

Hon. G. Taylor: Have you authority to make that statement?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am pleased to know that the outlook for mining is brighter than it was, but I am sorry to hear the report of the phthisical cases. On the other hand, I am glad to know that we are doing the best we can to assist those men financially to live, and I can only express the hope that we shall endeavour to give some attention to the work of prevention, while seeking to make the days of those afflicted with the disease brighter and happier by every means in our power. If we had a report each year of the deaths due to disease contracted in this industry, we might have to consider whether it is not worth while to cut out the enormous loss of life now taking place.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.24 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Thursday, 24th October, 1929.

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

BILL—RESERVES.

To Inquire by Select Committee.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [4.34]: I move—

That a select committee, consisting of the Hons. H. A. Stephenson, H. Seddon, C. F. Butler, E. H. Gray, and the mover be appointed to take evidence and report upon the proposals in Clause 7 of the Reserves Bill, the committee to have power to send for persons, papers and records, and report on Thursday, the 31st October.

Members will observe that Clause 7 of the Reserves Bill now before us is a most extraordinary one. It involves quite a new principle which, if not adequately safeguarded, may in the future lead to mischievous consequences. The Bill provides for the transfer to a local authority of some 14½ acres of "A" class reserves in fee simple, with power of sale subject to payment of the proceeds of a debt due to the Government. I cannot vouch for the facts or reasons which have induced the Government to permit the passage of so extraordinary a Bill. I find on inquiry that the member of another place representing the constituency in which the local authority is comprised had no knowledge of the provisions of the Bill before it was introduced. I understand also that the members representing in this House the province covering the locus of the particular local authority have been ignorant of what is proposed. In these circumstances it is a proper function of this House to satisfy itself that there are special circumstances which demand the passage of such extraordinary legislation. I therefore propose that a select committee be appointed to investigate the subject and report to the House. Under the Standing Orders I have to nominate the committee. I have endeavoured to include in its personnel members representing every section of the House. If, however, members are not satisfied with the names I suggest, it is quite open to them to call for a ballot. For myself I go to the committee with quite an open mind and shall be guided in my judgment by the facts that are ascertained.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M.

Drew—Central) [4.37]: I have no objection to the appointment of a select committee.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [4.38]: I should be lacking in my duty if I did not rise to challenge the remarks made by Mr. Lovekin because, rightly or wrongly, he has placed before the House a viewpoint which on investigation is proved to be absolutely wrong. The reserve in question together with the scheme involved has occupied the attention of different Governments during the last nine years. If the members for the district are not acquainted with the proposal, I cannot understand it, because

I know that the Claremont Road Board were actively trying to get into communication with them as late as Saturday last in order that members in this House should be well informed of the proposals in the Bill. I was a member of the Claremont Road Board some years ago and have an intimate knowledge of every detail of the scheme. I am surprised that Mr. Lovekin should make the statement that the member for the district in another place knew nothing of the details of the Bill. Members representing that locality in both Houses have introduced more than one deputation to the Government on this particular question. I think investigation will show that the appointment of a select committee will be useless, and I consider it lowering the prestige of this House to appoint a select committee on such a small matter. This will be the first time to my knowledge that the Chamber has appointed a select committee to inquire into any reserve. No member of this House proposed a select committee when Mr. Lovekin introduced a Bill regarding King's Park. I think the select committee will find that everything connected with the Bill and the transfer of the land is absolutely on the level and that when the scheme is completed, it will prove of great benefit to the people of the district. I do not propose to explain the details of the scheme, but I ask Mr. Lovekin seriously to consider whether it is worth while for us to appoint a select committee to inquire into so small a matter. I consider it is a reflection on the present Government, the departmental officers, the previous Government and members for the district. It is certainly unfortunate that the scheme should have taken so long to mature. However, an inquiry will have one good effect, namely, that there will be a few ratepayers of west ward disgruntled at the House having passed the motion. The unfortunate part is that the select committee cannot compel witnesses to give evidence on oath.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I have seen no ratepayers; I took the Bill on its merits.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: I know something of what has been going on.

