municipal corporations, road boards, boards of public health or other local authorities or bodies for local purposes.

There we have it all dished up nicely. There have been difficulties, so far as this House is concerned, with respect to Bills classed as money Bills; there have also been the same difficulties in another place with respect to similar Bills owing to the interpretations placed on them by the Speaker. Those interpretations should be made clear; there should be some definite method to determine what are and what are not money Bills. At present if the Speaker rules that a Bill

is a money Bill, his decision is final. The remedy suggested in this Bill is that the point should be referred to the Standing Orders Committee of another place. That committee, like the similar committee of this Chamber, is comprised of five members, three of whom are of the same political colour as the Speaker, while the Speaker is of the same political colour as the Government in power. What, then, is the position? It is that 26 members of Parliament can do what they like with the finances of the State, while the other 54 members cannot effectively object. That is what this Bill amounts to, that and nothing less. How any member can vote for the second reading I do not know. It is the most dangerous measure we have had placed before us. If this Bill passes the second reading we can never be sure what will happen.

Hon. A. Thomson: That is the danger.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: Definitely. I wonder whether the State Government is copying the Commonwealth Government. It appears so. Dr. Evatt ought to remain in this State. God alone knows the mess he has made of his Government! This Government simply sits back and lets the Commonwealth do what it likes to the State. It depends on the Commonwealth to do everything for the State, instead of doing something for itself. Now it has to find an outlet to pacify the electors. You, Mr. President, know as well as I do that the question of whether a Bill is a money Bill or not arises for the most part in another place. There has never been any real difficulty between the two Houses on the point. Why has the trouble arisen? This Chamber has taken up a strong stand in respect of matters which have really been brought forward by officers of trade unions with a voracious appetite for more and more favours from the Government for the unions to bolster themselves up. That is the position right throughout Australia, and it has been the position in this State for many years.

Hon. G. B. Wood: That is what they call progress.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is really retrogression. This House can justify its rejection or amendment of every industrial and social Bill that has been amended or defeated. When a Bill goes to another place with a string of amendments, what happens? The majority are approved, though a few are sent back for further consideration. The

Legislative Council is respected, yet another place would say: "We will do away with the Legislative Council." And we hear all this balderdash about what the Council represents! As a matter of fact, this House represents more than double the number of people whose names are on the Legislative Council roll. Although people are not on the roll, we still represent them. On the evidence of the officials, there should be 160,000 to 170,000 on the Legislative Council roll.

Hon. H. Tuckey: Those people who are not on the roll are not complaining.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I do not know where all the alleged complaints come from. I never hear them, although I mix with all sections of the community. When a Constitution Act Amendment Bill was recently rejected, the only comment I heard was: "Thank God, you stood to your guns and threw the Bill out!" It was not said in that language but in true Australian language. I do not hear people speaking in the way Mr. Heenan speaks and says he hears them speak. I do not know what company he keeps. It is not intelligent company, because intelligent people do not talk that way. There are those in the ranks of the Labour unions who say: "All they want to do is to stifle you fellows in the Council. Watch your step; we do not want you stifled. We want you to protect our interests." The Chief Secretary laughs. I am afraid his mind is warped, too; but the day will come when it will broaden. It has been broadening gradually since he came to this House, so we have had some influence over him.

Hon. J. Cornell: Age has mellowed him.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: It is not age, but association with this House. Of that I feel sure. There is only one thing to do with this Bill and that is to vote against the second reading. If we vote for the second reading and depend on amendments being made, it is difficult to say where the Bill will finish. Probably it will result in the power of this House being reduced, and that is what the electors do not want, whether they are the adult franchise people, of whom Mr. Heenan is so fond of speaking, or people entitled to be on the roll. They want this Council to stand firm, assert its rights and give them some protection, as in the past when everything has

been very satisfactory. I oppose the second reading.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West): This Bill proposes to define what is a money Bill—which it does very clumsily—the powers of this House in regard to a money Bill, and the powers of this House generally in regard to all Bills. I have made it a practice to vote for the second reading of any Bill which has any merit at all, with a view subsequently to eliminating what is not desirable and trying to incorporate in an Act the little merit it has. I think that this Bill has a little merit. I understand that this Legislative Council is the strongest in the British Empire.

Hon. J. Cornell: Who told you that?

Hon. L. CRAIG: If I am wrong, let the hon. member tell me.

Hon. J. Cornell: You are!

Hon. A. Thomson: What is the merit of the Bill?

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not see that this House alone should have such extraordinary powers.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It has not any extraordinary powers.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I say it has. Mr. Baxter said it was dangerous to pass a Bill that we do not like generally. He considered that we should not pass this one in particular because it is dangerous, and we never know what will happen to us. It is a sign of weakness if we cannot agree to the second reading of a Bill with a view to passing into law that portion of it we like and eliminating what we do not like.

Hon. J. Cornell: All you could accept would be the short title.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It is weakness to say that we fear the passing of the second reading. I am not afraid to pass any Bill and subsequently agree to throw out what I do not like. Mr. Heenan claims that this House opposes legislation from another place. I believe that is partly what we are here for. If we did not do that, there would be no need for us at all; we might just as well go out altogether. This House is constituted to oppose, amend or improve legislation from another place.

The Chief Secretary: I think you are making a mistake. I think it is here as a House of Review.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It exists to review and, if necessary, oppose legislation. Surely

the House is here to oppose those portions of a Bill of which it does not approve. I am not so stupid as to say that we must definitely oppose everything that is brought forward.

