

Ballot taken and a Select Committee appointed consisting of Messrs. Bolton, Gilchrist, Hudson, Willmott and the mover (Hon. R. H. Underwood), with power to call for persons, papers, and records, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned, and to report this day three weeks.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister—Pilbara) [9.27]: I move—

*That the resolution be transmitted by Message to the Legislative Council with the request that they appoint a similar Committee to confer with the Committee appointed by this House.*

Question passed.

#### MESSAGE — WAR BETWEEN BRITAIN AND GERMANY, ANNIVERSARY OF DECLARATION.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received a letter from the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Governor, as follows:—

Sir,—I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to inform you that His Excellency telegraphed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies the resolution passed by the Legislative Assembly on the anniversary of the declaration of war, and has this day received the following reply:—"In answer to your telegram 7th August, it has been laid before His Majesty, who greatly appreciates the resolution of Parliament and people of Western Australia to continue war to victorious end. (Sgd.) Bonar Law."

*House adjourned at 9.30 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 12th August, 1915.*

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

### QUESTION—FREEZING WORKS, WYNDHAM.

#### *Alteration of Notice.*

The Speaker called on the Hon. J. D. Connolly to ask the question of which he had given notice.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: Before asking the question standing in my name, I desire to draw your attention, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that certain paragraphs which were contained in my notice do not appear on the Notice Paper. Further, I desire to draw attention to the fact that other paragraphs do not appear in the form in which I gave notice of them. Two paragraphs of which I gave notice were: "Will he (the Premier) also lay the whole of the papers and correspondence connected with this matter on the Table of the House forthwith?" "If not, why not?" I desire to point out that these two paragraphs are in accordance with the Standing Orders, and certainly in accordance with the practice of this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not argue at this stage.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I simply want to point out—

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can ask his question, but he must not argue it.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I do not wish to ask that your ruling, Sir, be disagreed with. I am simply asking why these two paragraphs do not appear on

the Notice Paper. I understood that I might be permitted to explain my question.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member will be justified in asking a question why the notice he has given does not appear on the Notice Paper as he submitted it, but I hope he will not argue reasons why it should so appear.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: I only wish to find out whether the question as appearing on the Notice Paper to-day is right or not. I have no desire to delay the House, but I understood that I might make that inquiry. Otherwise, I would simply ask for a ruling and state the reasons why I gave notice in the form I did. The two paragraphs which I have read out do not appear on the Notice Paper at all. In regard to the last paragraph of the question, as it appears on the Notice Paper—

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): On a point of order, can the hon. member go on talking and making explanations without the permission of the House? It seems to me extraordinary I have never heard of such a thing since I have been here.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know what the point of order is which the Honorary Minister raises. The member for Perth (Hon. J. D. Connolly) is explaining—

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): He has not permission to explain.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I have given the hon. member permission to explain. The hon. member will continue to ask his question.

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY: With regard to the last paragraph of my question, in giving notice I stated two matters of fact. The rules of the House provide that any facts elucidating or explaining a question may be stated. In giving notice I made two statements of fact in order to elucidate and explain that paragraph. As it stands now, that paragraph has an entirely different meaning and may be answered in an entirely different way. The two statements of fact have been omitted.

Mr. SPEAKER [4.44]: I am glad the hon. member has raised the question, because I intended to refer to it myself this afternoon, in view of a statement appearing in the Press that the Speaker had ruled out certain questions on the ground that a motion should have been submitted for the papers to be laid on the Table of the House. I desire to state that the Speaker gave no ruling; the Speaker was not asked for a ruling; and how the Press obtained such information I cannot understand. It may be necessary for me to say that there is no element of truth whatever in any such statement. The Speaker rarely takes exception to a question unless an objection has been raised by some hon. member of the House, or unless the question is of a frivolous or personal nature. In the latter case, the questions are immediately rejected. The general practice in this House is that the Clerks peruse the questions, and when there are any doubts as to the questions being in order, reference is made to the Speaker. Frequently a question exceeds the limits of a question, as interpreted by the rules of the House, but instead of rejecting them I have always instructed the Clerk Assistant to interview the members responsible and render them every assistance to frame their questions in such a way as to be admitted. A majority of members in this Chamber have had this experience, and they have welcomed the Clerk's assistance. Last evening the Clerk Assistant drew my attention to irregularities in the questions of which notice was given by the hon. member for Perth. I advised the Clerk Assistant to see that hon. member and point out to him the objections, and at the same time assist him to bring the questions within the proper forms. This was done, and the Clerk Assistant has informed me that he understood that the hon. member for Perth was perfectly satisfied with the manner in which the questions were altered and as they now appear on the Notice Paper. Personally, beyond the usual instruction to the Clerk Assistant, I had nothing whatever to do with

