

days, which would not be sufficient to allow a tenant to find suitable alternative accommodation. The hardship would be greater on those in lower income brackets, as most of the accommodation available today is at a rental greater than those people could afford to pay. I know of instances where new Australians have bought homes and required possession of them and the tenants have been old-age pensioners who have occupied the premises for many years.

The hardship is greater still when the pensioner is a single unit, because he is not eligible for assistance from the State Housing Commission, not being able to pay the rent; and, as a single unit, he cannot be helped by the McNess Trust. I believe that, in all the circumstances, 28 days is a reasonable period from the point of view of both landlord and tenant. I would like the member for Nedlands to indicate how we could retain the 28 days' provision.

Mr. COURT: Subsection (1) of Section 20B would remain even if the Government had not brought forward the measure to extend the application of Section 20B beyond the 31st August, 1956. Subsection (4) only puts the time factor on Subsections (2) and (3), and it was always intended that Subsection (1) would continue so long as the principal Act governed by Section 33 prevailed. It has not been proposed by any member on this side of the Chamber to defeat Subsections (2), (3) and (4). All we ask is that both Houses of Parliament be given further opportunity, between now and the end of the session, to decide whether the provisions of Subsections (2), (3) and (4) should be retained for the extended period to December, 1957, as proposed in the measure.

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

Ayes	15
Noes	20
Majority against	5

Ayes.

Mr. Ackland	Mr. Nalder
Mr. Bovell	Mr. Oldfield
Mr. Brand	Mr. Owen
Mr. Cornell	Mr. Perkins
Mr. Court	Mr. Roberts
Mr. Crommelin	Mr. Wild
Mr. I. Manning	Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. W. Manning	(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Andrew	Mr. Lawrence
Mr. Brady	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Evans	Mr. Norton
Mr. Gaffy	Mr. Nulsen
Mr. Hall	Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Heal	Mr. Potter
Mr. Hoar	Mr. Rhatigan
Mr. Jamieson	Mr. Sewell
Mr. Johnson	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Lapham	Mr. May

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Grayden	Mr. Kelly
Mr. McLarty	Mr. Hawke
Mr. Watts	Mr. W. Hegney
Mr. Mann	Mr. Rodoreda
Mr. Hearman	Mr. Tonkin
Mr. Thorn	Mr. Toms

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. E. K. Hoar—Warren): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put.

House adjourned at 10.53 p.m.

Legislative Council

Thursday, 23rd August, 1956.

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

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieut.-Governor received and read notifying assent to the Supply Bill (No. 1), £19,000,000.

QUESTIONS.

TRAFFIC.

Convictions and Revenue.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN asked the Chief Secretary:

(1) How many convictions were obtained against motorists for minor offences as defined in Appendix A to Part XI of the Traffic Regulations for:—

(a) six months prior to the amendment to the Traffic Act in 1955;

(b) six months subsequent to the new regulations coming into force.

(2) What amount of revenue was obtained for each of the periods referred to in (a) and (b) of the previous questions?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

(1)

(a) Period 1/7/55 to 31/12/55 (Perth Court only)	12,209
(b) Period 1/1/56 to 30/6/56—	
(i) Traffic Court, Perth	9,319
(ii) Minor traffic offences new regulations (metropolitan area)—	
Perth and Midland Junction	12,863
Fremantle	1,032
	23,214

Cases referred to in (1) were mainly in respect of offences committed prior to 31/12/55 but not dealt with until after 1/1/56.

(2)

	£	£
(a) Period 1/7/55 to 31/12/55 (Perth Court only)		23,058
(b) Period 1/1/56 to 30/6/56—		
(i) Traffic Court (Perth only)	14,361	
(ii) Minor traffic offences new regulations (metropolitan area)—		
Perth and Midland Junction	7,911	
Fremantle	588	22,860

The above figures are for charges heard in the Perth Traffic Court only, whereas the figures for the offences dealt with under the new minor offences regulations are in respect of the whole of the metropolitan area.

The figures for charges dealt with in the Fremantle and Midland Junction courts would, if required by the hon. member take some considerable time to ascertain.

BASIC WAGE.

Annual Cost of Rise to Departments.

Hon. L. A. LOGAN asked the Chief Secretary:

What amount of extra salaries and wages would it cost per annum on a 10s. per week rise in the basic wage for the following departments:—

- Railways;
- Tramways;
- Water Supply;
- Main Roads?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied:

The estimated amounts based on 10s. per week rise are as follows:—

- £350,000;
- £26,000;
- £39,000;
- £52,000.

TIMBER.

Haulage and Freight on Esperance-Goldfields Line.

Hon. J. M. A. CUNNINGHAM asked the Minister for Railways:

(1) What is the tonnage of timber and firewood used for mining and other purposes hauled on the Esperance line to the Goldfields for the 24 months prior to the last general increase in freights?

(2) What is the tonnage hauled over the same line for the 24 months since that date?

(3) What was the value in freight charges received for this commodity for each period?

The MINISTER replied:

(1) From the 1st October, 1951, to the 30th September, 1953—34,686 tons.

(2) From the 1st October, 1953, to the 30th September, 1955—10,190 tons.

(3) £55,420 and £21,549 respectively.

BILL—RENTS AND TENANCIES EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT CONTINUANCE.

First Reading.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: The intention of this Bill is the continuance of the operation of the parent Act for a further 12 months. As members are aware, the Act may be divided into two sections—that which deals with evictions, the provisions for which expire on the 31st August this year; and the rental provisions which expire on the 31st December next.

Dealing with that part of the Act concerning rents, I would like to mention that the rent lawfully chargeable is that agreed upon between the landlord and the tenant, subject to the right of either party to approach the Fair Rents Court or the rent inspector.

All premises—business and residential—are covered, excluding—

- The Crown, Commonwealth or State.
- The State Housing Commission.
- The McNess Housing Trust.

- (4) Publican's general licence, hotel licence, wayside house licence, etc.
- (5) Premises used as a grazing area, farm, orchard, vineyard, market garden, dairy farm, poultry farm, pig farm, apiary.
- (6) Premises leased for holiday purposes, where the period of lease to any one lessee does not exceed 12 weeks.
- (7) Premises which for the first time or otherwise, are leased for a period of not less than three years.

The Act provides for the establishment of fair rents courts constituted by a magistrate. At present there is only one court, that known as the Metropolitan Fair Rents Court which takes in the magisterial districts of Perth, Fremantle and Midland Junction. Other fair rents courts may be constituted and assigned to other portions of the State as the Minister recommends.

All applications for determination of rent of any premises (except parts of premises, applications in respect of which may be lodged with the rent inspector) are lodged with the local court nearest to the premises, irrespective of the existence of a fair rents court in that district. Such application shall then be referred by the Local Court to the fair rents court. If there is no fair rents court in the district, the application may be dealt with by the Local Court.

As I have already stated, the landlord and tenant may agree as to the rent of premises. Despite such agreement, however, either party has the right to apply to the court or rent inspector to determine the rent. Neither the court nor the rent inspector has authority to alter or vary the rent of premises leased for a period of two years or more. The rent inspector can still continue to determine rent of parts of residential premises, but not self-contained flats which are completely closed off, and which include both cooking and bathing facilities. Applications in respect of self-contained flats must be lodged with the court.

It is provided in the Act that when fixing rents, the court or the rent inspector shall take into consideration any factors which are considered relevant. Such rent shall be based on the present-day capital value, to yield a net return of not less than 2 per cent. and not more than 8 per cent. The rent of parts of premises may be higher, if considered necessary.

If a lessee is given notice to quit premises, the rent of such premises on and after the date of such notice, shall not, except by a determination of the rent inspector or the court, exceed the amount of rent lawfully chargeable on the first day of the month before the month in which such notice is given.

Parties who have agreed to a rent of premises previously determined may make application for a further determination at any time; but where a determination is made after agreement, no further application can be made within six months of such determination.

Turning now to the eviction provisions, a lessor must give at least 28 days' notice to quit before commencing eviction proceedings. If on the hearing severe hardship is proved by the lessee, the court may suspend the operation of an order for eviction for any period up to three months.

Where a lessee not under notice to quit lodges an application for determination of rent with the court or rent inspector, a notice to quit cannot be given until the expiration of a period of three months from the date of lodging the application. If it is an application dealt with by the court and not the inspector, and the rent is determined at less than 80 per cent. of the rent at the time of application, the lessee has protection for 12 months after the date of the determination. This protection to the lessee expires on the 31st August, and may be set aside by the court if it is satisfied that the lessee has during his tenancy:—

- (a) failed to pay the rent for 28 days;
- (b) failed to perform a condition of his tenancy;
- (c) failed to take reasonable care of the premises;
- (d) been guilty of a nuisance;
- (e) used the premises for an illegal purpose;
- (f) become the occupant without the consent of the lessor.