Hon. A. Thomson: You mean amend.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I thought all members were intelligent and would understand what I meant. It is part of the function of this House to review, amend and, if necessary, oppose legislation from another place. I think that my remarks concerning the franchise can be connected with this Bill. If the franchise for this House were the same as that for another place, there would be no need for this Chamber, because its members would be elected by exactly the same people as are the members of another place. This place would be merely a duplication of the Legislative Assembly. If we were so elected, could we not rightly claim the same powers in regard to all Bills as are exercised by another place? If the franchise were the same for both Houses, surely we could rightly demand the same powers as another place possesses in regard to money Bills and all other Bills. That would be logical. To claim that we should be on the same basis as the Senate, is weak. It does not represent the same people; it represents States. Everyone knows that Western Australia, with its few people, has the same Senate representation as has New South Wales. There is roughly the same difference as between the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, a minority of people in Western Australia having the powers of the large population of New South Wales.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member should apply that to the provinces.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I am doing so. I am saying that there is a similarity, but it cannot be asserted that we should be on the same basis as is the Senate. We are nearer to it than we would be if the franchise were altered, as is desired by some. Regarding this Bill, I would go this far: The reference to money Bills I would have nothing to do with at all. That is defined clearly and concisely in the Constitution Act, and has never been disputed. If it has so stood the test of time and has not been challenged, we should leave well alone. I would suggest a lessening of the Council's power with regard to ordinary Bills, though not those necessitating an amendment to the Constitution. Other-

wise we would give to another place the power to abolish this Chamber. I consider that an ordinary Bill that had been submitted twice and was then submitted a third time following an election—perhaps with alterations made by this House—should become law, whether agreed to by the Council or not.

Hon. J. Cornell: You would exempt money Bills?

Hon. L. CRAIG: Yes.

Hon. J. Cornell: Then you would make the position worse.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I would give the Legislative Assembly powers in connection with money Bills.

Hon. A. Thomson: It has them.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I think it should have them, but the position has never been properly defined. I know what are our powers in regard to money Bills but I do not want to bring that in. The only powers of the Council I would reduce are those I have indicated.

Hon. A. Thomson: Do you not think we would agree to the Bill in those circumstances?

Hon. J. Cornell: Is the hon. member aware that we can reject a money Bill on the second or third reading?

Hon. L. CRAIG: I know all about that. I would agree to a lessening of the power of the Council in the direction I have indicated, and that is the only part of the Bill I would agree to. I support the second reading.

HON. G. B. WOOD (East): I had not made up my mind what I would do in regard to the second reading of the Bill until I heard Mr. Craig's remarks. He spoke about agreeing to a Bill becoming law after it had been submitted three times to this Chamber and rejected, with an election intervening between the second and third rejections. From those remarks, I see how very dangerous it is for the second reading to be passed, and I intend to oppose it. I look upon this as highly contentious legislation. Five years ago we were told that during the war no controversial measures would be introduced into Parliament, but I do not think we could find anything more contentious than this measure. That is another reason why I intend to oppose it. In regard to an alteration of the Constitution, I thought it might be desirable;

but, as Mr. Baxter said, these things are dangerous. I am convinced of that from what Mr. Craig said.

Hon. L. Craig: Why would you have agreed to the second reading?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: In order to permit of consideration in the Committee stage.

Hon. L. Craig: For what purpose?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: There is one amendment dealing with an alteration of the Constitution. So long as no alteration in the Constitution was suggested, I would be agreeable, but I am beginning to find how dangerous this could be. Other things might creep in. In any event, it had been my intention, if I voted for the second reading, to vote against the third reading unless the measure was amended to my liking.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I was pointing out that this is very contentious legislation and in view of certain promises that were made earlier I do not think it is legislation that should have been brought before Parliament during the currency of the war. It has been said that the Bill is not what it appears to be, and with that statement I agree. The Bill is absolutely dangerous in that if it is passed it will be possible for this House to be abolished after three years. I do not say that is in the mind of the Government.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: But someone else does.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: And someone else may coerce the Government into taking action along those lines. I do not agree that the Legislative Council has done very many dreadful things in the past with regard to over-dramatically amending legislation or even in rejecting it. That has not happened very much while I have been a member of Parliament. On the contrary, legislation placed before us has received very fair treatment. We have been told that we have held up progressive legislation, but who is to judge what is progressive legislation? We have certainly thrown out legislation that has been non-progressive in that it has gone too far, and the State is all the better for our actions in that respect. Complaints regarding the attitude of this House on the Legislative Council franchise Bill were mentioned by Mr. Heenan. I have not heard anything of that sort. I have made a point of endeavoring

to ascertain the opinion of people about what we did on that occasion. Only yesterday I asked a mayor of a town in the wheatbelt what the opinion of the people of that locality was, and the mayor said he had not heard anyone speak about it. I am not afraid of public opinion in this respect. Then we hear a lot of talk about democracy. It is said that the Assembly is a democratic House, whereas there is nothing of democracy about our attitude. I often wonder whether there is anything democratic about another place, although the members there are elected on the adult franchise.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Machine-elected!

Hon. G. B. WOOD: Legislation is presented in another place and because the Minister in charge says "No," the Bill is not allowed to pass. It receives little consideration whatever. I do not regard that as an indication of democracy. In such circumstances legislation does not receive any consideration at all. The party machine sees to that. In this House members vote as their consciences dictate.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Oh, oh!

Hon. G. B. WOOD: The hon. member who is so fond of interjecting may not do so.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I have belonged to the Labour Party for 30 odd years, and we have never changed our name.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I do not know what that has to do with the Bill.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Democratic! We have not changed our name.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I would be sorry to be in the position of having to say I shall vote for a Bill unless Caucus says otherwise.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Get out!

The PRESIDENT: Order! I suggest Mr. Wood should proceed with his speech.

Hon. C. B. Williams: We have never changed our name.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Mr. Wood has the floor.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: We have heard the argument about the disparity between the votes cast in connection with another place and those cast for this House. That cuts no ice with me. It is all the difference between compulsory voting and non-compulsory voting. I am positive that if there were no compulsion regarding the voting for the Legislative Assembly, equally as

low percentage polls would be recorded for that place as have been recorded for this House. As the Chief Electoral Officer said the other day, the Council vote is a responsible vote. We can be proud of the fact that we are sent here by people who want to vote and are not forced to go to the polling booths to exercise the franchise for fear of being fined.