the matter. There may possibly have been a misunderstanding between the Clerk Assistant and the hon. member for Perth as to that gentleman's satisfaction with the alterations, but I feel it my duty to point out that the objection taken to the inclusion of questions 2 and 3 is perfectly sound. According to *Blackmore*—

The practice is for the Speaker to amend questions asking "if the Government will, etc., etc.," by substituting the words "is it the intention of the Government to; etc., etc.," on the grounds that Ministers should not, at the request of a single member, do that, or pledge themselves to do that, which the House might not approve, and which should be done on motion. The last paragraph of the hon. member's questions contained matters of fact which were not necessary to explain the question, and these were deleted on the grounds that in putting any such question no argument or opinion shall be offered; nor any facts stated except so far as may be necessary to explain such question. There may have been occasions when questions of a like character have been allowed; but this has been entirely due to an oversight, and such a proceeding would be irregular. I desire again to emphasise the fact, however, that the omission of questions from the Notice Paper referred to by the hon. member for Perth are in accordance with the regular practice of this House.

#### *Questions asked:*

Hon. J. D. CONNOLLY asked the Premier: 1, When will he give effect to his promise of 3rd August, viz., that he would take the House into his confidence as to the exact position of the proposed Wyndham Freezing works? 2, Will he state the names and qualifications of the board who recommended the acceptance of Messrs. Nevanas & Co.'s private tender? 3, What were the terms of the contract not complied with, which caused the Government to cancel Nevanas & Co.'s tender? 4, Why did the Government not consider the fact of Nevanas & Co. having £63,000 worth of material on

hand for the contract sufficient guarantee for their due completion of the said contract? 5, In what part of Australia have this firm of contractors of Nevanas & Co. similar works in operation, as stated by him? 6, What is the total amount that has been paid, or is owing to Nevanas & Co., in addition to any moneys paid to them for contract material at invoice prices? 7, Had the suppliers and shippers of this £63,000 worth of material, or any part of it, been paid for before being taken over by the Government from Nevanas & Co.; if so, by whom, the Government or Nevanas & Co.? 8, (a) Is this firm of Nevanas & Co. a registered local company; (b.) if so, what is the amount of their capital; (c.) is the total capital paid-up; (d.) if not, what is the amount of the paid-up capital? 9, In view of the fact that the Government have cancelled a contract of Nevanas & Co. let by private tender for £155,000, will the Government persist in allowing this work to be carried out departmentally at the increased cost of £50,000, or will they cause a full inquiry to be made by an independent expert, acting as a Royal Commissioner, into this undertaking, and more particularly in the practicability of the plans supplied by Nevanas & Co.?

The PREMIER replied: Papers dealing with the contract will be laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, which will in all probability give all the information desired.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: In all probability!

The PREMIER: You did not expect me to give you everything you are looking for.

Hon. J. D. Connolly: I am looking for more than you are prepared to give me.

The Minister for Works: You can have everything you want.