HON. H. A. STEPHENSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.40]: Regarding the remarks of Mr. Gray, I wish to make it clear that I know nothing whatever of any scheme. There are many schemes connected with land

in various parts of Western Australia, and for all we know this might be a scheme that suits some people and not other people. Mr. Lovekin's object is to ascertain the exact position and obtain all the details relating to the scheme so that we shall be able to determine the right course to adopt. Mr. Gray spoke of efforts having been made to get into communication with me on Saturday last. I was at home most of the morning, and if anyone had wanted to get into touch with me urgently, he could have managed it during that time. On making inquiries, I find that Dr. Saw was not communicated with. When I first heard references to an unsuccessful attempt to communicate with me on Saturday, I asked, "What about Mr. North? What is his opinion?" I was told that he knew nothing about it and had not been advised.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Yes, he was advised.

Hon. H. A. STEPHENSON: I was informed that he had not been advised that this action was contemplated or that the Bill was to be brought forward. In the circumstances the motion is to be commended. It can do no harm, and it should result in the position being cleared up. I understand some parties favour the proposal and some are against it. That in itself suggests the need for an inquiry to investigate the matter thoroughly that we might arrive at a proper decision. I support the motion.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan, in reply) [4.43]: I regret Mr. Gray's suggestion that I did not present the case fairly to the House. At the same time I am not aware that he pointed to any particular misstatement I had made. At any rate I was very careful in what I said and endeavoured not to pre-judge the case, because I desired to approach the inquiry with an open mind. Mr. North, the member for the district in another place, told me only last night that he knew nothing of the Bill until it was sprung upon him in the House some six weeks or so ago, and I discovered from Mr. Stephenson that members in this House representing the province concerned knew nothing of the proposal. I know nothing of the merits of the scheme. I have not been approached by any ratepayers or disgruntled people or anyone else on the subject. On reading the Bill, I came to the conclusion that an inquiry was necessary. When a Bill contains such a clause as Clause 7, I con-

sider it the bounden duty of the House to investigate it. Subclause 2 reads—

That portion of the said reserve A7804, described in the Third Schedule, is hereby excised from such reserve, and may be granted to the Claremont Road Board for an estate in fee simple; and the board is hereby authorised to sell the said land and transfer the same to the purchaser.

The Third Schedule provides for the excision of 14½ acres of valuable land, I understand on the seafront. Many years ago, the same position having arisen at Cottesloe, land was sold for £500 and £600 per acre. The land here in question is better land than that which is now being sold by the municipality for £1,200 per acre, better and more accessible.

Hon. E. H. Gray: This land is in the wilderness.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The only obligation imposed is that out of the proceeds of the sale of the land a Government loan of £2,500 on another block of six acres should be repaid.

Hon. E. H. Gray: All the facts came out on second reading and in Committee.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Mr. Gray may say that, but I wish to learn the exact facts before agreeing to pass the Bill.

Hon. E. H. Gray: They were given during the debate.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I want some evidence besides the debate. In debate all sorts of stories are put up which one cannot challenge; therefore one should properly investigate the matter. The Bill as it stands is absolutely wrong in principle. It is utterly wrong to give to any person or body of persons "A" class reserve land in fee simple to sell and dispose of subject only to the repayment of a Government advance. If hon. members will think for one moment, they will see how open such a principle may be—I do not say it is so in this case—to the grossest corruption. What is to prevent the members of a body such as this from forming a cave and selling the land to a dummy for the amount of the Government advance, the dummy thereupon selling the land and pocketing the profits? I want to know what are the facts. Under the Bill the transaction is open to what I have described. Members would not be justified in holding their positions here if they allowed the Bill to go through in its present form without the fullest inquiry. Without committing myself to anything at all—I want to have an open

mind on the subject—I say, let us have the select committee and get the facts before we agree to make this Bill the law of the land.

Question put and passed.

BILL—TRANSFER OF LAND ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Assembly.