Generally speaking, I have always voted for the second reading of Bills since I have been in this Chamber. On this occasion as I look upon the Bill as highly dangerous and not all it appears to be, I shall not support its second reading. I hope the Government will bring down another measure which will deal more satisfactorily with the so-called deadlocks between the two Houses. What are these so-called deadlocks? Conferences of managers are held to deal with difficulties that arise, and they can sit for a week if they like to settle points at issue. Little harm has been done in the past through this House not agreeing to the wishes of another place. We have sent legislation from this Chamber to the Lower House.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Yes, the egg Bill; that is what you mean.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I desired to get a majority of producers on the board. What happened? The Minister said "No"—and out the Bill went.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Why should he not?

Hon. G. B. WOOD: In this House we give earnest consideration to legislation placed before us. When we send legislation to another place that is not the position.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: We do not try to abolish the Legislative Assembly.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: No.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: This House brought another place into being.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: That is so. In the circumstances I have outlined, I intend to oppose the second reading.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East): I have been a member of Parliament in this or another place since 1914. I am fully aware that at times there has been a certain amount of disagreement between the two branches of the Legislature regarding legislation. As Mr. Wood has pointed out,

Bills have been sent from this House to another place but have been thrown out just as legislation from another place has been rejected by this Chamber. It is safe to say that if the opponents of a particular measure in another place combined with those opposed to that class of legislation in this House, we would find, if a joint sitting of the two Houses were held, that the attitude adopted by this House regarding such legislation would be endorsed by a majority of members of both Houses. I have been endeavouring to ascertain what the deadlocks that have been referred to really mean. I have not noticed any indication that such deadlocks cannot be overcome. My mind goes back to the time when the late Alex McCallum introduced the Industrial Arbitration Bill on which a conference of managers sat for 19 hours. When the conference was ended, I remember Mr. McCallum saying that the Government had been successful in obtaining the best piece of industrial legislation then existing in Australia.

Hon. G. Fraser: That was in 1919.

Hon. A. THOMSON: But it goes to show that there is room for compromise between the extremists on one side and the extremists on the other. Unfortunately we now have a section that while claiming to be democratic, holds that there is only one way—its way. Anyone opposing the views or legislative desires of that section is told that he is opposed to democratic ideas. Let us examine the democracy as indicated in the actions of the present Government. Ministers claim to be representative of the whole of the people. There is not one Labour member of the Legislative Assembly or the Legislative Council that can surely claim to be the elect of the people. The fact is that they were selected by their unions. I do not say anything against those industrial bodies, but the fact remains that the machine Labour has built up selects the men who can stand for Parliament. Today, as always, Labour members are the servants of the unions, and unless they carry out the injunctions of the machine they are cast into outer darkness.

Hon. G. Fraser: I suggest the hon. member talks about something he is acquainted with.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am. During the course of the 1914-18 war men belonging to

Labour unions stood firm to what they thought was right and proper, but one by one they were penalised in public life. Mr. Fraser cannot deny that statement. The vital principle of his party is to do as the machine directs.

The PRESIDENT: I must ask the hon. member to connect his remarks with the Bill before the House.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am endeavouring to do so. At the moment I am pointing out that the party which claims to represent democracy is asking that in time of war, when thousands of men and women are away from their homes and their usual callings, the Constitution of Western Australia should be altered. I consider that very wrong indeed, and I feel sure that at the polls the people will take the same view. A remarkable feature is that only just before the recent Referendum, and during the struggle that proposal occasioned, various candidates and their supporters agreed that greater powers should be given to the Commonwealth. At every meeting that was held—I know of one case of the kind in my own district—that view was urged. The man I refer to had tried twice to become a member of this Chamber. At one of my meetings he stood up and said that the Legislative Council was a menace to democracy and to the well-being of the people. However, I was re-elected to this Chamber; apparently the other people of the South-East Province were still believers in the principle of retaining the Legislative Council. We hear a great deal about the adult franchise. Men and women who are married and have the responsibilities of a family are certainly entitled to a vote for the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council.

Hon. C. B. Williams: They have not got a vote for this Chamber.

Hon. A. THOMSON: If they have not, it is the fault of the Government in power today, which has not attempted to remedy the position during the nine years it has occupied the Treasury Bench. It has never attempted to amend the franchise so as to give every adult a vote. When we take into consideration the rental of a home entitling any man or woman who pays the 6s. 10d. per week to a vote for the Legislative Council, we realise that the franchise for this House is not narrow. I doubt whether any dwelling in Perth, or else-

where, is obtainable at a rental of 6s. 10d. per week. However, the Government ought to have broadened the franchise still further for people of responsibility such as I have described.

Hon. C. B. Williams: The Government has been in office, but not in power.

Hon. A. THOMSON: Much legislation introduced by the Labour Government has been passed by this Chamber. Thus all the sins are not on the part of the Legislative Council. I was opposed by a Labour candidate, and I purpose mentioning portions of the manifesto which he broadcast throughout the South-East Province. He said he was standing as a Labour candidate because the Labour Party, and that party alone, stood up in the interests of the common man, be he a worker, a farmer, or a professional man, who contributed his effort to the common good. He also said that Labour did not stand for St. George's-terrace magnates who were the masters and paymasters of Labour's opponents. Such statements are somewhat libellous.

Hon. C. B. Williams: You live in a flat in St. George's-terrace!

Hon. A. THOMSON: Yes, and I manage to pay my way. I have never sought the favour of any master or paymaster who would dictate to me how I should vote on any measure. I have always voted as my conscience dictated. Ever since I was elected to Parliament I have endeavoured to observe that principle, as I believe members on either side do. However, the position was that residents of the South-East Province were not all St. George's-terrace farmers or magnates.