#### QUESTION.—HARBOUR SCHEME, GERALDTON, AND HANDLING OF HARVEST.

Mr. HETTMANN asked the Minister for Works: Will he make a statement

to the House of the intentions of the Government in regard to the proposed Geraldton harbour scheme and the handling of the forthcoming harvest?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: A scheme for harbour improvements was prepared and accepted by the Government. The scheme provided for the construction of a harbour in the south-west corner of the bay, including a protecting mole on the west side. The first instalment would give a berthing accommodation of 2,000 feet with a depth of 30 feet below low-water mark, and is estimated to cost £436,000; when the scheme is completed the total estimated cost is £1,300,000. On giving this proposed scheme further investigation, I find there is considerable doubt in the minds of two of our responsible engineers, Messrs. Thompson and Rolland, whether the carrying out of the scheme would be beneficial to the State, they being afraid that the proposed harbour after completion will silt up unless heavy annual expenditure is incurred in keeping it clear. This being so, it is my intention at an early date to visit Geraldton with the Engineer-in-Chief to go into the question closely with a view to making all preparations for harbour improvement, if not the scheme adopted, with one of the other schemes suggested as soon as funds permit. The question of handling the coming harvest has received consideration by the Government, and the Commissioner for Railways definitely states that he can handle the harvest without any additional provision being made this year and he considers that no expenditure should be incurred unless on a portion of the proposed new work. This being so, and being advised that there will be no difficulty in handling the harvest, in view of the financial conditions, no expenditure will be incurred except it is in connection with work that would be portion of the harbour improvement scheme; but I desire to assure the hon. member and the people of Geraldton that it is in the interests of Geraldton and the State that the engineers should be satisfied with any scheme

proposed to be carried out before the work is commenced, to avoid any difficulties that may arise after the work is completed.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): Health Act, 1911-12, by-laws of the Donnybrook, Avon, and Kalgoorlie health boards.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

The PREMIER Hon. J. Scaddan, Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [4.52]: I move—

*That leave of absence until the end of the present session be granted to the member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom) and the member for Albany (Mr. Price) on the grounds that they are on active service in the military forces of the Commonwealth.*

I merely wish to explain that the granting of leave until the end of the present session is all that we can do under our Standing Orders. The House each session grants leave to members who are absenting themselves for a period longer than a fortnight, and under the circumstances I cannot do more than I now propose. Next session if the necessity warrants it I will again move for further leave of absence for the hon. members.

Question passed.

#### BILL—MINES REGULATION AND INSPECTION.

Introduced by the Premier (for the Minister for Mines) and read a first time.

#### BILL—GOVERNMENT ELECTRIC WORKS ACT AMENDMENT.

##### *Second Reading.*

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan, Brown Hill-Ivanhoe) [4.55] in moving the second reading said: The object of the Bill which has been presented to hon. members is to make some slight amend-

ments to the Act now operating known as the Government Electric Works Act 1914. With the exception of the amendment which is provided for in Clause 3 the others are merely to alter the wording for the purpose of giving sense to certain sections of the Act. Clause 3 of the Bill which provides for an amendment to Section 5 of the principal Act, is really the reason for the introduction of the measure. The principal Act provides in Section 5—

Subject to the Electric Light and Power Agreement Act 1913, the Commissioner may, within such areas as may be from time defined by proclamation, but subject to the consent of the local authority having control in any such area—

I want to emphasise that particular paragraph.

(a) Establish electric works or acquire electric works by purchase or otherwise, and generate electricity, and sell or supply electricity and electric meters, fittings, or other apparatus for any lawful purpose to any person or local authority, or to any Government department or agency (State or Commonwealth); (b) Maintain and carry on such electric works and the electric works mentioned in the Electric Light and Power Agreement Act 1913; (c.) Make additions to and improvements in any such works as aforesaid: Provided that no buildings or other works of a permanent character shall be erected, constructed, or acquired, and no land acquired for the purposes of this Act without the permission of the Minister.