As already stated, the Act continues in force until the 31st December, 1956, with the exception of those provisions dealing with evictions, which expire on the 31st August, 1956.

The Act which now operates is somewhat different from the original Act which was passed in 1939 and subsequent amendments up until 1951. During that period the various Acts had contributed largely towards checking inflationary trends in rents and provided a certain protection from eviction consistent with circumstances. Since 1951, however, the measure of control has been modified until today very little remains of the original Act. The law today does, however, provide some measure of protection.

The fact that there is a Fair Rents Court to which either party may appeal for the determination of a fair rent is beneficial to all concerned because it gives the opportunity for either party to air a grievance or difference of opinion. It is, too, a restraining influence on exorbitant rentals.

The unemployment conditions which are existing now are another reason why the continuance of this Act is necessary, and particularly would this be so with regard to protection from eviction.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: In other words, the landlord must be responsible for the unemployed not paying rent.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member will no doubt tell us about that phase. I am sure he will not be silent about it.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: I certainly will not be silent.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Eviction orders made by the courts as from the 1st August, 1955, to the 31st July, 1956, were:—

Perth	....	441
Fremantle	....	98
Midland Junction	....	30
		<hr/> 569

Determinations of fair rents were:—

Fair rents court—

Applications	....	59
Withdrawn	....	20
Determined	....	42

Rent inspector—

Applications	....	47
Withdrawn	....	7
Determined	....	40

With regard to the 569 eviction cases dealt with by the courts, 295 have been offered accommodation by the Housing Commission.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Is that inclusive of State houses?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Seeing that the State Housing Commission does not come within the Act—

Hon. H. K. Watson: Their cases go to court.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In that event State houses could possibly be included. I do not know what the hon. member intends to prove by his interjection.

Hon. H. K. Watson: I wanted to seek information.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member is seeking information which he is able to give. Some evictees, apparently, did not approach the commission and no doubt have secured other accommodation. The number of applications dealt with by the rent inspector does not reflect the volume of work performed by the staff which number two. There are considerable enquiries concerning the operations of the Act, but, in many cases, no assistance can be given because of the exclusion from the

provisions of the Act of leases for a term of three years or more. This exclusion was inserted in the Act two sessions ago by another place. Despite this restriction, however, the fact that the Act does exist provides some measure of protection for landlord and tenant alike. That is all there is to the Bill. It is quite a simple measure. All we are asking for is a continuance of the Act for one year.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: And do the same thing next year.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If members were genuine in their utterances last year and considered it necessary for the Act to continue, how could they say that they would not agree to a continuance Bill this year?

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Members agreed it was necessary for a period, not for ever.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The necessity is even greater this year than it was last year.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: How do you make that out?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The conditions today are much worse than they were 12 months ago.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: No!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: So if there were justification for the continuance of this Act last year, there is much more reason for it to be continued now.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Who told you that one?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: However, I am not going to anticipate members opposing this measure, because I think they would be hard put to find some excuse for doing so. Having that in mind, I merely move at this stage—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. H. K. WATSON (Metropolitan) [4.51]: It seems to me that this Bill is a pretty good illustration of much ado about nothing. Here we are, in 1956, asked to suspend Standing Orders and put through without delay a Bill to extend this Act, notwithstanding the fact that the Chief Secretary himself, in introducing a continuance Bill as far back as 1954, said that he trusted that would be the last occasion on which such a measure would be brought down—

The Chief Secretary: I can say that again, too.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: —as circumstances were easing all the time. And they certainly have eased during the past two years.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: But now he says they are getting worse.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I would certainly decline to accept the Chief Secretary's statement that today conditions are worse than ever.

The Chief Secretary: I did not say that. I said they were worse than last year.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: The Minister for Housing has told the world that housing conditions are better than ever they were. I understand the position is that the Housing Commission has either reached, or is fast reaching, the stage at which there is or will be a surplus of housing and a search for tenants.

The Chief Secretary: You know that in the last few months there has been a recession in the number of houses built.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: On the contrary, the number of houses being built is still pretty extensive.

The Chief Secretary: There would not be half as many as at this time last year.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: The Chief Secretary also mentioned that all the Bill does is to extend the Act for another 12 months. If that were so, then although I consider that the measure has outlived its usefulness, I would feel that I could not seriously oppose the extension of the measure for a further 12 months. But the parent Act is not merely being extended for a further 12 months. If the parent Act were being extended for 12 months, all that would be necessary would be those provisions which appear in Clause 3 of the Bill and which simply say, in effect, that the Act as it stands shall continue until the 31st December, 1957.

Let us have a look at the parent Act; and let us remember that, as the Chief Secretary mentioned in his second reading speech, it provides for the establishment of fair rents courts. It also provides that any landlord or tenant can go to a court and have a rent fixed not exceeding 8 per cent. per annum. It also provides that a tenant cannot be evicted without having received 28 days' notice and without, on the expiration of another month or two, having his eviction case heard. But there must be 28 days' notice. In addition, the Act provides that if a landlord does give a tenant notice, and evicts him, he cannot thereafter increase the rent of the premises without the permission of the court.

Those are the basic provisions of the Act, and I submit that they afford all the protection that any tenant requires or is entitled to receive at present. He can go to the court, and he must be given 28 days' notice before eviction proceedings can be launched. Then, if the landlord does give a tenant notice to quit, he cannot increase the rent of the premises unless he first goes to the court. Twelve months ago Parliament said that those provisions

should continue until December 1956, with a view either to their termination, or their review and extension at that time.

In addition to those basic provisions, we also inserted in the measure two or three special provisions that were not intended to be basic, but were simply to cover the transitional period from a state of complete control to one of modified control. Those special provisions are to be found in Subsections (2) and (3) of Section 20B of the parent Act. But we made it very clear that they were special provisions.

One was that if a tenant applied to the court for a reduction of his rent, the landlord in such case could not give him notice for a period of three months. We had been led to believe that the court would be flooded with applications, and it might well be that a tenant's case could not be heard for one month, or two or three months; and that was the reason for the insertion of that provision. But we know from the last two years' experience that the case has been entirely different.

Then there was a further provision that if a tenant, having applied to the court, succeeded in securing a reduction of his rent by 20 per cent.—and 20 per cent. is not a very large amount—the landlord could not evict him for a period of one year.

The Chief Secretary: Not long enough.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Again, we included that provision as a special protection during the transitional period to save the tenant from hasty eviction. There was a further provision that the magistrate could, even after the 28 days' notice and the month or two that elapsed after the issue of the notice, give a further period up to three months before the tenant was evicted.

To emphasise that those three provisions, which are found in Subsections (2) and (3) of Section 20B, and which I have mentioned, were purely transitional and not to be regarded as part and parcel of the Act if it was to be continued in the future, Section 20B, contained the special provision that those two subsections should cease to operate on the 31st August, 1956.

The two years' transitional period has expired, and it seems to me that those two subsections should be allowed to expire as was contemplated by the Act and intended by Parliament. No mention was made in His Excellency's Speech of any intention to continue this Act for another 12 months, much less amend it to make the transitional provisions continue. I have no serious objection to continuing the Act as regards its basic provisions—the 28 days' notice, the right of the tenant to go to the court and the restriction on the landlord against increasing the rent after he has given the tenant notice—but I feel that

the special transitional provisions which were intended to expire on the 31st August, 1956, should be allowed to expire on that date.

The Chief Secretary: You do not mind a man continuing to live, so long as he can live after being disembowelled.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: That sort of thing might be all right on the Esplanade, but I think the interjection is unworthy of this Chamber.

The Chief Secretary: It describes the position.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: It does nothing of the kind.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: In that case the Crown and not an individual should find a home for the person concerned.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: It is interesting to study the operation of the basic principles of the Act. We have a fair rents court and a magistrate specially appointed to act in that capacity, with all the paraphernalia of the court. Yet during the past year that magistrate has received only 59 applications for the determination of fair rent: an average of one a week. I repeat: 59 applications in the year out of a total of about 34,000 tenanted premises. Does the Chief Secretary think the negligible number of approaches to the court by landlords or tenants to exercise the functions it was supposed to exercise, warrants the expense of the establishment and maintenance of that court?

The Chief Secretary: I do.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I am inclined to doubt it, and I see nothing in the activity of that court during the past 12 months to warrant its being carried on.

The Chief Secretary: There are many policemen who do not make an arrest in the course of 12 months, yet we could not do without them.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: The number of applications dealt with by the rent inspector is equally negligible—47 during the year, or less than one per week—and I think the figures speak for themselves.