The PRESIDENT: I must remind the hon. member that we are discussing the powers of the Legislative Council.

Hon. A. THOMSON: I am endeavouring to connect my remarks with the Bill. Other members were permitted to deal extensively with the franchise and so forth, and I am seeking to prove that members of this Chamber are honourable men who seek to represent all sections of their electorates. I cannot congratulate the draftsman of Clause 3 on his definition of "Money Bill," especially when I compare the definition in that clause with the clear wording of the Constitution in that respect. What can be plainer or simpler than this?—

The Legislative Council may not amend loan Bills or Bills imposing taxation or Bills

appropriating revenue or moneys for the ordinary annual services of the Government.

That provision has never been the cause of disputes or conferences between this Chamber and the other. However, I remember being twitted over an appropriation Bill which was returned to the House of Representatives by the Senate with a request that it be reduced by a substantial sum. This occurred during the depression, and in another place I endeavoured to move that the Government be requested to recall their Estimates with a view to seeing whether they could possibly be reduced. In those days deficits were becoming fashionable, and we spoke with bated breath of a deficit of thousands. Today we talk in hundreds of thousands of pounds. Mr. Craig said he saw a certain amount of merit in the Bill. I personally can see no advantage to be gained from its passage. One of the main reasons why I shall oppose the second reading of the measure is that in my opinion it is not fair, just or reasonable for any Government to attempt to amend the Constitution while the country is at war, while so many hundreds of thousands of people are torn from their ordinary vocations and deprived of the opportunity to cast a vote. I defy any member to prove that there has been in this State a deadlock which has rendered it impossible for a Government to carry on.

I do not remember any occasion on which the business was taken out of the hands of the Government. It is true that we amended numerous Bills which came before us from another place, but I consider that members were entitled to exercise their judgment in those cases. Members were sent here to act in a House of Review, and I believe that on the whole they have tried to be fair to all sections. I feel quite sure that the majority of our members would agree to amend the Constitution in a way which would result in joint sittings of the two Houses instead of conferences between managers. With the exception of the present Commonwealth Government, I believe that Western Australia's Government is the only one in the world which has made such a proposal as the Bill contains. I am of opinion that the majority of Western Australians desire things to remain as they are, because all the State Governments have sufficient power. This Parliament can continue to function adequately and give satisfaction to the great

majority of the people. I shall vote against the second reading.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East): I am sure that it was never in the minds of those who drew up the Constitution and provided that the State should be governed by two Houses, that a section of the people would arise and try to do away with the Upper House as it was then called, or the Legislative Council, the House of Review or the second Chamber. When we think of the troubles that have arisen in countries governed by a single Chamber in the days gone by we realise that for the English-speaking race government by two Chambers stands supreme.

Hon. G. Fraser: I do not hear of any great trouble in Queensland.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Queensland became a single-Chamber Government because of a fraud perpetrated there.

Hon. H. S. W. Parker: What about the referendum?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: A referendum was held and the people voted against the Government on that question. But the Government succeeded in getting a tool of its own to be Governor of the country and, as a result, got rid of the Legislative Council. I believe that many people in Queensland would today like to see that Chamber restored.

Hon. G. Fraser: It has made Queensland one of the best States in the Commonwealth.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Would you like to follow suit in Western Australia?

Hon. G. Fraser: I would not mind.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: This measure reminds me of the showmen on the Royal Agricultural Society's showgrounds in the days gone by. They would put up an Aunt Sally to be knocked down, and that is precisely what this measure is. It is to be of use to the present Government when the next elections are being contested. The Government will use this Bill as an example of how the Legislative Council throws out various proposals brought forward for the good government of the country. We have had to take enough blame for the condition into which this country has drifted. I often think of what a terrible plight we are getting into and how little we have to show for the enormous sums that have been borrowed and spent

within the last 15 or 20 years. Governments of this country in the early days were particularly careful before they borrowed money, but no serious thought has been given to the enormous sums that have been spent in recent years. Outstanding examples of the old days can be seen in the success of the ventures that were necessary for the building up of this country.

It is remarkable how few outstanding features can be seen in connection with the money spent today in no matter what direction we travel. Several members have mentioned our railways, but every department can be cited. They are all in a chaotic condition. Our Constitution cannot be improved by a measure such as this because there is little doubt about the intention of those who include in their platform the doing away with the Legislative Council. That was a feature of my last election. The Labour Party passed a resolution at Northam, my home centre, to the effect that it would defeat me and therefore it became quite an interesting joke; quite an interesting election. It was due to the fact that I embraced the maintenance of the Legislative Council in my policy that I romped home with the best majority that I have secured in any election I have so far contested. It is necessary that I at any rate should stand to my guns and leave no doubt as to how I shall vote. There was no doubt as to my intentions at the last election, and I have not altered my opinion. Some people would say that I am one of the old die-hards.

Hon. G. Fraser: There is no doubt about that!

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I am proud of it. I hope there will be many with me when we divide on this question. It is particularly interesting to me to think about those ancient days of past history. We cannot take any risks with this measure because it is a mass of pitfalls. I shall vote against the second reading.

HON. G. W. MILES (North): I am going to vote against this Bill. I agree with previous speakers that the Government gave an undertaking that no contentious legislation would be introduced during the war.

Hon. G. Fraser: The Government also said at the last elections that it intended to make reforms in the Upper House, and was elected on that undertaking.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Yes. The Title is wrong in my opinion. It should be—A Bill to Abolish the Legislative Council.

Hon. E. M. Heenan: I think you said that about the franchise Bill.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I do not know that I did, but I say it on this Bill. It is too dangerous for us to pass the second reading.

The Chief Secretary: In what way is it dangerous?