The Bill when originally introduced to Parliament did not contain the words, "but subject to the consent of the local authority having control in any such area" and an amendment was made which was finally accepted because it was held by those responsible for the introduction of that amendment, that the local authority would never unreasonably withhold its consent, but we have now discovered after a very short period that the local authorities in some cases are unreason-

ably withholding their consent. I want to explain that actually all that is essential to an expansion of our business as generators of electric current at the new power house at East Perth is contained in Section 5 of the principal Act, and owing to those words, we cannot extend our business beyond the Perth city boundary under that section without first obtaining the consent of the local authority. That hinders us to such an extent that though we desire to provide current, even for Government requirements, within the metropolitan area, if a local authority between the point of supply, namely, the power station and the point where the current will be used intervene, that local authority can, under the proviso, prevent our taking the cable through their district for the purpose. I want to give the House the full facts in connection with this matter in order that members may clearly understand the trouble. Some time ago the Commonwealth authorities requested us to submit a proposal for the supply of electric current at the new naval base at Cockburn Sound. They will be large consumers of current. Of course, the power station was erected on the distinct understanding that eventually it would supply practically all the current required in the metropolitan area, but we have always adopted the attitude that there is no desire on the part of the Government to become a retailer of current, although, so far as practicable, we would supply the current in bulk to the local authorities, and allow them to retail it, even to Government departments. To that end we arrived at an agreement with the Perth City Council to supply them within an area of five miles radius from the town hall with current at a fixed price. By another agreement we bound the Perth City Council to supply the adjoining municipalities within a five-mile radius of the Perth town hall at a rate which has been accepted by them as satisfactory. We then desired to provide current for other districts, some of them not having yet erected power stations, and in addition we wanted to supply our own requirements in different parts of the metropolitan area and

in other places. The Fremantle local authorities, including the tramway board, saw me in connection with the possibility of our supplying current at Fremantle, and requested to know the basis on which we would supply. We went into the matter and eventually submitted a proposal, which was not accepted. As far as I can recollect, the grounds upon which it was rejected, judging by the discussion at the meeting of the municipal council, was that it would mean the closing down of their own power station, and the throwing out of employment of a number of men in the municipality. We then went further into the question, after the offer came from the Commonwealth authorities to utilise our current at the naval base, and we submitted another proposal to the Fremantle Tramways Board. I will recite the proposal, in order to show that we have done everything possible to arrive at an agreement with the local authorities to supply them with cheap current, at the same time undertaking not to interfere with their business as retailers of electric current at Fremantle. The proposed price was .85 of a penny per unit delivered at low tension, Fremantle. If the board desired to take supplies at other points, high tension current would be supplied at the same price. We offered to enter into an agreement for 50 years, the same as with the Perth City Council, if desired. The board was offered the exclusive right to supply current within five miles of the Fremantle town hall—that is, including the Government departments and the naval base—and the Commissioner agreed not to compete with them within that area. The board was to receive 1½d. per unit for current supplied to Government departments. We are supplying Perth at a cost not to exceed .75 of a penny and they must supply to us at a price not exceeding 100 per cent. above that. The Fremantle board was given the option of supplying other local bodies within the five-mile area on the same basis as prescribed by the Act for the Perth City Council, namely, cost price, plus management and metering; distribution, including wages, stores, repairs, and all other charges in

connection therewith; sub-station charges; interest, sinking fund, obsolescence fund of seven per cent. on sub-station capital; interest, sinking fund, and obsolescence fund of seven per cent. on feeders per mile; loss of current in transit and transforming; interest and sinking fund of six per cent. on the board's capital charges. We have received from the Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Board the following letter bearing date 9th August, 1915:—

Yours of the 29th ult., and further to mine of the 30th idem. I now regret to inform you that the Fremantle Municipal Council have notified us that they do not favour the acceptance of the Commissioner's offer to supply the board with electricity.

That would be all right. I have no objection to the municipalities of Fremantle declining to accept the proposal submitted to them. What I do object to is the permitting of them to have the power to prevent the Government supplying even the Government's own customers with current in the metropolitan area, or within the sphere of the new power house. But, although they have relied on those words added to the Bill last session, namely, that we must obtain their consent before we undertake those works, indeed even if the Fremantle council had accepted our offer, or had raised no objection to our cable passing through the municipality, the Claremont local authority have refused us permission to pass the cable through the Claremont municipality along our own railway line, notwithstanding that we do not intend to supply anyone in Claremont. The railway line is intersected by a street, which belongs to the municipality, and we cannot cross that street, either above it or under it, with our cable, although we desire to supply North Fremantle with current at their own request. Under the reading of the clause, the Claremont municipality refuse to let us take the wire along our own railway line, either over or under the street.