The Chief Secretary: If they are so innocuous, why worry about them?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I am not worrying to that extent; and at a pinch, I do not mind the Government having this control for another 12 months. But if a thing is useless, why have it on the statute book?

The Chief Secretary: Why worry about it?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: The statute book is cluttered up with sufficient unnecessary restrictions, without that.

The Chief Secretary: You are going to a lot of trouble about something which does not hurt.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: It can hurt a few people. Are we to continue spending £4,000 or £5,000 per year to have a magistrate deal with 50 cases and reduce the rents from perhaps £5 5s. per week to £4 17s. per week, and tell a landlord that he cannot put a man out for another 12 months? I repeat that I think those transitional provisions should be allowed to lapse as was intended when they were put in the legislation.

The Chief Secretary: Who said they were special provisions when they were included?

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Parliament did; and that was why Subsection (4) of Section 20B. was put in.

The Chief Secretary: It was on the 23rd August, 1956, that I first heard that these were special provisions.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: Then the Chief Secretary must have been either asleep or out of the Chamber when I moved for the inclusion of these provisions and gave the reasons for them. If the whole of the measure went overboard it would not have the slightest bearing on the general rental or economic position in respect of housing. Nevertheless I will not oppose the second reading. When the Bill is in Committee, however, I think we should strike out Clause 2, and simply carry forward the basic provisions of the parent Act for a further 12 months.

HON. A. F. GRIFFITH (Suburban) [5.28]: The speech made by the Chief Secretary when introducing the Bill, and the reply we have heard from Mr. Watson, leaves me in an uncertain frame of mind concerning the necessity for this measure, any way.

The Chief Secretary: You would not be uncertain if you examined the Bill and the position.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The first thing that comes to my mind is that, if this matter is so urgent, why do we find ourselves on the 23rd August, 1956, considering the terms of a measure, or some of the terms of a measure, which expire in exactly eight days' time?

The Chief Secretary: Because the Legislative Council made the date the 31st August instead of the 31st December.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Is that the reason? We have been sitting for nearly a month and there has been no move by the Chief Secretary to suspend Standing Orders.

The Chief Secretary: I told you that it was because of the conference of Premiers to discuss urgent affairs.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That is a poor excuse.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Let us assume that was the reason. What did the Chief Secretary expect the Premier to come back with from the Canberra conference in connection with this Bill?

The Chief Secretary: He did not know, because the Federal Government did not tell him before he went why he was going.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Yes, they did.

The Chief Secretary: No, they did not; he was only told at Melbourne airport.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Even if that was a fact, the question I ask is: What did the Premier hope to obtain from the Canberra conference which would affect the introduction of this Bill?

The Chief Secretary: It could have affected a lot of things.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: How? Does the Chief Secretary mean that if the Treasurer had come back with something from Canberra he would not have introduced a Bill to amend the legislation on the statute book? Is that what we are expected to believe?

The Chief Secretary: No.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Well, if we are not expected to believe that, surely we can be expected to believe some attention should have been given to the matter before Tuesday evening of this week. This is my point: the haste in which the legislation was brought down, and the necessity for you, Mr. President, to leave the Chair while members had a talk about it—also in haste—to see if anything could be done.

The Chief Secretary: Supposing I plead guilty on all counts, could we deal with the points in the Bill?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: The Chief Secretary does plead guilty?

The Chief Secretary: No.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Obviously the Chief Secretary must feel guilty.

The Chief Secretary: I will do anything for a quiet life.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: This question of housing is one which has been before the House for years and years, and we have listened to so many disconcerting statements. We have heard the present Minister for Housing on numerous occasions say, "What a magnificent job this Government is doing."

The Chief Secretary: Quite true, too.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: He says the housing problem has been solved; yet there is the necessity to bring down a Bill of this nature to protect people who somebody imagines need protection. What are we to believe?

The Chief Secretary: You are able to believe your own ears and eyes.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: If that is the way we can make up our minds, I will refer members to a statement which appeared in "The West Australian" of the 5th May, 1955. It is headed in black letters "Housing Problem 'Solved,' Says Minister." The statement goes on to say—

Statistics indicated that the housing problem in Australia had been solved, the Minister for Housing (Mr. Graham) said in Perth yesterday.

Ten thousand houses had been built in Western Australia since the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement was signed in 1946, he said.

The Chief Secretary says I must believe my ears and eyes, so I can believe the Minister for Housing when he says the housing problem has been solved.

The Minister for Railways: You do not deny that, do you?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I am neither denying nor agreeing; I am simply saying that it is no wonder people do not know where to turn on this matter. On the one hand, it is said there is no difficulty; and on the other, the Chief Secretary says there is a difficulty.

The Chief Secretary: Nothing has happened since 1955, has it?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not follow what the Chief Secretary means. Houses have continued to be built. As a matter of fact, the Minister for Housing, in another place, says housing costs have come down.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: And rents have gone up.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I have a statement here in which the Minister for Housing says the cost of houses has gone down £300 per house.

The Chief Secretary: Why?

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: That is not material to this debate, but I shall take the matter up on the Address-in-reply. On the 29th September, 1954, the Minister for Housing was quoted as saying—

It was believed that there would be fewer court applications for rent determinations than had been expected at first.

So, once again, this sort of thing leaves us in an uncertain state of mind. Perhaps the Minister was misquoted, as he so often claims to be.

I feel this matter should have been given attention much earlier. The Government should realise that some Bills expire on a certain date, and should not wait until six, seven, or eight days before the date of expiry to ask for a suspension of Standing Orders and request members to consider a Bill in all stages in one day. We are entitled to consider these matters; and, as a member of this Chamber, I protest and hope it

will not happen in the future. We should have ample time to consider all legislation.

I think the introduction of this Bill is in keeping with a plan. The Government hates the Legislative Council, and I believe the Bill is being presented here in conformity with the plan, in the hope that the Legislative Council will throw it out and the Government will be able to print more pamphlets about members who throw out these Bills, despite the fact that the wisdom of the Legislative Council in these matters has been greater than anticipated by the Government.

The situation is almost now back to normal—according to the Minister for Housing, there is no housing problem—and I hope that we will get more time to consider legislation and not be asked to hurry over it and get it through before the clock strikes 6 p.m.

HON. N. E. BAXTER (Central) [5.37]: When the Chief Secretary introduced the Bill this evening, as usual he described it as a simple measure. The words in the Bill certainly appear simple; but they are not so simple as some poor people would be led to believe. The Chief Secretary, by way of interjection when Mr. Griffith was speaking, suggested that Mr. Griffith examine the position. But I suggest it is the Chief Secretary who should do so. If he examines the position today, he will find it entirely different from what he assumes. I would point out that six months ago if a person inserted an advertisement in the paper to let a house and put his name in that advertisement he would be swamped out by a queue of people replying to it. But today, after inserting many advertisements, he would not receive one application.

Hon. G. Bennetts: Perhaps rents are too high.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: People today are more selective. I do not mind the main provisions of this measure applying for another 12 months but I seriously object to Subsection 20B of the Act. When introducing the Bill, the Chief Secretary said that this gave full protection to both the tenant and the landlord; but I say it protects only the tenant. Right through the Act there is no provision which gives protection to a landlord.

Today, an owner can let a house and the tenants may do a lot of damage; and when the landlord gives them notice—and it must be 28 days—the wrecking goes on, and another fortnight elapses before a magistrate will hear the case, after which he gives the tenants another three weeks in which to move out. Take a person who is in arrear with his rent. The average landlord would not worry him for two or three weeks, but might then decide that something must be done. He could then give him 28 days' notice.

The tenant is already a fortnight behind in his rent; and before the landlord can get the case before a magistrate, he is a further eight weeks in arrear, on top of which the magistrate may give him further time to move out. There is no hope of getting money from tenants when they are so far behind. It costs up to £20 to get an eviction order against such people; and if a landlord tries to secure the five guineas that are granted by the magistrate as costs, the tenant cannot pay that, either, so the landlord is still £20 out of pocket. This is a nice Act for tenants, but it affects landlords very adversely.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: The tenant has got to pay the cost of the action.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: If a person did not pay his rent, he could be given notice to quit in seven days; and after that the landlord could put the bailiff in. But this does not protect the landlord to any great extent.

Hon. E. M. Davies: The bailiff does not go in.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: He only goes in after the period set by the magistrate has elapsed, to ensure that the people have left the premises. The hon. member has had more experience than I have, and I would welcome his assistance in getting people out of properties under this Act. He does not understand that a bailiff cannot be put in until one has a court order to get the people out. The hon. member is only talking poppycock. I will quote an example of a case I know where a person wanted to purchase a house and paid a deposit. From the day that person went into the house, he never attempted to pay one penny of the payment.