Hon. G. W. MILES: It is proof of what the Government has in view.

Hon. G. Fraser: In your opinion.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Not in my opinion, but by the wording of the Bill which states that its object is that if on three occasions the Council does not agree to a measure the Governor may proclaim it law. If a Bill is brought down for the abolition of this Council, then the Council goes out.

Hon. G. Fraser: Is that your only objection to the Bill?

Hon. G. W. MILES: That is my principal objection.

Hon. G. Fraser: You could move an amendment to provide for that.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I am not going to vote for the principle contained in the Bill as now worded.

HON. A. L. LOTON (South-East): I have recently been in closer touch with electors than have other members and I must say that on only two occasions did I meet with people who wished to have the Upper House abolished. I had many Labour supporters, as most members will agree, when it came to the preference votes, and quite a percentage of those people did not wish to have the Upper House abolished. I am going to vote in favour of the second reading.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

BILL—LOAN, £975,000.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—PERTH DIOCESAN TRUSTEES (SPECIAL FUND).

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Council's amendments.

BILL—METROPOLITAN MILK ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER [8.15] in moving the second reading said: This Bill seeks to amend the Metropolitan Milk Act, which was passed in 1932 to provide for the regulation and organisation of the production, purchase, treatment, sale and distribution of milk for use by consumers within the metropolitan area. Members are no doubt aware that the Act makes provision for the constitution of a board called the Metropolitan Milk Board comprising representatives of the milk industry, and will agree, I think, that the board has given good service in an endeavour to ensure a wholesome supply of milk to the metropolitan area. The Act has been amended from time to time in order to tighten up its provisions, and this Bill is, in respect of one of its proposals, another attempt in that direction.

There are three proposals in the Bill, the first of which seeks to give to the board power to direct any dairyman, milk vendor or other person to supply milk in reasonable quantities to any other person or class of person. In this regard there have been occasions when insufficient milk has been available to meet all requirements in the metropolitan area, and it has been necessary to request milk vendors to reduce their supplies to shops, milk bars and other similar institutions to ensure a reasonable distribution of milk to those most in need of it. In a great number of instances the board has experienced little difficulty in obtaining compliance with its wishes, but certain milk vendors have not been amenable to requests.

In recent years certain milk vendors have developed a trade with centres outside the metropolitan area, and during the flush period milk for those centres has been bought below the ruling price. In the summer-time milk made available and purchased for metropolitan trade has been sold outside the metropolitan area to the detriment of the metropolitan supply. The board has no control whatsoever over this milk. The board is charged with the regulation and organisation of the supply, sale and distribution of milk to consumers, but it is utterly impossible for it to carry out its true function unless power is given to

control the activity I have mentioned, so that supplies can be distributed to the best advantage and in the best interests of the community.

Hon. W. J. Mann: Does this Bill seek to give the board control only of the milk produced in the metropolitan area?

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: No, all milk coming into the metropolitan area. While a majority of the milk vendors have been reasonable, others have defied the requests of the board to the detriment of children and other people who should have priority in times of difficulty. The Bill therefore provides for necessary power to be given to the board so that it will be enabled to direct where milk shall be consigned or delivered, such a decision not to rest with the owners of depots or with dairymen themselves. For example, the provision, if passed, will enable the board to say whether school children or hospitals or similar institutions shall be supplied with milk, although better contracts may be held by suppliers.

The next proposal in the Bill sets out that the board shall make a yearly report of its proceedings in order that such may be published and tabled in Parliament. This is considered to be a move in the right direction, and will provide members with a better opportunity to obtain a knowledge of the board's activities than is at present available. The only other provision in the Bill seeks to continue the provisions of the Act for a further period of five years.

Hon. J. Cornell: Why not make it permanent?

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: I do not intend to start an argument on that point.

Hon. J. Cornell: But a temporary measure for five years! The Title is not in accord with the subject-matter of the Bill.

The **HONORARY MINISTER**: The Act expires on the 31st December, 1944, and it is proposed to continue its operation until the 31st December, 1949. It will be agreed that the Metropolitan Milk Board has provided a good service to the public, and that it is most necessary that it shall be enabled to continue its operations. I am hoping that after the war the whole milk industry will increase considerably. In fact, I have long looked forward to the day when the consumption of milk will be three times the present quantity. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. F. E. GIBSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) : I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill. As members are no doubt aware, I was a member of the Milk Board from the time of its inception in 1933 until 1942, when I resigned, having become a member of this House. My continuous and long membership of the Milk Board enabled me to understand the complexities and difficulties which confront the board in administering the Act, the very considerable improvements which the board has brought about, and also the benefits which it has bestowed on all sections of the industry and on the consumers.

The board was established in 1933 and, at that time, conditions in the milk industry could best be described as chaotic. From the dairyman's point of view, conditions were not only chaotic; they were deplorable. He had an inadequate price, no security, no stability for his market, and no hopeful outlook for the future. Where there was instability, the board has brought about stability, and has replaced insecurity with security. It gave to dairymen supplying milk to the metropolitan area privileges enjoyed by few primary producers; that is to say, security of market and a guaranteed price. These innovations were a tremendous advantage to dairymen. Similarly, milk vendors, under the board's system of licensing, have been granted security of tenure. The established milk vendor is not subject to the vicious competition of what were commonly described, prior to the board, as "cut-throats" and "blow-ins"; that is, persons who entered the industry possessing possibly only a handcart, and commence vending milk under any conditions and at any price. Whilst this type of individual might have been regarded as some temporary advantage to the consumer, his life in the industry was short. He disturbed existing trade, as no established man conducting his business on proper lines and observing the usual conditions could compete with this type of intruder into the industry.