Mr. George: They cannot stop you crossing.

The PREMIER: The Crown Law Department say they can.

Mr. George: I do not care, they cannot do it.

The PREMIER: At all events, I do not wish to take any action which might land the municipality and the Government in litigation, at least not if it can be avoided. Therefore I have introduced an amendment which, I think, will fairly meet the difficulties which have arisen. I desire to emphasise that we are not desirous of using the current to be supplied from our new power house for the purpose of ousting any municipality from a business they may have entered into of generating and supplying electric current within their boundaries. Where a municipality is already generating current, we have no intention of going into their area and supplying current to their customers without first obtaining their consent.

Mr. Taylor: Did you propose to enter into competition with the Claremont municipality?

The PREMIER: No, we only proposed to go through their municipality? But under the existing section of the Act, the Fremantle council, even after refusing the offer we made them, declined to let us take our cable through the municipality to supply current to the naval base, which is a Commonwealth department. We hold that, as the naval base is not within their boundary, they ought not to withhold their consent, and that any such withholding is unreasonable. The power given to the local authority is absolutely unfair to the Government, who have invested a large sum of money, the property of the people, in the power station. If hon. members will look at Section 5, they will see that the proposed amendment merely strikes out the objectionable words "but subject to the consent of the local authority having control in any such area," and adds the following proviso—

Provided also that the Commissioner shall not sell or supply electricity within the district of a local authority, otherwise than to a Government de-

partment or agency (State or Commonwealth)—

"Agency" means Harbour Trust or hospital. The proviso continues—

without the consent of such local authority, if such local authority has established electric works within its district prior to the establishment or construction by the Commissioner of electric works within the same district.

That is perfectly clear, and, I think, absolutely fair. Even the local authorities themselves cannot object to a provision of that kind. If they have established electric works within their own district prior to the establishment of our electric works we cannot supply current within their municipality without first obtaining their consent. In view of the fact that we have already made an offer to the Fremantle Municipal Council to give them the entire control of the retailing of electric current, even to Government departments, within a radius of five miles of the town hall, on a basis which they themselves have never yet suggested was not fair to them, I contend that they should not be permitted to unreasonably—for unreasonable it is—withhold their consent to the Government supplying current which does not come into competition with their own.

Mr. Carpenter: Have they refused?

The PREMIER: Yes, as I have shown. If the offer we made was held by them to be unfair, if there was something in it which they were not prepared to accept in respect to price or conditions; one could understand the objection; but they have never raised any objection to the price offered, or to the conditions surrounding the supply. They have stated merely "We have an electric power station in the municipality and we are not going to allow it to be abolished, whether it pays or not." I happen to know that Mr. Mitchell, the manager and engineer of the Fremantle Municipal Tramways Board—who, by the way, are the greatest consumers of the locally generated current—recommended the acceptance of our offer on the grounds that it would

show a saving. Notwithstanding that, they withheld their consent. Nevertheless we do not desire to go to Fremantle and enter into competition with the municipality in respect to their ordinary private consumers. But as for the Commonwealth department, we hold that the Fremantle council should not be permitted to interfere with the business we have established at the cost of a large sum of money, and which is a national concern. For that reason I am asking for the amendment.

Mr. Carpenter: Has the Victoria Park council objected?

The PREMIER: Not that I am aware of.

Mr. Piesse: Is there no special agreement with Claremont?

The PREMIER: That is within the five-mile area and governed by the agreement we made with the Perth City Council. In consequence of the withholding of consent, we are unable to take our cable along the railway line to supply current to those at North Fremantle asking for it. I wish to give an assurance that there is no desire or intention on the part of the Government to compete with local authorities who have their own electric stations already erected. We wish to enter into arrangements with them to be the retailers of our current. We do not wish to enter into the business of retailing the current. We desire the municipalities to take the current in bulk and even to supply Government departments, and we will allow them a fair margin and even a profit.

Mr. Willmott: If you wanted to electrify the railways, could not you carry your cables down?