Hon. E. M. Davies: Would it be with tenancy?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: That has a lot to do with it. I shall quote another case. It was decided between the tenant and the owner that they would try to sell by private treaty. When the house did not sell in a reasonable period it was put up for auction but again it did not sell. A further attempt was made to sell by private treaty, and the occupant got abusive when anyone had a look at it. Finally an eviction order had to be taken out. The whole of that matter was handled by solicitors who know what they are doing, and not by laymen like the hon. member and myself. That shows just how much poppycock he is talking!

Hon. E. M. Davies: Did they not pay a deposit? You will not answer that.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Now we get on to the rental side. Members brought up the unemployment problem. What happens is that a person gets behind in his rent, and this type of tenant usually finishes up unemployed as well. He does not

go near the agent or the owner to say that he is out of a job until he has been out of work for three weeks. Then he goes along and says he cannot pay the rent. What does the owner do? He still has to give the tenant the 28 days' notice and take him to court. In the meantime he, the owner, does not receive any rent. This is what is going on today under Section 20B.

The House should reject Clause 2, leave the provisions as they stand in the rest of the Act, and give the landlord a fair crack. I do not say everyone is taking advantage of this, but certain types of people are. Some landlords are unfortunate to get into their houses people who take advantage of Section 20B. There are some who are doing that and using it to their own ends; to a jolly good purpose. I wanted to mention another matter in this connection but the hon. member opposite has put me off quite a deal.

As Mr. Watson told the Chief Secretary, when we agreed to this Clause 20B, it was for the transitional period—the 12 months from the 31st August last year to the 31st August this year—until things settled down and we caught up with the housing position, as illustrated by Mr. Griffin, what was said by the Minister for Housing and what has occurred in this city. There are at least 400 empty homes—untenanted—for sale in the city. They are untenanted because the type of tenant available is not acceptable to the landlord.

The Chief Secretary: Because they cannot pay the rent that is required.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: It is not a case of not being able to pay the rent required. There are premises in the city available at reasonable rentals, but the type of people offering for them are not acceptable to the landlords. Surely a landlord has the right to say what type of person he is going to put into his house! Members opposite have indicated that these places are untenanted because the rent is too high. In most instances the rent is fair, and if the tenant does think it is too high and he goes into the place, he has recourse against the landlord under the Act.

Hon. E. M. Davies: What happens then?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The tenant has occupancy of the premises for 12 months before he can be evicted again. This is purely an Act for tenants; it does not protect landlords in any way. At the same time, it is absolutely detrimental to those people who would today attempt to build or purchase homes for letting purposes.

The Chief Secretary: What about your introducing a landlord protection Act?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: How many private builders today are building properties to let? I do not know of one; whereas at one time it was common for builders to erect homes as an investment.

The Chief Secretary: How many have built that way since 1929?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I admit we have not been —

The Chief Secretary: Not since 1929.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: That is because of the position that has arisen in the State.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Because the Government has become the landlord.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Yes. People will not build while this restrictive legislation is over their heads, because the investment is not worthwhile.

The Chief Secretary: They were not building even before this Act was thought of.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Prior to the war there were still builders who were building houses; and when the Chief Secretary mentions 1929, he is talking a lot of hot air. There are still people today who have money to invest and who are prepared to buy houses and let them for a reasonable return. But what is the result? Under this measure they would not dream of building, because they could buy a decent house and let it to a tenant, and, before they could get the tenant out under Section 20B, the place could be wrecked. I mentioned the case I quoted of a person who purchased a house but did not keep up the payments for this reason: During the period that the purchasers were in the property they not only did not look after it in a normal way, but almost wrecked it.

I do not know whether the children, the parents or animals were responsible, but there were holes through the flywire doors and windows—it was a brick house—and boards were knocked off the garage doors. The place was left in a disgraceful condition. They never even put on the sprinklers to keep the lawns in order. It is this type of person that the section favours.

Members can go through the metropolitan area, as I do, and see houses that are tenanted. They can compare such a place with the one next door—an identical property almost—and they can pick out which is the tenanted house and which is the occupier-owned house. Around the rental house the grass will be high in the front garden, and the place will be marked. Members cannot tell me anything about tenanted premises after the experience I have had in the last 18 months. If they got around a little themselves and observed what was going on, they would realise what this Act is doing to tenancy houses in this city.

I ask members to give serious consideration to Clause 2 when the Bill is in the Committee stage, and see if we can throw it out and leave the rest of the Act to operate until next year when we will not need such legislation.

HON SIR CHARLES LATHAM (Central) [5.53]: I am looking at the Bill from two angles. In the first place, I fully realise that the State has become the landlord of dwellings—more so, probably, than of business concerns, although it has become a landlord of business concerns, too. I ask myself, what is the objective. Is it to prevent people from investing money in homes?

Until the war broke out, this city was built up principally by people who were prepared to invest their money in buildings; mainly homes. In consequence, we had people who were renting houses and, in some cases, buying them on time payment. I admit, of course, that during the depression period some problems arose; but they were overcome.

I ask the Government whether it thinks it is the function of a Government to build houses and become a landlord. If it is, are we going to get to what is known in other countries as the "welfare State"? In that event, I do not know whether Parliament will be needed. If it is, we will be made to do what we are expected to do today—namely, just what the Minister tells us shall be done.

Personally I have two complaints. One is that this legislation has been left to the last minute. That is because either the officer in charge of it neglected to bring to the notice of the Minister that an important section would cease to exist after the 31st of this month; or else it was deliberately done so as to push the Bill through the House without consideration being given to it.

The Chief Secretary: I told you the reason why.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is dreadful to me. The Chief Secretary said it was because the Federal Treasurer decided to call a meeting, but did not tell the Premiers what they were to discuss. That is a weak one! I have heard a few, but the Minister is getting a bit weak now! I have heard him put up far better suggestions than that.

The Chief Secretary: It would not matter what the argument was, it would still be weak to you.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is so, because there is no excuse. Somebody is at fault somewhere. Why could we not have called the House together in July, as we often do, treating the matter as urgent?

Hon. A. F. Griffith: We had a special session on rents once.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: There are plenty of old people in this city who, in the course of their lives, have acquired several houses; one in which they live, and perhaps a couple of others to provide an income. There are in our community many people who are reluctant to go to the Commonwealth Government for the

old-age pension and who built houses and let them, because they wanted to remain independent. We are now asked to say to those people, "You can get your tenants in; but once you have them there, you will not have the power which the State Housing Commission has to put them out if they do not pay the rent or damage the property." I would remind members that there are plenty of evictions of tenants from Government-owned houses.

In the report of the Stipendiary Magistrate dated the 5th July, 1955, we read that the net annual percentage return allowed by the court remains the same. For example: Self-contained dwellings, 5 per cent.; self-contained flats and shared accommodation, 6 per cent.; and furniture, 20 per cent. Would any member here care to let a house under the conditions that we are asked to enforce by law, with a 5 per cent. return? No one will put money into property under those conditions.

Legislation such as this is forcing us into a welfare State where the Government will have to care for us all. No wonder the value of our currency is falling! This is the sort of thing that is causing it to depreciate in value. I am reluctant to prevent the Government having its own way. But let us make no mistake, the next three years will tell the tale, and I would not like to have the Government's job during that time.

The Chief Secretary: Then why not help the Government?

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The Federal Government, foolishly, said, "We will find the money and you can spend it," and the States agreed. The position is like that of a naughty boy with a generous father. The States have no respect for finance when they can help themselves to somebody else's treasury. I would like to see the responsibility of raising revenue returned to the local Treasurer, because then we would not have this class of legislation before us. I am prepared to allow the Minister to retain this control until the end of the year, and then, when we have had a better opportunity of examining the legislation, we can decide whether it should continue for a further year. Later in the session the Minister can introduce another continuance Bill, if it is thought necessary. If this House passes that measure there will be no need for the Chief Secretary to worry. The Government has not the numbers here, although it has them in another place.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: We have never had the numbers here.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Then how did the Government get the legislation through? Not by a minority vote!

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: You did it by pressure in your own districts.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is a funny story. We are not all like the people at Fremantle. I look at the three

members representing that area, and I think that it must be the welfare state where they want everything done by the Government. I would remind members that a tenant who does not pay the rent or knocks a building about must receive 28 days' notice, and then application must be made to the court. I believe the court sits once a month and it might give him another three months to get out.