I had the opportunity of inspecting a great number of dairy farms and milk vendors' premises in the early days of the board, and I was shocked at the conditions existing in a number of instances. The fault did not lie entirely with the individual. The fault can be attributed to the depressed economic conditions under which those engaged in the industry, prior to the board, were

forced to work. When, considering a measure of this nature we are naturally desirous of ensuring that the public are given milk of best quality at a fair price, and also ensuring that reasonable and adequate prices are provided to the producer, the distributor, and all those concerned with the handling of milk.

I am aware that improvements in our milk supply are needed, but we must not overlook the fact that this country has been at war for over five years and that the milk industry suffered very seriously from a manpower standpoint. In fact, dairy farmers were almost denuded of labour early in the war, and milk vendors and others have suffered very considerable difficulties in obtaining adequate and suitable labour, despite the efforts of the Manpower Department to assist. This is a problem applying not only to the milk industry. It applies to all industries, but I take the opportunity of mentioning it so that we will not overlook this disability which has no doubt retarded progress in many directions.

I am pleased to be able to state that the metropolitan milk supply has not regressed during the war; in fact it has progressed, and the improvements in conditions are apparent to all who have the opportunity of seeing them. Our food supply has been greatly disturbed during the war, largely through the effect of two causes—

(1) Loss of suitable labour, and

(2) Heavy demands caused by the requirements of our own Forces and those of our Allies.

We are aware that the forces of one of our Allies are heavy milk drinkers, and it is pleasing to be able to state that practically at all times the board's organisation has been able to cope with the requirements of the market, which must have varied considerably in its requirements. In the Eastern States very severe rationing of milk has been found necessary, but in this State it has been possible, in practically all instances, to supply the needs of householders in full, and to meet the requirements of shops, milk bars and tea rooms to within at least 50 per cent., even at the end of last summer which was the most prolonged and difficult season that we have ever experienced, and this in addition to meeting the requirements not only of our own people, but also of the Services.

The milk supply is subject to constant

supervision by officers of the board, as not only does the board organise the marketing of milk, but it also adopts educative and remedial measures in those cases where milk is found to be not up to the required quality. Very considerable endeavours have been made by the board to reduce the bacterial content of milk and thereby improve its keeping quality. Evidence of the results achieved are not lacking in this respect, as, some years ago, to bring about a more orderly distribution of milk and to economise in manpower and transport, the afternoon delivery of milk was prohibited by the board. Yet, despite the fact that since the introduction of these regulations we have passed through very severe summers, we find that the householder has suffered no disability in this regard, and milk keeps throughout the day.

It will be found throughout the industry that very considerable improvements have taken place in dairy buildings and the methods by which milk is produced and handled, which is all to the advantage of the consumer. Similarly, there has been a considerable improvement in some of the buildings and in the methods by which the milk is treated in the metropolitan area. Improvements in these directions must, of course, have been very greatly retarded owing to manpower limitations, and building restrictions.

I regret that the Minister has not brought down a Bill to provide for a permanent Act. I feel sure such a move would have given great satisfaction to persons engaged in the industry. The Milk Boards in New South Wales and in Victoria have permanency. A permanent Act would enable the controlling body to shape long-range policies and to lay down a programme to which it could work. Progressive steps have been taken by the board in the belief that its work would be continuous, but nevertheless it has not been possible to lay down a comprehensive programme over a period of years. Reforms cannot be introduced overnight, or within a period of five years. The Act was last extended by Parliament for a period of five years in 1939, and, as we are all well aware, during the whole of that period the country has been at war.

During the last six years the question of bovine tuberculosis has been causing much concern in the metropolitan area. In the

period just prior to my leaving the board, 78 herds had been examined in No. 1 zone and none of those herds was found to have cattle suffering from bovine tuberculosis. Quite recently, to meet the request of one large consumer of milk, some 800 cattle in the Harvey district were examined, and out of that number less than 5 per cent. were found to be infected. I think that result was very satisfactory. I hope that the House will agree to the measure, and I am quite sure that before the 5-year period expires the Minister in control will see fit to bring in a Bill providing for the permanency of this legislation. Then the milk industry will have an opportunity to establish itself and become a credit to those engaged in it. I support the second reading.

HON. J. CORNELL (South): I support the second reading. Personally, I think the Title of the Bill does not conform to its subject-matter. I submit that the Title should be "A Bill for an Act to amend and continue." Is the Title correct, Mr. President?

The **PRESIDENT**: The Title can be amended to include the subject-matter of the Bill.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I think it should be amended.

The **PRESIDENT**: Are you raising a point of order?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am asking your opinion, Sir.

The **PRESIDENT**: The Title can be amended to include what the hon. member desires. The amendment will certainly make the Title more comprehensive and more in accordance with the meaning of the Bill.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West): This Bill contains only three clauses. The first requires the board to submit an annual report to both Houses of Parliament. That is only reasonable. The second is to extend the life of the Milk Board for five years, while the third gives the board power to direct where milk shall be delivered. With the first and second clauses I entirely agree. I do not intend to speak on the first clause. Any body like the Milk Board should submit an annual report. With regard to the second clause, Mr. Gibson will know how long the Milk Board has been

operating. I think it has been operating for five or six years.

Hon. F. E. Gibson: Twelve years.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Time passes! We surely should now extend the term. The board has done a remarkable job. It started under the most difficult conditions. The milk supplied to the metropolitan area at the time was—to call it “dirty” would be praising it. Dairies were in a primitive condition, as some still are. Milk was brought to the metropolitan area from long distance by producer-retailers, and arrived at its destination in very poor condition. Many of these phases have been improved, but there is still tremendous room for improvement. Milk is a commodity which, if taken fresh, probably has the highest food value of any product; but if it is allowed to deteriorate, it becomes very harmful because bacteria spreads in milk faster than in any other food consumed by human beings.