The PREMIER: I do not think we could unless we obtained the consent of the local authorities concerned. The Solicitor General states that it is an absolute bar of a permanent nature to the extension of our works if any local authority makes objection.

Mr. George: It might be so under the new Act, but I am satisfied the old Railway Acts gave the Commissioner the necessary power.

The PREMIER: It was intended to prevent undue competition with those having stations within their own boundaries, but the present law goes considerably beyond that. The amendment will merely restore the position that so far as supplying current to a Government department or agency is concerned, be it State or Commonwealth, a local authority cannot withhold its consent, and in fact its consent will not be required. We will therefore be able to lay a cable down to the naval base. There is some urgency in connection with this matter because the Naval authorities are considering the question of obtaining current and are pressing for a definite decision from us. We cannot give any definite decision until we know whether we can take the cable down there and, even if we knew that we could do so, we would have to order the cable and erect it from the power house to Fremantle—a work which would occupy some months. It is therefore urgent that we should know whether we can supply the current or whether we shall be prevented by the unreasonable attitude of local authorities, and for this reason I desire that the Bill be passed as early as possible.

Mr. Robinson: Regarding local authorities which have not their own stations, you propose to pass them by?

The PREMIER: Yes, I have already stated that we have been prepared to use the local authorities as retailers of our current and we are anxious to do so.

Mr. Robinson: You are not bound to do that.

The PREMIER: No; the provision reads—

Provided also that the Commissioner shall not sell or supply electricity within the district of a local authority, otherwise than to a Government department or agency (State or Commonwealth) without the consent of such local authority, if such local authority has established electric works within its district prior to the establishment or construction by the Commissioner of electric works within the same district.



I ask the House why should we, after having established a central power station for the purpose of manufacturing current to supply a certain radius, be required to obtain the consent of a local authority to supply a district where there is no station. Where a local authority has its own power for supplying current, we do not propose to interfere except to supply Government requirements, State or Commonwealth.

Mr. George: How will you get over street crossings? Surely you can cross them!

The PREMIER: No, we cannot. Under the measure passed last session, we cannot carry a cable along our railway line to Fremantle either beneath or above a street-crossing within the boundaries of a municipality which has objected.

Mr. George: They have to ask the permission of the Commissioner of Railways to cross his line.

The PREMIER: That is an entirely different matter.

The Minister for Works: It all depends whether the road has been closed.

The PREMIER: To show that I am sound in my contention, only recently in connection with the works now in operation at East Perth we required to close Summer-street and had to obtain the consent of the Perth City Council to close that street over our own railway line. If the argument of the hon. member were correct, we need not have sought this consent but could have built our fence on either side of the railway property. This, however, is not so. Once a road is gazetted and approved and placed under the control of a local authority, it cannot be closed without the permission of the local authority.

Mr. George: All the streets of Perth belong to the Government.

The PREMIER: The position is as I have explained it. In the case mentioned, we had some difficulty in obtaining the necessary consent, but ultimately it was given. In the circumstances I ask that a reasonable attitude be adopted by allowing us, so long as we do not compete

with established power houses, to do what is necessary for the extension of the work in connection with the new power house. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

On motion by Hon. J. D. Connolly, debate adjourned.

## BILL — FREMANTLE MUNICIPAL TRAMWAYS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING AMENDMENT.

### *Second Reading.*

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [5.22] in moving the second reading said: This is the second time Parliament has been asked to authorise an increase of capital in connection with the Fremantle Tramways and Electric Lighting scheme. When the original measure was introduced, £100,000 was provided for capital. Under the amending Act the amount was increased to £150,000. The whole of that capital has been expended and this Bill provides for a further increase of £50,000. I may state for the information of members that this scheme up to the present has proved a fairly good proposition. Every year it has paid interest and sinking fund and never, on any occasion, since the trams have been running, has a rate been made on the rate-payers to pay the charges necessary in connection with the work. The amount of interest paid is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and the amount for depreciation and sinking fund is approximately  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 per cent., so that the scheme is paying approximately 9 per cent. on the capital outlay. In addition to this, though the present year has been a bad one, there will be a profit of approximately £2,000. This goes to show that there should be no fear on the part of Parliament in granting further power to enable the municipality to extend its scheme, if necessary. Even if the Fremantle council decide to take their power and electricity from the Government works, it will be necessary to have in-