BILL—TREASURY BILLS.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [4.51] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is required to authorise the issue in London of Treasury Bills under the signatures of the Agent General and the accountant of the London Agency for the purpose of liquidating or reducing the State's bank overdraft should such occasion arise. Under existing legislation, Treasury bills can be issued in the State for the unraised balances of Loan Acts, amounting to £6,000,000. The present Bill extends that provision to London, and enables the bills to be signed there in lieu of Perth. Owing to the practical closing of the money market, no loans have been floated in London since May, 1928; and consequently money has since been obtained by means of bank overdrafts in order to meet our London requirements. Recently the Commonwealth issued Treasury bills in London for £5,000,000, from which this State received £684,967. This amount was applied towards clearing the overdraft. Failing the issue of a loan within the near future, the State may have to issue Treasury bills for the purpose of placing the bank account in order, as it may be desirable to issue State Treasury bills instead of Commonwealth bills, according to the requirements of the market. The procedure under this Bill is similar to that which was authorised in 1921, when Treasury bills for £2,000,000 were issued in London at a discount of 5½ per cent., with a currency of six months, when they were redeemed from loan proceeds. The present position of the London market demands that every precaution be taken to enable the State to finance under the most favourable conditions. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [4.54]: I offer no objection to the Bill, but rise merely to say that in view of the critical position of the money market throughout the world—the outlook, I am afraid, does not point to any great relief being afforded in the near future—it would be well if the Government were to take the initiative in Australia and declare that finance shall no longer be a battleground of party politics. If we do not come together on a question such as finance, we are all free, as we have been in the past, to get up and say anything we think, thereby oftentimes, through want of adequate knowledge making statements highly disadvantageous to the State. Finance, in my opinion, is one of those subjects on which we can all come into accord, and all try to do the best we can for our State. I throw out this suggestion to the Government because they are the people who can give a lead on the matter for the future. I feel sure that such a lead would prove highly beneficial; at any rate, it can do no harm. I make these remarks at a very critical juncture of our finance.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Issue of Treasury Bills:

Hon. G. W. MILES: In passing the clause do we give this power for all time to the London officials, or merely for the current year, or for a limited period?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The authority is subject to the Financial Agreement and to the Federal Loan Council. We can only borrow, on our own behalf with the consent of that council. In future, if we wish to borrow, we must get the unanimous consent of the Federal Loan Council, who will no doubt consider the financial interests of all the States. I do not see that there can be much objection to this clause.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Does the clause merely represent authority to borrow in London?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I notice that the Treasury Bills Act of 1893 contains a section limiting the amount to be raised by one issue to £500,000. Will this clause supersede that section?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Bill extends the provision. Under existing legislation Treasury bills can be issued in the State up to an amount of £600,000. This measure extends that provision to London, and enables the bills to be signed there in lieu of being signed in Perth.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Perhaps I had better read the provision from the Act of 1893—

The Colonial Treasurer for the time being of the said Colony may issue from time to time bills to be called Treasury bills for the purpose of raising any sum or sums of money not exceeding in the aggregate the sum of £500,000.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The Financial Agreement superseded that.

Hon. H. SEDDON: That is the point I wish to raise.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Federal legislation supersedes our legislation, and the Financial Agreement impliedly repeals that section of our Treasury Bills Act. If the Federal Loan Council gave permission, under the Financial Agreement, to float, say, £5,000,000 instead of £500,000, that provision would prevail as against the £500,000 mentioned in the parent Act which Mr. Seddon has quoted. All that this Bill is intended to do is to allow the Agent-General to sign in London instead of the Treasurer signing here, as may be convenient, for whatever amount the Federal Loan Council agree we are entitled to raise by way of Treasury bills to overcome a temporary difficulty.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This legislation authorises the raising of funds per medium of Treasury bills up to a maximum of £600,000. The Bill extends the permission to raise, enabling Treasury bills to be floated in London. Probably the legislation quoted by Mr. Seddon has been amended.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Probably Mr. Seddon has overlooked the amendment Act of 1916 which provides—

The first section of the principal Act is hereby repealed, and the following section is inserted in its place:—"The Colonial Treasurer may from time to time make out and issue Treasury bills for raising temporarily any sums of

money not exceeding in the aggregate the amount authorised to be raised by any Loan Acts in force for the time being, and not already raised at the time of the issue of the said Treasury bills, and on paying off and discharging any such Treasury bills may issue other Treasury bills in lieu thereof to the extent of any such moneys for the time being remaining unpaid."

That would seem to give the authority being asked for in the Bill now before us, but subject, of course, to the Financial Agreement. The clause in the Bill reads "subject to the provisions of the Financial Agreement." Mr. Seddon will realise that the position is safeguarded.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I am under the impression that there is a provision in the Agreement by which the State ceases to borrow under that agreement. All the borrowing is done under the authority of the Loan Council by the Federal Government. In that case the Act quoted by Mr. Nicholson would have no effect.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Can we go on creating an overdraft in London?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The overdraft is operated on in London and it is convenient to draw on the bank in that way by reason of the cheapness of the rate. All Governments have operated to the fullest extent on the London bank overdraft.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Will the State get further credit from the bank in London in addition to what is allowed by the Loan Council?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The overdraft is reduced when a loan is floated and it is operated on again and probably up to the limit.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The credit of the State is so good that the bank will allow us to overdraw beyond what we are allowed to raise by the Loan Council.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: As I have stated, all Governments have operated to the fullest extent in this way and subsequently reduced the overdrawn amount with the money raised by way of loan.