Hon. E. M. Davies: The landlord has the right to inspect his property.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: What good does that do? I saw a house in Maylands where it had taken the owner four months to get the tenant out; and, in my opinion, it would cost at least £800 to put the premises in ordinary repair again. The doors were broken off their hinges, the windows were smashed, and the copper in the laundry had a big hole in it. The whole place was in a deplorable condition; and I do not think it is fair that any landlord should have to suffer in that way, because we protect the tenant. We should be sensible about legislation of this sort.

The Chief Secretary: It is about time.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: If the Minister will agree to give us an opportunity of re-examining the position later, we will extend the period to the end of the year. At that stage the Chief Secretary can bring down a further measure.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West—in reply) [6.2]: I wish to thank members for putting up the weakest case I have heard against a measure in this Chamber.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Do not put us off your case—because that is what you are doing.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am referring only to those who did speak. I thank them for that effort because there is so little I have to reply to.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: You cannot reply to nothing.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I said it was a weak case and did not use the word "nothing". Mr. Watson said an interjection of mine was like something one would expect to hear on the Esplanade, but it described the situation aptly. Mr. Watson said, "We will let you have the Bill, but we will take three-quarters of it away".

Hon. H. K. Watson: No, less than one-tenth of it!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: He wanted to take away the vital parts of the Bill.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: You knew last session that it was going to be done.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I did not know until the hon. member mentioned it here today.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Then why do you think the 31st August was included?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Because the hon. member and others like him forced it in. I have said all the time that it is a silly date to have there. I can recollect on no previous occasion being required to deal with this measure before the completion of the Address-in-reply debate.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That was because you lost your majority in the other House last session.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Some date other than the 31st August would have been more suitable, because we have been accused of rushing this legislation through, notwithstanding Sir Charles Latham's remarks about a weak excuse. What I told him and told the House is true. This matter was discussed by Cabinet over a month ago, because we knew it had to be completed before the 31st August. It was about that time that the Premier was advised of a conference being called by the Commonwealth Government because of the situation in Australia today.

Cabinet decided that, in view of the fact that questions of this description—in fact all questions dealing with inflation—would be discussed, it would not do anything about this measure until the Premier had attended the conference, or had at least seen the agenda. Unfortunately, however, the day the Premier left here he was asked by the Commonwealth authorities in Canberra where would be a suitable place to send the screeds in connection with the conference.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: How can you connect a conference to deal with inflation with this Bill?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Does not the hon. member believe that rents have something to do with inflation?

Hon. A. F. Griffith: Do not bus fares have something to do with inflation?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course rents and prices, and everything of that description have something to do with inflation; that is what the conference was supposed to deal with. The Premier had to reply, and so he advised them to send the papers to the Melbourne airport and that he would pick them up there, which he did. It was not until he came back that we were able to decide anything in regard to the legislation, the reason being that nothing had eventuated at the conference. No matter how weak that may appear to the hon. member, I have given him the facts.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Not very strong.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course, nothing is strong if the hon. member does not want it be strong, and nothing is strong if one wants to excuse someone for not having done a proper job; and a proper job was not done because this State was not notified about what was to be discussed at the conference.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Poor old Commonwealth!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not blaming the Commonwealth in any shape or form. I am merely giving members the facts and telling them why this legislation was not introduced a couple of weeks ago.

Hon. H. K. Watson: But the Act does not expire until the 31st December.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: But there are certain portions, and very important ones, which expire on the 31st August.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That was put in because you lost your majority in the other Chamber last session.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It was put in so that the legislation would be dealt with at this time of the session instead of our having to wait until the end of the session when it might be regarded as rushed legislation. At least, that was said to be the reason for the date but, if I remember rightly, I wanted to have the date set about the middle of September or October. However, my proposition was defeated and the 31st August was inserted. Mr. Griffith quoted the Minister for Housing as saying, in May 1955, what the housing position was. But very often the hon. member picks on a subject and does not look at all the facts; in this case he has not looked at all the facts and at what has occurred since May, 1955, when that statement was made.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I only repeated what the Minister had said.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Why repeat it if you are not putting up something that is final?

Hon. A. F. Griffith: I thought it was final.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It was, to a large extent, the position at that time.

Hon. H. K. Watson: It still is.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The hon. member knows better than I do that that is not so.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Then what has happened?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: He knows that the bottom is falling out of the building trade. He also knows that some thousands of migrants have entered this country in the last 12 months and that has made the housing position so much worse. The hon. member knows, too, that the price of houses is falling. Why? Because the money is not there to invest in the building trade, and that has been the case for the last 12 months. I have many friends who have been to the banks but the banks will not allow them credit for home building. So with the tightening up of finance for building, the situation has reached the stage, because of the extra population, where we are worse off today

than we were 12 or 15 months ago. Members do not need me to tell them that, because they know it is true.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: And they will be worse over the next two years.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is getting worse all the time; and that is why I say to the hon. member that he should support this legislation so that there is some protection on the statute book to meet a situation that is likely to occur.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Make it the individual's responsibility.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No, we are not doing that at all.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: That is what you are doing.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We are giving necessary protection to the people of this State.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Lifting the responsibility from one person and putting it on another.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Giving a fair deal to all sections.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: No.

Hon. A. F. Griffith: How can the Chief Secretary reconcile all this with the fact that the Minister for Housing said that applications to the court had been fewer than he expected?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Of course they have been, and they will be fewer still because of the state of this legislation. What has happened so far as rent legislation is concerned is that every year there has been a whittling down of the powers in the Act until today it is not much more than a skeleton.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: And a pretty sick one, too.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I agree with members that it is not very valuable; but at least it has a little bit of value, and the Act as it now stands should be salvaged. The hon. member is following tactics that he has followed throughout the year. He wants to take another bite and do what he has done in other years—take a little more out of what is in the Act. If he succeeds in what he is trying to do, and that little bit is left out, it will not be worth going on with. I would rather have members face up to the position and say, "All right; we do not think this is worth while and we will put it out—"

Hon. H. K. Watson: You have just about convinced me that that is how I should vote.

The CHIEF SECRETARY:—rather than take another bite out of it and leave us with little more than the title to the Bill."

Hon. H. K. Watson: I think you are right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It is not often that we agree.

Hon. J. M. A. Cunningham: Building has started to—

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I would say that if the clause, or that particular portion, is taken out we might as well do what I have suggested.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: Would you be agreeable to throwing it out?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: No; I want the Bill as it is. But if an amendment is agreed to, we might as well throw the thing right out.

Hon. H. K. Watson: That is fair enough.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That is the position, and that is how I feel about it. I am not goading members into doing that.

Hon. J. G. Hislop: But you are nearly doing it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I say that we might as well do that as leave little more than the Title to the measure. During the debate, some members have said that we want this because we wish to make ours a welfare State. I do not think I will trouble to reply to that statement. Governments built rental houses in this State because they had to build them; no rental homes were built by the Government until after the war.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: When did you expect that they would be built? There was no demand for them prior to the war.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The Government's attitude—

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Workers' homes have been built here in past years.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They are for private ownership; they are not rental homes and have nothing to do with the situation.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: No?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Governments built rental homes only when they were forced to do so.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not wish to prolong the debate, because I am quite sure that, after having partaken of a very nice dinner, one does not feel so disposed. Before the suspension I was referring to one or two matters that were raised by Sir Charles Latham. He stated that the percentage was 5 per cent. and 6 per cent. To bring the hon. member up to date I might mention that the percentage is now 6 per cent. and 7 per cent.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: I was not quite sure about it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I can realise that. Since March of this year it has been 6 per cent. and 7 per cent. It is often said that the operation of a rents Bill constitutes a drawback and a handicap to building. Members know that possibly ever since 1929 very few houses for rental

purposes have been erected by private investors. Since that year, people who have had the money to invest have used it to build homes for sale; and I do not blame them. Therefore, the homes built over the past 27 years for letting purposes have been very few indeed.

Hon. H. K. Watson: That being so, how is it that there were about 40,000 homes available for rental?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Because, as Sir Charles Latham has said, in the years gone by people invested their money in rental homes in order that they might have an assured income when they retired. The trend over the past few years, however, has been for people to invest their money in homes for sale. It has proved to be a better investment for them. Nevertheless, many homes that were built with this object in view are now let to tenants because the owners have died, and the houses have been placed on the market for letting. As against that, many of the old houses that were let on a rental basis have disappeared.

Hon. L. A. Logan: Where have they gone?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: They have been bulldozed down to make way for industrial establishments. In North Fremantle and in many other suburbs whole blocks of homes have disappeared for that very reason. Practically the whole of them would be let to tenants. If the hon. member paid a visit to Fremantle, he would find that one whole block in Point-st., and half a block in Cantonment-st. have been bulldozed down in the last two or three months, and the same applies all over the metropolitan area. As I have already said, most of those blocks did contain rental homes.