creased borrowing powers, because to provide for that scheme would involve the expenditure of some thousands of pounds. At present the municipality is up against a dead end. Increased plant is required to provide what the municipality has already contracted to supply. The Fremantle scheme supplies the railways, the Harbour Trust, the North Fremantle municipality, the Cottesloe municipality, and a portion of Melville roads board district outside the five-miles radius of the Perth district. At present, therefore, a fairly large area is being supplied from these works, and it has been found necessary to increase the plant. The whole of the additional capital will not be required at once, but it will be raised in instalments as business increases. A further sum of £12,000 to £14,000 is needed at once. Only a few months ago £10,000 was raised for the purpose of increasing the plant. Seeing that the scheme has been a good paying proposition, and that the trams are run as cheaply as any in Australia, and more cheaply than any in Western Australia, there need be no fear that the granting of this extra borrowing power will involve a burden on the ratepayers. The Bill seeks to amend the Act by striking out the words "one hundred and fifty" and inserting in lieu the words "two hundred." I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington) [5.26]: It seems to me that it might be wise to allow this matter to wait for the present. Apparently the Fremantle council will have an opportunity to obtain their current from the Government works at Perth at a very much lower rate than it can be generated at Fremantle, and if we give the council authority to increase their capital by £50,000 it will seem like authorising the erection of plant which will soon become obsolete. I am quite aware that if they take their current from the Government works at Perth, they will have to alter or increase their cables, but surely the outlay thus involved would not amount to £50,000. When it comes to a

question of increasing their plant for generating electricity—

Mr. Carpenter: It is not intended to increase the generating plant.

Mr. Bolton: It is required to provide cars.

Mr. GEORGE: I understood the Minister to say that it was proposed to add to the plant.

Mr. Bolton: Not the generating plant.

Mr. GEORGE: Is it to be used to provide tram cars?

Mr. Bolton: Yes.

Mr. GEORGE: If the extra capital is required to provide more cars to afford greater facilities for the people, it is immaterial whether the current is obtained from the Government works or from their own station.

The Minister for Works: Even if the current were obtained from the Government works, the council would require £7,000.

Mr. GEORGE: I would be averse to authorising the putting up of a lot of plant which presently might be found to be useless. I know of Government works in this State where electric plants have been lying idle for years. This occurred in connection with the railway goods shed in Perth. The Perth Gas Company were able to supply current at a price which enabled me, as Commissioner, to scrap the railway plant. I do not wish to see that repeated at Fremantle.

Mr. Bolton: I do not think the board will permit that.

Mr. CARPENTER (Fremantle) [5.29]: The view taken by the hon. member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) might be naturally expected after the speech made by the Premier on another measure. The question of the attitude of the Fremantle board on that subject should not be considered in connection with their request for further borrowing powers. I can assure the House that there is no connection between the two questions. If it should happen that the Fremantle council, at some future time, agreed to take their current from the

Government generating station, that would not relieve the tramway board of the necessity for raising further capital. A very small amount of this £5,000 will be required for present extensions. It is possible, however, that by and by we shall take some of our current from the Government station. The trams have been run on economical and profitable lines. I am sure that the ratepayers of Fremantle have confidence in the board and the council, sufficient confidence to warrant them in believing that they would not ask for these further powers, and would not exercise them, unless they were satisfied that the money would be expended in as careful a manner as their other capital has been expended.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle—in reply) [5.32]: If the Fremantle councils decided to-morrow to take the current from the Government it would require an expenditure of between £7,000 and £8,000 to make the necessary provision for installing facilities for taking it. Such expenditure would be required at once. There are no powers at present, however, to enable the Fremantle councils to raise this money. I may further add that this raising of money and increasing of plant, as well as the extending of the tramways, as far as Fremantle is concerned must first be submitted to the property-owners of Fremantle for their approval. They have to approve of this as if it were a municipal loan. The Melville road board is at present extending its tramway service to Point Walter, and a considerable distance along the Canning-road. The Fremantle Tramway Board has just entered into an agreement with them to run their trams, consequently it will take funds to enable them to carry out this work. As the hon. member for Fremantle (Mr. Carpenter) stated, the taking or otherwise of electricity from Perth makes no difference so far as these borrowing powers are concerned, because it is necessary to have extended borrowing powers to enable them to take the increased current necessary to make

the necessary additions to their present plant.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