Hon. A. Lovekin: The State issues Treasury bills as part of the Commonwealth loan.

Clause put and passed.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

BILL—DRIED FRUITS ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central) [5.5] in moving the second reading said: Owing to the serious condition of the fruit industry and repeated requests of the growers for assistance the Dried Fruits Act of 1926 became law. The period of the operation of the measure was limited to the 31st March, 1930. The object of this limitation was to ascertain whether the control of the industry, as provided in the Bill, was in the best interests of the growers. It is now regarded as beyond doubt, as a result of experience, that the control has had a beneficial effect. It is found that the total values of crops have been more evenly distributed among the producers, and there is an end to the unfortunate condition which previously existed, under which a few growers did exceptionally well and the great majority were unable to secure reasonable returns. With the operation of the Bill every grower gets practically the same price per ton for his fruit, and as he exports a fixed percentage of his tonnage he shares equally in the loss caused by lesser returns for the fruit exported. There was opposition to the measure by some growers when it was first introduced in 1926. Now it is generally agreed that the results are good. In proof of this, it may be said that at each of the meetings of growers held in the principal vine-growing centres, resolutions have been carried unanimously in favour of the re-enactment of the Act. Besides that, the Dried Fruits Board has received from growers living in other centres letters expressing their appreciation of the benefits derived from control of the industry. From the information supplied me, I feel safe in stating that at least seven-eighths of those most directly concerned, namely, vine dried fruit producers, desire a continuance of the legislation. In Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales there is legislation in force similar to this. Hence there is a grave danger if this Bill is not passed, that our State will be swamped with surplus products from the other States. The strength of this contention will be realised when I state that at least 75 per cent. of the total dried fruit output of Australia has to be exported overseas. Only 25 per cent. is consumed in Australia. I have here some figures showing the production, consumption

and the exported quantity, as well as the values. These figures emphasise the necessity for control under a well-ordered system, so that the marketing shall be regulated in a manner that will give the best return to those engaged in the industry.

Production of dried fruits in Western Australia during the years 1927, 1928, 1929:—

	Currants.	Lexias.	Sultanas.	Total.
	tons.	tons.	tons.	tons.
1927 ..	1,140	340	117	1,597
1928 ..	1,231	441	179	1,851
1929 ..	1,321	301	180	1,853

The figures show a gradual increase in currants (the principal crop), and in the total.

Consumption in Western Australia during 1927, 1928, 1929:—

	Currants.	Lexias.	Sultanas.	Total.
	tons.	tons.	tons.	tons.
1927 ..	336	167	316	819
1928 ..	371	140	381	842
1929 ..	385	155	340	880

The foregoing figures show a gradual increase of consumption, both in currants and sultanas, and also in the full totals. (As production of sultanas is less than consumption, the following amounts had to be imported from the Eastern States:—In 1927, 199 tons; in 1928, 152 tons; in 1929, 160 tons.)

Export overseas (London):—

	Currants.	Lexias.	Sultanas.	Total.
	tons.	tons.	tons.	tons.
1927 ..	804	173	nil.	977
1928 ..	860	301	nil.	1,161
1929 ..	927	206	nil.	1,133

Total value of crops of dried fruits produced in Western Australia during years 1927, 1928, 1929, including both State and export sales:—

	£
1927	97,278
1928	110,198
1929 (estimated)	110,298

Accepted normal Commonwealth consumption per annum:—

Currants.	Lexias.	Sultanas.	Total.
tons.	tons.	tons.	tons.
3,600	2,500	6,600	12,700

Production in Commonwealth in 1929:—

Currants.	Lexias.	Sultanas.	Total.
tons.	tons.	tons.	tons.
14,285	7,560	42,117	63,962

Percentages to be exported in 1929:—

Currants.	Lexias.	Sultanas.
74 per cent.	67 per cent.	87 per cent.