We know, from experience, what rents the tenants are paying in any of these industrial centres. Many of these homes are only a stone's-throw from my own residence. Houses that were far from new in 1910 and which prewar were bringing in a rental of 12s. 6d. per week are now returning to the owner £4 and £5 per week because of the scarcity of homes.

Hon. H. K. Watson: No, because of the change in money values.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, to an extent. But that would not be the reason why the rent has jumped from 12s. 6d. per week to £5 per week. It could not change that much for that reason alone; but because of the competition for homes, people are prepared to pay that rental. They are loth to go near a court, and that is one of the reasons why very few cases come before the Fair Rents Court. Although it is only slight, this legislation does contain some value, and it is for that reason that the Government wishes to retain it on the statute book.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. E. M. Davies in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Section 20B. amended:

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I hope the Committee will not agree to this clause. It has nothing to do with the continuation of the parent Act as such. Without any justification, the clause proposes to continue, for another 12 months, special provisions and special restrictions on landlords which were intended to apply only during the transitional period and which were to cease, once and for all, on the 31st August of this year. The deletion of this clause does not defeat the Bill. It will permit the parent Act to remain on the statute book as it stands now.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Like Mr. Watson, I intend to vote against this clause. This provision was intended to apply only during the transitional period. Except for specific directions, relating mostly to possession, the clause does not help the present position at all. The provision relating to a person giving 28 days' notice to a tenant to evict him is not a fair thing to property owners.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I would like members to have a look at the Act. This will not debar the operation of the Act. Subsection (1) will remain, and I would refer members to it. Protection is still provided.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Without this provision the rest of the Bill will be useless. Do members believe that if this provision were taken out, they would have any hold on the man who wished to charge up to the sky for his rent?

Hon. H. K. Watson: Yes.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is provision for 28 days' notice and nothing else. Members want to make it an open go for the person who wishes to charge what he likes. Provision of 28 days' notice without any strings is a deterrent to anybody who wishes to charge what he likes. If this is taken out by members there will be no deterrent.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: The Chief Secretary would have us believe that we are deleting all that portion of the Act dealing with rents. There is still plenty of power left in the Act, particularly that portion dealing with rents. The Chief Secretary is misleading the Committee by saying "If you take this out, the Act is no good." There is still much power left in the Act. There was a very good reason why that provision was put in. The Chief Secretary said we were forced to accept it. The reason for that was that the Government had lost its majority and had no power to do anything; it would have accepted a rejection

of the Bill. It was only because of the generosity of members that that did not happen.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: The statement of the Chief Secretary that a man has only 28 days' notice without any strings, is not correct. He is entitled to his 28 days' notice; that is, before he can be evicted. The owner then has to go to the court, which may take three or four weeks, which means there would be about eight weeks on the eviction side. So far as the rental side is concerned, anyone can go to the court, which can fix the rent, and that becomes the rent of the premises. If the owner evicts the tenant, he cannot increase the rent without going to the court. Those provisions still remain; and surely that is sufficient protection?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The Chief Secretary is no doubt trying to mislead the Committee. The provision for 28 days' notice is there. Under common law, and even under this Act, the tenant has the right to go to the court. He has the right of seven days' notice to quit and is then not forced out until an eviction order is executed. We should get back to the common law provision of seven days' notice rather than 28.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Members should look at that portion of the Act which will go out, and they will then know who is trying to mislead the Committee. Sir Charles Latham told us that Section 20B was going out.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Not all of it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Members should read Clause 2 of the Bill. If they throw this out, the words "fifty-six" will be left in the Act.

Hon. H. K. Watson: Be more precise.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: At the 31st August, 1956, it will cease to operate.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: What will?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Section 20B.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: No, it will not! You are getting worse than ever.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If the words "fifty-six" are left in, it must cease to operate in August, 1956. Section 20B deals with the three months' notice after the court has given an award or 12 months if the court finds the amount to be 80 per cent. of the rent.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I am prepared to accept the Chief Secretary's assurance that he is not misleading the Committee. I am also prepared to accept the position that he does not know what he is talking about. I would draw his attention to Subsection (4) of Section 20B. The Chief Secretary has told us if we leave Subsection (4) of Section 20B as it stands, the whole of Section 20B will cease to operate on the 31st August.

Subsection (4) provides that Subsections (2) and (3) shall continue in force until the 31st August, 1956, and no longer. If this Bill had not been introduced, all that would happen on the 31st August, 1956, would be that Subsections (2) and (3) would cease to operate. However, Subsection (1), which contains a vital provision, would remain operative. The Chief Secretary is incorrect in saying that if Subsection (4) is unaltered the whole of that section will become inoperative.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: If I did say that the whole section would become inoperative, I might have stretched it a bit. I did point out that all that would remain would be the 28 days' notice, which is provided for under Subsection (1), and there would be no strings attached to that period of notice. The penalties of three months and 12 months, which are the important portions of the section, will be repealed. They are the penalty provisions to prevent abuses under this Act. If the clause is not agreed to the whole Act will become useless.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: That is not correct because there will be many other provisions left, as I pointed out earlier. We are dealing with Subsections (2) and (3) only and not with all the other provisions that are in the Act. If the Chief Secretary is not sure of the position, he ought to get expert advice on this matter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: There is only one important provision left in the Act, and the balance serves a limited purpose. The penalty provisions must be retained to make the Act effective, and that is the considered opinion of the people who have handled rental control.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Who are those persons?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Ministers of the previous Government, Ministers of the present Government, and the officers of the department. Yet members who have had no experience of administering this Act say that I ought to get advice. I would point out that I have already got the best possible advice in this State, which deems this subsection to be the vital part of the Act. Without this subsection we would not be able to save even the remnant of the rent legislation still on the statute book. I said two years ago that I hoped it would be the last time I would have to ask for a continuance Bill. I hope the present occasion will be the last time. But I shall continue saying that until the rental position has improved to the stage when this legislation is no longer required. Everyone knows that there is a much greater need for this legislation today than there was 12 months ago.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: A small section of the community, the landlords, have been bearing this burden from year to year; and

we hear the same sad story from the Chief Secretary; and so every year the burden continues to be borne by the landlords. On reading a large number of the findings of the Fair Rents Court, it is amazing to see how the burden has been placed on the landlord. In not one case was the rental maintained; in every case it was reduced. That looks to me to be a policy adopted by the magistrate.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: It was pointed out by Mr. Watson that in the metropolitan area there were 59 applications before the court, and 47 applications for a reduction of rent, those being the total out of the 40,000 people who are renting houses. The State Housing Commission completed 20,000 homes by the 15th August, 1955. They included war service homes, workers' homes, McNess homes, and homes for rental. Of all these homes, approximately 13,000 were for rental. The State Housing Commission has evicted people because they have not met their requirements.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: Does the commission have to go to the court?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I am not objecting to people being evicted who do not live up to the requirements of the law, but in reply to the argument that there is no need for the Fair Rents Court, I shall quote three cases which occurred this week.

The first concerned No. 63A Quarry-st., Fremantle. This is an old stone house up in the back of the street. After the tenants were evicted, the owners spent £120-odd on repairs to the twin houses, as they are, and got the tenants to sign contracts for two years at £3 a week. The contracts expired last Saturday; and when the lady in 63A went to pay her rent in advance, she was told it would not be accepted, and that she would get a registered letter on the Monday. She received the letter this morning telling her she was to get out of the house within seven days.

This woman is building a war service home which will be ready in October. Together with me, she discussed the matter with the land agent, who said, "Seven days is all I have to give you. Your lease is up, but you can stay there at an increase of 10s. a week." Well, she is going to stay there. She is frightened to go to the Fair Rents Court because she will be dumped out.

The next case is in connection with No. 31 DeLisle-st., North Fremantle. The tenant got this notice—

Dear Madam,

Following the verbal notice given to you on the 13th August, 1956, please accept this as confirmation to terminate your tenancy and vacate this house by the 27th August, 1956.

She was given 13 days' notice.

Hon. H. K. Watson: That is invalid.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: We know. The landlord thought she would make it valid so she sent this notice along—

I am sorry to tell you to take a 14 days' notice to quit the premises of 31 DeLisle-st. You have proved very unsatisfactory tenants, and it is a house that needs careful attention as I explained when you took over the place. Too much water and other things. So I will be glad if you will let me know when you go.

No wonder she said it needed care! How it did not blow over in the last storm, I do not know. The North Fremantle Council inspected this property in connection with putting a condemnation notice on it. The people in the house kept the inside as clean and tidy as this Chamber. The verandah is rotten and has fallen down so that the authorities ordered another one to be put up to protect the electric light covering, and also insisted on a new dry well for the kitchen. The result is that it is costing £1 15s. per week for two little rooms.