Since I have been partly living in Perth, I have been somewhat shocked at the quality of the milk that is supplied to the metropolitan area. Milk is delivered to me in Perth in sealed bottles. When the milk is poured out of the bottle it is sometimes filthy; it cannot be described in any other way. The milk, after it has settled, leaves a sediment, while the bottles are so dirty owing to the solids in the milk adhering to the bottom that it becomes very hard to remove it. I look forward to the time when metropolitan dairy herds will be eliminated altogether. It is not right that milk should be produced on sand patches, with the dust rising all the time. The cattle are put on to sandhills and brought back along dusty roads.

Hon. G. Fraser: Say they are grazed on sandhills.

Hon. L. CRAIG: They are then brought back to a black sandpatch, with a cloud of dust rising all the time.

Hon. J. Cornell: That gives the milk some body.

Hon. L. CRAIG: The dust pours into the milking shed. Yet the food that is fed to the cows is purchased from the country. Would it therefore not be much more economical to graze the cows on decent pastures and so obtain a better quality milk? There is no food equal to good pastures for dairy cattle. I think it only right that the board should have the power of

direction. I look forward to the time when the board will have absolute control of all milk coming into the metropolitan area. Dairy premises should not be licensed until they have passed a certain standard, and no producer should be allowed to supply milk to the metropolitan area until his dairy is of that standard.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Is not that the case now?

Hon. L. CRAIG: It is in England.

Hon. G. B. Wood: And here?

Hon. L. CRAIG: No. Provision should be made for producers who have suitable dairy herds, but whose milking sheds are not up to the standard, to obtain sufficient finance from the huge accumulations in the hands of the Milk Board to put their dairies in proper order. To equip a modern dairy costs a lot of money.

Hon. J. Cornell: It is surprising how our forebears ever existed.

Hon. L. CRAIG: One can stand up against many diseases, but a great number of babies in the past died through contaminated food, and a great many deaths of children occur now in infancy through contaminated food. Some years ago I was in England and at the time certain dairies were classed as Grade A dairies. These dairies received a higher price for their milk because they produced grade A milk. Before they could be classed as Grade A, they had to conform to certain standards, which were very high. The milkers had to be clothed in white and wear white caps and white gowns up to their necks. Every cow had to be washed down and thoroughly cleaned before being milked.

Hon. V. Hamersley: And there were inspectors going around.

Hon. L. CRAIG: They visited the dairies frequently. A man with a Grade A license was very jealous of his commodity because he received about 6d. per gallon more for his milk than did the ordinary supplier. He had something to strive for. I am not sure that, perhaps at a later stage, the Milk Board should not adopt such a standard. It should say to a supplier, “If you conform to these conditions we will permit you to raise the price of your milk.” That milk would be of such a quality as to permit of its being sent direct to hospitals. As I said, milk is a dangerous food. Dr. Hislop can tell the House a great deal more about it than I can.

A 5-gallon can of milk can be contaminated by a wooden spoon with a little crack in it.

Hon. C. B. Williams: Is whisky contaminated?

Hon. L. CRAIG: It contaminates some people, I know, but we are talking about milk now. I quite agree that whisky goes well with milk, but which contaminates the other, I do not know. Once the Milk Board has obtained the confidence of the people, it should be given almost unlimited powers. The start must be made with the cow in the field and control must be continued right up to the time when the milk is delivered for consumption. Then, and then only, will we have a clean milk supply. Western Australia is perhaps one of the most difficult countries in the world in which to produce fresh milk in the summer because dust is in the atmosphere all the time, and we have no rain. I know something about the subject, from the milking of the cow onwards. In the summer it is difficult to maintain milk in a clean condition. It should go straight from the cow to a cooling chamber. If members had seen some of the milk which I have inspected, their hair would stand on end.

Hon. C. B. Williams: I have not drunk milk for years.

Hon. L. CRAIG: I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill, and I hope the measure will have the support of the House.

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

BILL—SHEARERS' ACCOMMODATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Assembly's Message.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had agreed to amendments Nos. 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 made by the Council and had disagreed to Nos. 3, 4, and 6, now considered.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Cornell in the Chair; the Honorary Minister in charge of the Bill.

No. 3. Clause 4, proposed new Section 6, (2), paragraph (ii), page 2:—Insert after the word "passing" in line 29 the words "or erected thereafter."

The CHAIRMAN: The Assembly's reason for disagreeing to the three amendments is—

The proposals in amendments Nos. 3, 4 and 6 are in accordance with changes recently made in South Australia and are in keeping with modern tendencies in the field of industrial amenities.

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

It was probably due to some fault of my own, or to some misunderstanding of the proposal, that provision was made to reduce the accommodation to two from four. This amendment and the succeeding one can be taken together. I consulted with Mr. Clare about the matter and he was good enough to supply me with particulars and a plan. These can be inspected by members. The difference in the cost of the accommodation would be £1 7s. if there were one partition, and £1 10s. if there were two partitions. If we take the worst example, Model B, the difference in cost would only be £1 per man and that is not worth bothering about. I would like members to realise that we made 11 amendments to the Bill, to eight of which another place has agreed and I urge that these remaining amendments be not insisted on.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: The main difficulty is not the cost, but the change-over from three in a room to two in a room. There will be some dissatisfaction on the part of shearers who go from one place where, in the newly erected buildings, there are two in a room to a place where there are three in a room. The reasons given by the Legislative Assembly for disagreeing to the Council's amendments are weak. Have we got to follow the lead of South Australia or of any other State? The fact that the Assembly agreed to so many of our amendments does not indicate that the Assembly was particularly generous, but merely that the amendments improved the Bill; that is why they were accepted.

While no extra accommodation may be required at present on various holdings, the time will come when alterations will be needed on account of an increase in flocks; and, if there is any differentiation in the accommodation, there will be dissatisfaction. The industry is at its lowest ebb and this is not the time to suggest these changes and to bring in such pin-pricking amendments. This measure does not apply merely to shearers but to every man on the place.