The figures I have quoted show that the total production of the Commonwealth for 1929 was 63,962 tons. Only 12,700 tons were consumed in Australia. In 1929 we

had to export 74 per cent. of currants, 67 per cent. of lexias, and 87 per cent. of sultanas. Hon. members will thus realise the necessity that exists for having some effective control. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. H. J. YELLAND (East) [5.15]: I support the second reading. I take it from the remarks of the Leader of the House the Government acknowledge that the Act has been of great service to growers as a whole. Anyone who looks back upon the work of the board will agree that the industry has made great progress since the inception of this legislation. The fact that the Act has been three years in operation indicates that it has passed the experimental stage. I should like to know why the Government have brought down a Bill to extend this legislation only for one year. If it has passed the experimental stage, and has been of such wonderful benefit to the industry as a whole, why not make the period of its operation indeterminate instead of bringing down a Bill every year? By passing this law only from year to year we reduce the outlook of the board, whose members are not able to think ahead, as they would do if there was no possibility of the Act being repealed the following year. One or two matters might receive consideration at the hands of the Government. I refer to necessary amendments. I do not propose to touch upon these now. I understand that a meeting of growers will be held during next week, and that they are to have a heart-to-heart talk with the members of the board. I propose, with the consent of the growers, to be present at that meeting, and afterwards will be able to give information to the House bearing on the points to which I refer. I hope the Minister will allow the Committee stage to remain in abeyance until I have had an opportunity to go into the whole question with the growers. If it is the wish of these people, perhaps the House will extend the term mentioned in the Bill, and will make the Act indefinite as to the period of its operation. A little while ago I called at a country store, where dried fruits were retailed. As I often do, to find out what is going on in respect to the industry, I purchased a retail sample. To my amazement I found, when the case was opened, that, although it had been received from one of the distributors, it contained Eastern States lexias.

We are growing more lexias here than we can consume. The only class of dried fruit in which the supply is unequal to the demand is sultanias. Seeing that we export to the world's markets so much in the way of lexias, it is unfair that the distributors should import from the Eastern States and undercut the growers of this State. I intend during the week to take up the matter with the board and the growers, and hope to have some interesting information to give the House later on. For that reason I hope the Committee stage will be delayed.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [5.18]: So far as I have been able to discover there is no special reason why the Bill is limited to one year, except that in the Act this limitation was embodied. The legislation has proved very successful during the time it has been in operation, and perhaps it would be as well to put it to yet another year's trial before placing it permanently upon the statute-book.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: I desire to assist the board as much as possible.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I will consult with the Department of Agriculture as to the point raised by the hon. member.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

The PRESIDENT: Under Standing Order 188, the reply of the mover to the original question closes the debate. As the Chief Secretary has replied, the debate is closed, and the hon. member cannot move for the adjournment of the business.

Hon. A. Lovekin: I thought the Chief Secretary was only making an explanation.

The PRESIDENT: It was rather a lengthy explanation, but I did not regard it in that light.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—LAND AGENTS.

In Committee.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Hon. Minister in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—"Land Agent" defined:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 1, after the word "person," in line 1, the following words be inserted:—"save as hereinafter provided."

The HONORARY MINISTER: The object of the amendment is to enable the hon. member to insert additional words later. I cannot accept it. The Bill is required to cover the case of an owner of land who carries on the business of selling it in allotments instead of getting a licensed land agent to do so. The Bill should, therefore, cover such a person as well as the land agent. That is provided in the South Australian Act, which is working satisfactorily.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We must legislate for our own requirements, without necessarily following other similar types of legislation. In the Act itself the definition of "land agent" differs materially from that contained in the Bill. It states that every person shall be deemed to be a land agent whose business is to act as an agent in respect of the sale or other disposal of land or of interests in land, or the purchase or other acquisition of land, etc. This would not involve any owner of land who might wish to subdivide it for sale. He may even choose his own buyer.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is not always possible.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We are not bound to consider what has been done in South Australia. If it was my business to sell land, then I would come under the clause. The definition in the existing Act is quite different. It defines a land agent as one whose business is the selling on commission of land or any interest in land. The Bill contains no reference to selling on commission. Under its provisions every person who desires to sell a block of land will have to be licensed. He will not be able to sell one of his own blocks without registering as a land agent, or taking the risk of being prosecuted.