I go now to a better part of Fremantle—Manning-st.—where there is a little four-roomed stone house in which there is only a refrigerator. The lady tenant was being charged £7 7s. per week. I said to her, "You can get out of this for about £4 from the rents people. Why do you not do something about it?" She said, "If I do, I will be evicted, and where will I go?"

It was said by Mr. Watson that there were only 59 applications in 1947. Of course! That was because people were afraid to apply. They cannot get assistance from the Housing Commission under a period, and they cannot get into the 100-odd houses around the city that Mr. Baxter talks about because they cannot pay the rents that are being asked. Let us not start making pious speeches about who is going to be hurt. No one will be hurt any more from this legislation than has been the case to date. Those people who talk about what the rent officers are doing do not even know where the rents office is.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: I am not concerned with that.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: I challenge the hon. member to say where it is. It is no wonder I get upset when members talk like this. I had hoped that this measure would go through in an orderly fashion, and that in another 12 months we could forget all about it. Also, do not forget that more than 3,000 building tradesmen are out of work. One firm completed the building of a wool store in Fremantle, and 120 of its employees are now out of work.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: What has that to do with the Bill before us?

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: These people will not be able to pay any rent in a few weeks. Where is their protection to come

from? The hon. member may not understand the housing position as we members from the Fremantle area do, because four-fifths of our work is taken up with housing worries. We have 100 houses in South Fremantle ready for condemnation the day the people can get into better places. Yet members say we do not need this legislation! I do not think Mr. Baxter was sincere in what he was talking about.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Surely the hon. member has put up a good case for these people out of employment. Who is going to put money into a house and give them work when we have this class of legislation? Surely it can be understood that it will prevent any enterprise of that nature. If the hon. member had £4,000 to invest, would he build one or two houses knowing very well that the tenants could do as they liked with the premises? Let us appreciate what this means. Are we not shifting the responsibility from one person to another?

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: No; we are leaving it as it is.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: A man saves a little money and puts it into a house; yet we are saying, by this legislation, that the fellow who has not done that, but who lives in the house, is the only man who ought to be considered, whether he pays the rent, or whether or not he looks after the property. This is bad legislation, and we should be ashamed of it. Let the State as a whole bear the responsibility and give such a man a State Housing Commission home.

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: Where are you going to get it from? Where are the empty ones?

Hon. N. E. Baxter: Medina.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Medina, I am told.

The Chief Secretary: You have been told!

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: I am capable of being told, but the Chief Secretary is not. I hope the Committee will not agree that we should take from one to give to another. Rather let us all, as taxpayers, find the homes necessary for these people. The Premier has been complaining about the lack of export markets for our timber but as we have plenty of timber, bricks and other materials available, let us build whatever is required in the way of housing.

Hon. F. R. H. LAVERY: It is time that members who, over the years, have opposed this legislation ceased complaining because a small proportion of tenants do not look after the premises they occupy. A very small proportion of old-age pensioners spend their money in hotels or wine shops; but we do not, for that reason, condemn all pensioners. I agree that any

landlord is perfectly justified in getting rid of a bad tenant; and, of course, he can do so in considerably less than 28 days.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: Mr. Lavery implied that I was not sincere. But I have no axe to grind, and I still believe this legislation is wrong. For three years or more the Chief Secretary and his followers have told us what dire consequences would follow a relaxation of these controls; but, in fact, as we have pared down the controls, there have been no dire consequences, and the position has become more normal each year. I ask the Committee to vote against this clause and give the landlord the right to get rid of a bad tenant.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: I do not think any of us doubt Mr. Lavery's sincerity in regard to what is happening in his area. After listening to him, I wonder whether he thinks that a block of land, a motorcar, or a purse full of money, or any other chattel should legally remain in the possession of the owner, but that we should agree to legislation which would mean that a property owner would have no right to a house he owned. We are all sympathetic to those who are out of work. But I know of a widow who bought a couple of houses from her savings, in order to have an income from rent, but now cannot get the rent as the tenants are out of work. Are both parties to starve?

Hon. F. R. H. Lavery: She is entitled to get rid of the tenants.

Hon. A. F. GRIFFITH: Sir Charles said the State should look after such people. Surely an owner of premises is entitled to possession of them!

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Baxter has told us that as the controls have been reduced nothing has happened. I would not say any member was misleading this Chamber—but I could! Let us see what has resulted from the whittling away of the original provisions of the legislation. I have the figures for the whole of Australia, and would point out that even the Liberal Government in South Australia has some form of rent control.

For the March quarter of 1954 the weighted average in Sydney was 1,318 and it was 1,359 in June, 1956. These are the weighted averages of the six capital cities in regard to rent. In Melbourne the figure went from 995 to 1,192, not a great increase. In Brisbane the figure went from 1,004 to 1,044; it was fairly static. In Adelaide the figure went from 1,166 to 1,338. In Hobart, in 1954, the figure was 1,271; and in December, 1955, it rose to 1,282; while by June, 1956, it had risen to 1,684. It went from 1,282 to 1,684 in six months because rent controls went out of existence.

What is the picture in the other city that I have not yet mentioned—Perth? In the March quarter, 1954, the figure was 1,230. In June, 1956, the figure was 1,962.

We have jumped well over 50 per cent. while the other capital cities have remained practically static.

Hon. H. K. Watson: What was our weighted average 12 months ago?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In the June quarter, 1955, it was 1,837.

Hon. H. K. Watson: As against what today?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: In June, 1956, it was 1,962.

Hon. H. K. Watson: A very small increase.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: A greater rise in the period than the rise in all the other capital cities. That is a true picture of what has happened as a result of this gradual whittling away of the rent Act. Notwithstanding that terrible record, members still want to whittle it away more and push these index figures still higher.

I am surprised at Dr. Hislop getting up and defending this whittling way, and saying that it is time we finished with this sort of thing. If members vote against the clause, they will give an open go to the person charging 20 per cent. more than he ought to charge. I have every confidence that the majority of members will not allow that sort of thing to happen, and that they will allow more than the remnants of a rent Act to stay on the statute book.

Hon. J. G. HISLOP: I think we should be grateful to the Chief Secretary for presenting those figures which show the results of savage legislation in the Eastern States. Those who have relatives in the Eastern States realise how bitter is the feeling among those who carry the burden, as so many here have done because this rent legislation has been continued. Time after time I have been in the Eastern States and have heard comments about the temerity of people saving a few pounds and putting them into the purchase of houses! They are the people who have had to bear the burden of this economic struggle; and I think the time has arrived when we should look at this matter squarely and continue to exert a sense of responsibility, which this Chamber has always shown.

It is time we realised that what we have done in the past, by gradually easing the strain upon these people, has been the correct procedure. We must realise that there is a lot of truth in what Sir Charles Latham said: That this State and other States of Australia have attempted to put the burden on a small section of the people and it is time they were relieved of it. That burden should be borne by the community as a whole, and not by one small section of it.

This measure is put up on the grounds that 59 people went to the court and a small number went to the inspector in regard to their rents—an infinitesimal percentage of those renting houses. Yet we have tremendous enthusiasm on the part of the

Chief Secretary for this Bill when it really would not matter if it did not see daylight. I do not intend to be baited by the Chief Secretary, particularly in regard to his remarks about my being a medical man; and in my opinion we should get rid of this type of legislation as quickly as possible.

Hon. Sir CHARLES LATHAM: Will the Chief Secretary lay on the Table of the House, under Standing Order No. 341, the documents he quoted?

The Chief Secretary: Yes; you can see anything I quoted from.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: I did not intend to speak on this measure; but after listening to the debate I think I would be doing myself an injustice if I did not do so. When I first came to this Chamber, in 1952, we were in the midst of the rent control controversy. It was a most contentious subject; and at that time I ranged on the side of that section of the community which had definitely been oppressed. It consisted of those who had put their money into bricks and mortar prior to 1939, who had had their rents pegged, and who had been permitted only a small margin of increase during that period. We were successful in making an alteration to the legislation to enable those people to charge a rent somewhat in proportion to the present-day value of the property. Last year further legislation was introduced and, as the Chief Secretary told us, in the interim the interest was increased to 6 per cent.

Whilst I am no great believer in controls, the fact remains that economic conditions are not as bright today as they were 12 months ago. We are always prepared to urge the other fellow to do something, but we are not prepared to do anything ourselves. I do not see people taking up the cudgels for that section of the investing public who, in 1939, put their £800 or £1,000 into Commonwealth bonds. It would be interesting to compare how that investment has fared with the investment made by a person who placed his money in bricks and mortar.

Hon. N. E. Baxter: The investor in bonds would still get a better percentage than the investor in bricks and mortar.