The Honorary Minister: No, it does not.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: I have told the Minister before that he does not know any-

thing about the Bill. The definition in the Act states—

“Shearer” means any person employed in or about a shearing shed in the shearing of sheep or in work connected therewith, but does not include a person who is employed on the holding on which the shearing shed is situated when the shearing is not in progress, nor does it include any member of the employer's family, wool classer, or expert quartered and dining apart from shearers, or any aboriginal native.

Hon. F. R. WELSH: I hope the amendment will be insisted on. Under the 1912 Act, provision was made for four men in a room. In my opinion that worked very well. I know from personal experience that shearers have been glad to have four in a room because they have been able to play bridge or some other card game. The Bill has reduced the number to three, which is quite all right provided the space is sufficient and other conditions are satisfactory. In the majority of the pastoral areas there is accommodation for three in a room. As Mr. Baxter has said, there might be some dissatisfaction on the part of shearers coming from a place with two in a room to a place where the provision is for three in a room.

As a matter of fact, knowing the conditions pertaining to the pastoral industry up North, shearers on the whole realise that certain disabilities cannot be avoided. Little misunderstandings do crop up, but my experience of shearers has been that there has always been a spirit of give and take. So far as South Australia is concerned, I do not think that the cases are parallel. Previously I said that I did not think there could have been trouble in the northern areas as had been stated but since then, from what I have heard, I think that perhaps there may have been. However, there are remedies. If a man agrees to work under certain conditions, he should conform to those conditions; and if he fails to do so he should be proceeded against. Both sides to a contract should be forced to adhere to it.

Hon. G. B. WOOD: I hope the amendment will be insisted on. I do not know where this agitation has come from. I doubt whether the shearers have made any agitation for two men in a room. I can back up what Mr. Welsh said about four or five shearers liking to get together in the one room. I do not suggest that should be

compulsory, but I do think that three in a room is reasonable.

Hon. A. THOMSON: The Honorary Minister's statement regarding the cubic capacity of the rooms and the cost involved in the alterations required is quite correct. I do not think the cost of putting the petition in to convert rooms to meet the requirements of this legislation would be more than 30s.

Hon. L. CRAIG: It would appear that the Assembly has raised a storm in a teacup. The fact that this will apply where not less than eight shearers and shed hands are employed eliminates practically all farmers. The permanent employees would not be included and this will apply only to those who are engaged in connection with the shearing.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Read the Act!

Hon. L. CRAIG: I do not know of any farmer who would have eight new hands on his property for the shearing.

Hon. V. Hamersley: I would have them on my farm.

Hon. L. CRAIG: Generally speaking, we can exclude nearly all farmers and that will leave only the pastoralists. At the present time every pastoral property has quarters for the hands. All it will mean is that they will have to provide accommodation for a reduced number in each room. I do not suppose there will be one new shed built within the next six years as a result of this provision. I think this is a bit of propaganda on the part of another place because it has agreed to most of our amendments and someone must have said that it could not afford to accept them all.

Hon. J. A. Dimmitt: Do you suggest that another place is providing a deadlock?

The HONORARY MINISTER: The question of accommodation keenly affects the shearers and it must be remembered that this legislation will not be operative until 12 months after the war. Some of the shearers come from South Australia.

Hon. L. Craig: They are the ones responsible for this.

The HONORARY MINISTER: It has been said that some of them will not come here because of the accommodation that is at present available.

Hon. F. R. Welsh: They come here on their own account.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Seeing that the farmers will not be affected and

that on properties where eight or more hands are employed already far better accommodation exists than is provided for in the Bill, I appeal to members not to insist on the amendment.

Question put and a division called for.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I appoint the tellers I inform the Committee that I shall vote with the noes.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	13
Noes	14

Majority against .. 1

AYES.

Hon. C. R. Cornish	Hon. J. G. Hislop
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. W. H. Kitson
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. F. E. Gibson	Hon. A. Thomson
Hon. E. H. Gray	Hon. C. B. Williams
Hon. E. H. H. Hall	Hon. W. R. Hall
Hon. E. M. Heenan	(Teller.)

NOES.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. W. J. Mann
Hon. L. B. Bolton	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. H. S. W. Parker
Hon. L. Craig	Hon. H. Tuckey
Hon. J. A. Dymmitt	Hon. F. R. Welsh
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. G. B. Wood
Hon. A. L. Loton	Hon. H. L. Roche
	(Teller.)

Question thus negatived; the Council's amendment insisted on.

No. 4. Clause 4, proposed new Section 6, (2), paragraph (ii), page 2:—Delete all words from and including the word "and" in line 31 down to and including the word "compartment" in line 35.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This is consequential, but I move—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

Question put and negatived; the Council's amendment insisted on.

No. 6. Clause 6:—Delete.

The HONORARY MINISTER: This is important. No reason exists why the word "tent" should appear in this legislation. The reason for erasing the word is that tents are sometimes used instead of sheds. I move—

That the amendment be not insisted on.

Hon. C. F. BAXTER: What should have been done was to amend Section 7 of the Act, which refers to tent accommodation. That section requires the tent to be in a condition satisfactory to an inspector. All that has been struck out is the stipulation that the tent shall be handed over to the shearer in good order and condition. I

raised the matter very plainly, but no notice was taken of it.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We did not agree to the deletion of the word "tent." It could be retained in Clause 8. I adhere to that view. What is wrong with a tent? What about our surveyors and linesmen and others who travel the country?

The CHAIRMAN: It was clearly pointed out previously that the word "tent" had been struck out in the wrong section.

The HONORARY MINISTER: The principal Act provides for emergency use of tents when other accommodation is not available. The men are keen about this, and I ask the Committee not to insist on the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest to the Honorary Minister that he let the matter go now and permit a modification to be made.

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

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

House adjourned at 9.25 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 29th November, 1944.

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