The HONORARY MINISTER: Naturally there is a difference between the definition of a land agent in the Bill and that contained in the principal Act. That is due to the circumstances that necessitated the introduction of the amending legislation. If Mr. Nicholson should be successful in securing the endorsement of his amendment, it would be possible for anyone to purchase land in any portion of Western Australia, sub-

divide it, and dispose of the blocks under conditions similar to those in which holdings have been sold in the country areas during recent times. They could do that so long as they did not describe themselves as land agents. If they refrained from doing that, the provisions of the Bill would not apply.

Hon. A. Lovekin: They would not be land agents; they would be selling their own land.

The HONORARY MINISTER: They would be able to sell that land under any conditions they thought fit, and might misrepresent matters as they chose.

Hon. J. Nicholson: No; the law would nail them.

The HONORARY MINISTER: There is no provision in the existing Act to deal with that. Much of the trouble that has been experienced by country people recently has been due to the fact that people have been able to purchase land, subdivide it and sell blocks to people, to whom they have misrepresented the true facts. Mr. Nicholson raised one point that should receive attention. He suggested that under the Bill any man who desired to sell part of a block he owned would be compelled to register as a land agent. That is not the intention. Perhaps Mr. Nicholson and I may be able to frame an amendment that will cover that point. Hon. members must remember when dealing with this question, that a large number of big estates have been bought quite recently and are in process of being subdivided or have been subdivided and sold throughout the country areas by unscrupulous persons. In many instances country people have been defrauded, and the Government are simply desirous of amending the legislation to prevent such occurrences in future. The other point raised by Mr. Nicholson was as to whether an attorney or trustee should be exempt. In my opinion what applies to the individual should also apply to his trustee or attorney.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I take it that the Honorary Minister will accept my amendment and we can then agree upon any further alteration to make clear the point he mentioned. We all desire to catch those unscrupulous persons who seek to defraud the unwary. In my opinion the only way to catch them is under the provisions of the Criminal Code. On the other hand, if we agree to the Bill as it is now, we, as ordinary individuals, will penalise ourselves in order to get at these rascals.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: From what the Minister has told us, it seems that in the hope of getting at the swindlers, we are to be asked to penalise a lot of honest men who are entitled to sell their land if they so desire. Personally I can see little difference between the man who desires to sell one or two blocks he may own, and another who has a dozen acres and may wish to cut them up into 24 lots for sale. The point is that such men are not engaged in the sale of that land as land agents. If we were to adopt the wording of the Act and include the words "sells on commission," that would set the hall mark on the real land agent and exclude the private individuals who sell blocks they own. A lot has been said about fraudulent land sales, but there is an old maxim, "Caveat emptor," which means that the purchaser should beware.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: And he has good reason to beware.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: In order to safeguard against fraud, the law already lays down that every transaction in land must be in writing. It is impossible to tie up a few scoundrels by means of an Act of Parliament. The scoundrels are the exceptions, and they should be dealt with under the Criminal Code.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: It should be possible for the Honorary Minister and Mr. Nicholson, who obviously have the same object in view in their desire to protect the unwary from being swindled, to confer upon a suitable amendment to the definition clause so as to differentiate between those who make a business of speculating in land and selling to others, and private individuals who may wish to sell a block or two that they may own. Perhaps some limit could be placed upon the number of allotments that may be sold without the necessity for the owner to register as a land agent. The position regarding these people seems to be much the same as that of people in other walks. I am bombarded by opticians who desire to be registered and by land agents who do not want to be registered. It is like the old saying about matrimony, "Those who are in want to get out, and those who are out want to get in."

Hon. E. H. HARRIS: If the Honorary Minister and Mr. Nicholson intend to consider the position, they might also have regard to another phase. We were told that

sales of mining leases were to be exempt from taxation, but experience has proved on several occasions that the person who sold a second lease was deemed to be an agent and was taxed accordingly. I should like to know from the Minister whether this would mean that if a person sold one block it would be quite right, but if during his lifetime he sold another block he would be deemed an agent? That is the view of the Taxation Department if you set out to sell mining tenements.

Hon. G. FRASER: I hope the Honorary Minister will accept Dr. Saw's suggestion and report progress, so that he and Mr. Nicholson may have opportunity to arrive at a suitable amendment to the clause. When first the debate started the discussion was on small subdivision blocks, but when Mr. Lovekin finished it had risen to blocks of 10 or 12 acres. If a man could subdivide a block of 10 or 12 acres without coming under the Act, it would be playing into the hands of the go-getter.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Except that the go-getter would be selling on commission, whereas the owner would not.