Hon. L. C. DIVER: Mr. Baxter may be right. I am not a crystal gazer. In the 1930's, when our economic position was at a very low level, Commonwealth bonds with a par value of £100 were valued at only £61 or £62. People who invested their money in bricks and mortar have had their lot relieved since I entered this Chamber. If everyone else in the community had fared as well as this section of the public they would be quite all right. In my opinion, this legislation should continue for another 12 months.

Hon. J. MURRAY: I did not intend to speak on this measure until after I heard Mr. Watson quoting figures on the number of applications that have come before the Fair Rents Court. His reference to the

reports of inspectors on the question of rentals was also very interesting to me. His information showed that little exception was taken to the rentals that have been charged in Western Australia over the past few months. On the other hand, we have heard the Chief Secretary quote examples of phenomenal increases in rentals. If what the Chief Secretary says is true, one would think that there would have been more applicants appearing before the Fair Rents Court for a reduction in rent.

It was also mentioned by the Chief Secretary that the building industry is in a shocking state. There is no doubt about that. And who is responsible? The Government must take most of the responsibility. Its slogan was, "House the people irrespective of the cost." It also took the view that it did not care very much what a tradesman was paid so long as houses were built. As a result, houses have been built, but at a phenomenal cost; and unemployment is rife in the timber mills today because of the Government's policy. The Government was anxious to obtain timber irrespective of cost and inefficient employees were employed in an endeavour to meet the Government's timber demands to build houses irrespective of cost. However, there must be a day of reckoning with a policy such as that, and that day has arrived.

Timber millers and building contractors now say, "The time has come when, if we have to pay a man £5 or £6 a day, we expect from him £5 or £6 worth of labour, and the work he performs must be good." The Chief Secretary, therefore, should not link up the building trade with rents and tenancies legislation. He should put forward some reasons why there are so very few applicants appearing before the Fair Rents Court when he states that rents have been increased to an exceedingly high figure.

Hon. G. E. JEFFERY: I intend to vote for the retention of the Bill in its present form. I heard two members say that the position was obscure. In my opinion the position will remain obscure for at least 12 months. I also heard another member say that he was prepared to allow the legislation to stand in its present form until Christmas. If he is prepared to do that I cannot see why he is not agreeable to permit the legislation to remain on the statute book for another 12 months.

It has also been stated that a small section of the community is carrying the rest, but that is not quite true. Not many houses for rental have been built by private individuals since the war. The proposition has been put forward that many people bought houses prewar so that these might be a source of income when they retired. I would point out that one could buy a house for about £800 before the war; and, despite the inflationary trend, the

people who own those homes are still receiving a reasonable income from their investment.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: The cost of living has increased, too.

Hon. G. E. JEFFERY: Exactly! And everyone in the community shares that cost. People talk about a small section of the community bearing the cost alone. But nobody complained when the basic wage was frozen, and some workers are still carrying considerable costs. I agree with the hon. member who talked about investment in war loans.

Hon. Sir Charles Latham: What about the man who went away to fight for his country?

Hon. G. E. JEFFERY: I have no quarrel with investing in war loans and Commonwealth loans. The nation has not been at war for some years, but we still maintain a substantial defence service. I think that in 12 months' time we will have a much better picture of the economic future of the nation. Members have talked about controlling inflation, and this measure might help significantly in that direction. I do not think there are too many people who have built homes for investment since the war, and I have much pleasure in supporting the clause.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The Chief Secretary quoted huge rises in rental between 1954 and this year. He did not tell the committee the reason for those rises. The reason was the alteration of the legislation and the setting of a fair rental in 1954. Prior to that we operated on the old standard rent. Statistical figures cover those places of standard or cheap rental, and that is why they show a great rise. This provision does not deal with the setting of rentals but with the recovery of premises, and I believe that the owner is entitled to recover his premises. Members should vote against the clause.

Clause put and a division called for.

The CHAIRMAN: Before tellers are appointed, I give my vote with the Ayes.

Division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	....	....	....	12
Noes	....	....	....	9
Majority for				3

Ayes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. L. A. Logan
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery

(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. J. G. Hslop	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. A. F. Griffith
Hon. G. MacKinnon	

(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. R. F. Hutchison	Hon. C. H. Simpson
Hon. E. M. Heenan	Hon. A. R. Jones
Hon. W. R. Hall	Hon. F. D. Willmott

Clause thus passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Title:

Hon. H. K. WATSON: If the Bill goes through in its present form I question whether its Title will be correct. Strictly speaking, this is a Bill to amend and continue the Act. By clause 3, the Bill continues the Act; and by Clause 2, it amends Section 20B of the Act.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not know that it is necessary; but rather than run any risk, I move an amendment—

That after the word "to" in the first line of the Title, the words "amend and" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed; the Title, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment to the Title.

Recommittal.

On motion by Hon. N. E. Baxter, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 2.

In Committee.

Hon. E. M. Davies in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Section 20B amended.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: I move an amendment—

That after the word "amended" in line 8, page 2, the words "(a) by deleting the words 'Subsections (2) and (3) of' in line one," be inserted.

I do this because Subsection (1) of Section 20B, which is under consideration, expires at the same time as the other provisions—namely, the 31st December. That is entirely different from the other expiry date of the 31st August, 1957. So, in respect of two provisions, the expiry date would be the 31st August, 1957; but the others would remain in force until the 31st December. The first portion which is relative to the two subsections mentioned does not become inoperative when the two subsections cease to operate. As the first portion relates to the subsections following, it should cease to operate at the same time—namely, the 31st August, 1957.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: I support the amendment. The effect of it is to make the whole of Section 20B governed by Subsection (4). If the amendment is agreed to, Subsection (4) would provide:—

The provisions of this Section shall continue in force until the 31st day of August, 1957, and no longer.

This will bring the dates into conformity with each other.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I propose that instead of our bringing the date back to the 31st August, 1957, they be extended to the 31st December, 1957, and thus also make them all uniform. In the past this legislation had to be dealt with before the Address-in-reply and had to be rushed. It would be much more sensible to alter the dates to the 31st December so that any future Bills could be dealt with at a more suitable part of the session. Under the circumstances, I oppose the amendment.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: If the amendment is agreed to, it will only affect the opening sentence of Subsection (4), and there is nothing to stop this Chamber from deleting the word "August" and substituting the word "December."

The Chief Secretary: It is a bit risky.

Hon. H. K. WATSON: There is nothing to stop us. The Chief Secretary appears to have the numbers; so if he is interested in having the date extended, the opportunity is here for him to do it.

The Chief Secretary: I never like to take a mean advantage of the Chamber.

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: The reason for my moving the amendment is to bring it into line, whether the month is August or December. As Mr. Watson has pointed out, we can bring it into line with either month. The Bill is sent to us purely as a continuance measure. In other words, except for a few amendments that we might make with regard to the continuance part of it, we are hamstrung in regard to amending it to keep up with the present times. Perhaps I can suggest to the Chief Secretary that we could amend this again tonight to carry on until, perhaps, the 31st December. We could then bring down a small amending Bill to deal with Subsections (1), (2) or (3) of this section to give satisfaction all round.

The Chief Secretary: Will you vote with me for December?

Hon. N. E. BAXTER: For December, 1956, if the Chief Secretary will accept that. There is no doubt that Subsection (1) needs a slight amendment to give justice to people on rents.

Amendment put and a division called for.

The CHAIRMAN: Before tellers are appointed, I give my vote with the noes.

Division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	....	....	....	10
Noes	....	....	....	11
				—
Majority against			....	1
				—

Ayes.

Hon. N. E. Baxter	Hon. G. MacKinnon
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. R. C. Mattiske
Hon. J. G. Hislop	Hon. J. Murray
Hon. Sir Chas. Latham	Hon. H. K. Watson
Hon. L. A. Logan	Hon. A. F. Griffith
	(Teller.)

Noes.

Hon. G. Bennetts	Hon. H. L. Roche
Hon. E. M. Davies	Hon. H. C. Strickland
Hon. L. C. Diver	Hon. J. D. Teahan
Hon. G. Fraser	Hon. W. F. Willesee
Hon. J. J. Garrigan	Hon. F. R. H. Lavery
Hon. G. E. Jeffery	(Teller.)

Pairs.

Ayes.	Noes.
Hon. C. H. Simpson	Hon. R. F. Hutchison
Hon. A. R. Jones	Hon. E. M. Heenan
Hon. F. D. Willmott	Hon. W. R. Hall

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Bill again reported without further amendment, and the reports adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and returned to the Assembly with an amendment to the Title.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. G. Fraser—West): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till Tuesday, the 4th September.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.10 p.m.