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

### BILL—BREAD ACT AMENDMENT.

#### *Second Reading.*

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister—Pilbara) [5.36] in moving the second reading said: This is only a small measure, and, therefore, I trust the House will treat it leniently. The main object of the Bill is to provide that people buying bread shall buy the weight that they expect to receive. The idea of the Bread Act was that if one bought a loaf of two pounds or four pounds' weight, it should contain that amount of bread. But in that Act provision was made that fancy bread might be of a lesser weight, and it has worked out in this way; that in many cases, particularly in country towns, the bakers put a bit of a frill on or a twist in the dough and call it fancy bread.

Mr. Munsie: French bread.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): It is also called Vienna bread and by other names. The main object in doing this was to give the people less weight in bread than they were entitled to receive. If people desire to have fancy bread, and the bakers to make it, it is only reasonable that those buying it should pay more for it. Let the fancy bread, therefore, be still in the two-pound and four-pound loaves. Let the people get the same weight in bread, and if the baker desires to have fancy bread let him charge more for it than for plain bread. From the manner in which the Act has worked out up to the present, it has meant that bakers have used this provision in regard to fancy bread as a subterfuge for giving less

weight than the people really thought they were getting. I am pretty well convinced that it requires no eloquence of mine to commend this Bill to the House. I am glad that this should be so, because I have no eloquence. There are just one or two other alterations to the Act as amended by this Bill. It is provided that roads boards as well as municipalities shall have the power to appoint inspectors. It has been found absolutely necessary in the outback country that this provision should be made. In my own district, for instance, a most important district, there is no municipality at all. The whole district is run by road boards. It seems to me wrong that such an important district as Pilbara should be unable to appoint inspectors under the Bread Act.

Mr. Allen: Very wrong.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): There is one other provision in the Bill, and that refers to what I think has been a fault in the drafting of the Act. It is provided in the Act that when an inspector goes to take bread for weighing he must take six loaves or more. There is no provision made for the position which may arise where there are not six loaves. If a person selling bread has only five loaves he cannot be checked at all. The amendment to which I have referred provides that where there are six loaves that quantity shall be taken, and an average struck, but where there are not six loaves a lesser number may, by this amendment, be taken. I do not think it is necessary to speak at any length at all on the Bill. I am sure it will appeal to the sense of members, for it is only putting into operation what was really intended by the original Act. I move—

*That the Bill be now read a second time.*

On motion by Hon. H. B. Lefroy debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 5.43 p.m.*

## Legislative Council.

*Tuesday, 17th August, 1915.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Medical, Health, Factories, Early Closing annual report for 1914. 2, Industries Assistance Act, 1915, regulations 1 to 6 inclusive. 3, University of Western Australia Act, 1911, Statutes Nos. 16 and 17. 4, Health Act, 1911-12: (a) Avon Roads Board—resolution; (b) Donnybrook Local Health Authority—by-laws; (c) Kalgoorlie Roads Board—amendment of By-law No. 16. 5, Return of claims received for resumed lands for period 1st July, 1911, to 30th June, 1915 (asked for by Hon. H. Carson).

### WAR BETWEEN BRITAIN AND GERMANY, ANNIVERSARY OF DECLARATION.

*Letters from the Governor.*

The PRESIDENT: I have received the following communications from His Excellency the Governor:—

9th August, 1915. Sir, I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant forwarding copy of a resolution passed by the Legislative Council on the 4th instant, and to inform you His Excellency has been pleased to cable the resolution to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Sgd, H. F. Wilkinson, Major, Private Secretary.