Hon. G. FRASER: If that was to be the line of demarcation, the go-getter would buy the land for himself and so overcome the difficulty. I am heartily in accord with the suggestion that the Honorary Minister and Mr. Nicholson should confer.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I move—

That the Chairman do now leave the Chair.

Motion put and negatived.

The HONORARY MINISTER: In view of the suggestion made that Mr. Nicholson and I might be able to arrive at something satisfactory to all, I move—

That further consideration of Clause 3 be postponed.

Hon. A. Lovekin: Could you not report progress? The succeeding clauses all hinge on Clause 3.

Motion put and passed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: If it will facilitate matters, it will be observed from the Notice Paper that after Clause 3 I offer no suggested amendments until we reach Clause 35.

Clauses 4 to 17—agreed to.

Clause 18—Register of Licenses.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: What does paragraph (a) mean? It reads "the name and description of every person to whom a license is issued under this Act." Does it mean that if a land agent has certain tattoo marks on his arm and comes to sell land to me, I require to make sure that he has those marks on him before I allow him on to my premises to talk business to me? That is the way it appeals to me as one frequently taken down by agents of one sort or another. If I am right in my assumption, I think the whole of the land agents would object to any such personal examination.

The HONORARY MINISTER: I do not know whether the hon. member is very serious in his inquiry. In a case of this kind the description would be fulfilled by giving the business of the agent. He may be a land agent carrying on other business as well. If so, that would be his description.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: The question of business does not come into it. It is the description of a person.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We find in many Acts the words "name and description" of certain parties. In every case the word "description" refers to the qualifications or business that a person carries on. Probably it would be better if we had the words "name and address", but in paragraph (e) of the same clause it is made necessary to give particulars as to the place or places of business of the licensee. That would supply all that was wanted. As the Honorary Minister suggested, some of these land agents may also be auctioneers, in which event the licensee would be described as land agent and auctioneer.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 19 to 30—agreed to.

Clause 31—Evidence of contracts of agency:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Reference is made to the recognised rate of commission. What is the recognised rate?

Hon. J. Nicholson: As fixed by the Chamber of Commerce.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Then should not we say so?

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 32 to 34—agreed to.

Progress reported.

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT.*In Committee.*

Resumed from the 22nd October. Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; Hon. H. J. Yelland in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 100a.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I move an amendment—

That the following be added to the proviso:—“unless such holding is used for agricultural or pastoral purposes.”

If any religious or charitable organisation carries on business in the pastoral or farming areas, the effect of exempting it from vermin rating would be to deprive neighbouring settlers of protection. Complaint has been made that Government reserves become breeding grounds for vermin, and I am afraid the same thing would happen on the properties referred to if they were exempted. When such organisations carry on trade as do ordinary settlers, they should play their part in the matter of vermin destruction.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Mr. Hamersley has overlooked the principle observed in all our legislation that institutions of the kind should not be taxed. The measure does not relieve such organisations from the necessity for destroying vermin; it merely relieves them from the contribution of taxes towards the general fund provided for the destruction of vermin. Some of the institutions are subsidised by the Government, and why subsidise them on the one hand and tax them on the other?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Suppose one of the organisations had a big farm or station.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: It should be exempt from taxation.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Why?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Because the business is not run for private profit and because such organisations have always been exempt from taxation.

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: If they rented a shop, they would have to pay rates.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: I dare say they would. This clause merely provides the relief from taxation usually given to religious and charitable organisations.

The HONORARY MINISTER. The tax is not such a serious matter as might be inferred from Mr. Yelland's remarks. The

fund has been established for the benefit of all engaged in the industry, and I cannot see why such organisations should be exempt.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Quite a number of institutions conduct farm schools and instruct young people in farming operations.

Hon. V. Hamersley: And receive fees for it.

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: No. Should institutions like the Swan Boys' Orphanage and the Fairbridge Farm School be taxed?

Hon. G. Fraser: Do they sell produce?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: Yes, to enable them to carry on the institutions, but they are assisted by the Government or the public, or both.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Would you agree to the insertion of the words “agricultural school”?

Hon. H. J. YELLAND: That would not meet the position. The amendment is a direct attack on a principle observed in all our legislation that such organisations should be exempt from taxation.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 6.15 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 24th October, 1929.

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The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Panton) took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.